Dissertations   **Graduate Research**

2004

Instructional Implications of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program as an Accountability Instrument

Daniel J. Applegate
Andrews University

Recommended Citation

Andrews University

School of Education

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM AS
AN ACCOUNTABILITY INSTRUMENT

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Daniel J. Applegate

October 2004

UMI Number: 3164582

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI®

UMI Microform 3164582

Copyright 2005 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM AS
AN ACCOUNTABILITY INSTRUMENT

A dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
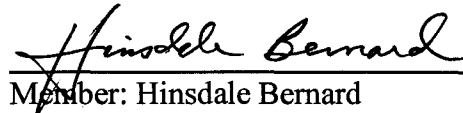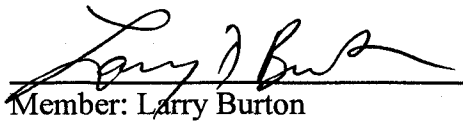
Daniel J. Applegate
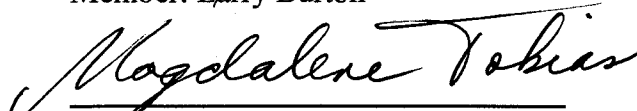
APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:
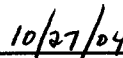
_____
Chair: James A. Tucker

_____
Member: Hinsdale Bernard

_____
Member: Larry Burton

_____
External: Magdalene Tobias

_____
Dean, School of Education
James R. Jeffery

_____10/27/04_____
Date approved

ABSTRACT

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM AS
AN ACCOUNTABILITY INSTRUMENT

by

Daniel J. Applegate

Chair: James Tucker

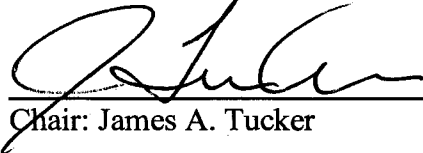ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

School of Education

Title: INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL
ASSESSMENT PROGRAM AS AN ACCOUNTABILITY INSTRUMENT

Name of researcher: Daniel J. Applegate

Name and degree of faculty chair: James Tucker, Ph.D.

Date completed: October 2004

Problem

In Michigan, early elementary school teachers are held accountable for instructional

decisions they made based on the number of children who pass the state standardized

reading test, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Although state

officials claim the MEAP can inform instruction, no data are regularly collected to describe

reading instructional practices or the relationships between current practices and the

percentage of students who pass the MEAP.

Method

Using a survey instrument, this study measured the amount of instructional time

Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers reported that they devoted to the development of 19 different components or activities within their classroom reading and language arts program. The Pearson product-moment correlation was applied to determine the relationship between the amount of reported time devoted to each of these activities and the percentage of students who achieved a satisfactory level on the Grade 4 MEAP test in the participating teachers' schools.

Results

Descriptive analysis showed grade-specific preferences in the amount of time teachers report devoting to various activities within their language arts programs. Despite balanced approaches being reported across all grade levels, only eight significant relationships were found between teacher practices and the MEAP. Of the eight, four were found between Grade 4, two for Grade 3, one for Grades 2 and 1, and none for Kindergarten.

Conclusions

Although the reading activities and components measured were representative of actual practice in this Southwestern Michigan county, the fact that, at the most, only four variables for any one grade level could be identified that showed a significant relationship between grade level practices and the MEAP calls to question whether the state standardized test can be used to inform instruction. If the MEAP cannot be connected to actual classroom instructional practices, then holding teachers accountable for their instructional decision making by the MEAP is a questionable practice that lacks

methodological consistency and dismisses the necessary link between a behavior and its

consequence.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iv

v

LIST OF TABLES

vi

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Problem

An increasing number of federal, state, and local reforms have focused on helping

children succeed in school (Bracey, 2002; Christie, 2002; Gambrell, Morrow, Neuman, &

Pressley, 1999, Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; No Child Left Behind Act, 2001; Sack, 2002).

Once a child is enrolled in one of our nation's public schools, it is expected that he or she

will be taught how to read by knowledgeable, licensed, and appropriately prepared

teachers (Cunningham, 1999; Millman, 1997; Thompson & Nicholson, 1999). The

passage of the landmark No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001 was an effort to

assure adopted reforms had intended effects and that the nation's teachers were highly

qualified (NCLB Act, 2001). This Act also required states to implement statewide

accountability systems covering public schools to ensure all students reached challenging

standards in reading (NCLB Act, 2001).

Controversy has existed for decades regarding the best instructional methods for

teaching children to read. In recent years, a debate between two opposing views held

about the course of reading instruction has been referred to as "The Reading Wars"

(Adams & Bruck, 1995; Bond & Dykstra, 1997; Carbo, 1998; Chall, 1989; Coles, 2000;

1

Gambrell & Mazzoni, 1999; Gambrell et al., 1999; Harris & Sipay, 1984; McPike, 1995;

Mendez, 2004; Metcalf, 2002; Morrow & Asbury, 1999; Pearson, 2004; Pearson &

Raphael, 1999; Putman, 2002; Schickendaz, 1990; Stahl & Miller, 1989; Turner, 1989;

Zimmerman, 2003). The ongoing debate pits phonics-based instruction against whole-

language instruction (Adams & Bruck, 1995; Carbo, 1998; Chall, 1989; Coles, 2000;

Innis, 2002; Krashen, 2002; McPike, 1995; Pearson & Raphael, 1999; Schickendaz,

1990; Stahl & Miller, 1989; Turner, 1989). Phonics-based instruction treats reading as a

process whereby reading is broken down into skills and subskills which need to be taught

in isolation and in a prescribed sequence (Pearson & Rapheal, 1999; Tunmer &

Chapman, 1999). Whole-language instruction is centered around comprehension with

minimal focus on letters and word-based activities (Gambrell et al., 1999; Pearson &

Rapheal, 1999; Tunmer & Chapman, 1999). Researchers and theorists on each side of this

"war" have cited authorities and research to support a particular point of view, hoping to

convince school systems, teachers, teacher training institutions, and state departments to

adopt a specific method to teach reading (Adcock & Patton, 2001; Coles, 2000;

Cunningham, 1999; Kohn, 2002; Meier, 2002; Shepard, 2000; Slavin, 1989).

Adopting one approach over another can severely limit a teacher's arsenal of

available strategies to teach reading. Some recent studies investigated the effects of

blending both approaches, and favorable results were reported (Dahl & Scharer, 2000;

Gambrell et al., 1999; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998). Despite the new call for a

blended approach, there are some who insist on using one approach over another (Davis,

1999), and still others believe that children learn to read despite the method of instruction (Smith, 1999).

The intensity of the debate notwithstanding, Reutzel and Cooter (1990) found scant research describing actual reading instructional practices. Baumann, Hoffman, Duffy-Hester, and Moon (1998) asserted that missing from the debate has been a basic understanding of reading methodologies and information regarding their use within the nation's public schools. The researchers in both studies indicated that even with all the discussions and debates over reading practices, few empirical descriptions of contemporary practice could be found. Concluding that the essence of reading instruction that occurs behind closed classroom doors remains largely unknown.

Even without a definitive account of teacher instructional practices, state tests are routinely administered throughout the nation's public schools to assess whether current practices for teaching reading are effective and the extent to which children are learning to read (Bracey, 2002; Kohn, 2002; Shepard, 2000). National and state reports have cited reading test scores, most often standardized test scores, to measure reading achievement and judge the effectiveness of reading teachers (Barton, 1999; Bracey, 2002; Cunningham, 1999; Kohn, 2002; Meier, 2002; Millman, 1997). These same reading scores have been used by parents, local boards of education, politicians, policy makers, and the general public to judge how well school districts, schools, and teachers have influenced reading achievement (Barton, 1999; Bracey, 2002; Cunningham, 1999; Gambrell et al., 1999; Millman, 1997; Peterson, 1997; Shepard, 2000).

Accountability for the effectiveness of public schools and teachers in Michigan is determined principally by student performance on a state-mandated test, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). According to the Michigan Department of Education, MEAP scores represent the overall strengths and weaknesses of a school district's curriculum; thus schools use MEAP scores as the most important consideration for improving instruction (MEAP, 2000).

MEAP results have also been used as incentives for programs such as the Michigan Accreditation Program. This program is intended to assess the performance of public schools in Michigan and improve academic performance. Key factors in school accreditation are past and present MEAP scores. According to state officials, MEAP will continue as a component of this program, eventually becoming an accountability model. State supervisors have suggested that MEAP scores measure the extent to which children have mastered the state's reading curriculum more than they measure student reading achievement (MEAP, 2000).

Despite pressure to abandon the use of standardized tests as accountability measures (Grant, 2000; Kohn, 2001; Madaus, 1988), MEAP officials support the continued administration and uses of the MEAP. If districts better identified schools that succeed and examined the factors that accounted for their success, MEAP scores might be useful in affecting teaching practices (Durbin, 2000; Harper, 2000). MEAP critics contend that the use of any standardized achievement test as a measure of accountability represents clear ignorance of the complexity of teaching (Barton, 1999; Coles, 2000; Grant, 2000; Meier, 2002; Millman, 1997). The Michigan Department of Education,

however, continues to insist that MEAP provides the best current measure of school

accountability (Durbin, 2000; Harper, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

School districts with substandard or decreasing MEAP scores seek to adopt more

effective reading practices, programs, and instructional materials. Yet, according to the

assistant superintendent of schools in the participating Southwestern Michigan county

and the county's special education director neither district-wide nor county-wide data

exist that describe the relationship between the reading methodologies and instructional

practices used to teach reading in local elementary classrooms and MEAP scores (Jeanne

Morris, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services, & Jeff Siegel, Special

Education Director, personal communication, February 12, 2000)—and it is the MEAP

that districts must use as the statewide measure of reading achievement. In fact, Hiebert

and Stigler (1999) indicated that no state regularly collects and uses data directly related

to instructional processes in the classroom. The absence of these data poses a significant

problem for elementary classroom teachers, who are held accountable for the important

decisions they make daily about reading instruction.

Purpose of the Study

Because school accountability for public schools and teachers in Michigan

depends upon student achievement as assessed by MEAP, the purpose of this study is to

address the gap between state accountability practices and reading instruction in schools

in a Southwestern Michigan county by studying the relationship between time spent on

specific reading instructional practices and MEAP scores. The amount of time each day that teachers report using each of 19 reading strategies in Kindergarten through Grade 4 was determined. The 19 strategies were taken from a larger study of which the purpose was to describe current reading instructional practices (Baumann et al., 1998). An analysis of the data will determine the strength of the relationship between time reportedly spent using the reading strategies and satisfactory scores on MEAP.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study sought answers to four research questions regarding the reported use of 19 reading instructional practices from teachers of Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 in a Southwestern Michigan county. Although four research questions are addressed in this study, two of the questions are descriptive in nature and do not have associated research hypotheses. The research questions and associated hypothesis are as follows:

Research Question 1 asked: How much instructional time do teachers report allotting to each of the 19 reading instructional practices?

Research Question 2 asked: What is the difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the overall means of the total reported time allotted for all 19 reading practices?

Research Question 3 asked: Is there a significant difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the reported time allotted for each of the 19 practices?

Hypothesis associated with research question 3 states: There is a significant difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the reported amount of time allotted to use each of 19 reading practices.

Research question 4 asked: What is the extent of the relationship between the amount of reported time allotted for each of the 19 practices and MEAP scores?

Hypothesis associated with research question 4 states: There is a significant relationship between the amount of time teachers report allotting to each of 19 reading practices and MEAP scores.

Rationale

This study sought to determine the relationship between the reported use of 19 reading instructional practices and school performance on the MEAP. Based on MEAP results, school officials and district administrators punish or reward schools and teachers. By linking instruction to MEAP results, it is expected that the findings of this study will help classroom teachers in selecting appropriate reading instructional practices. For example, if the total time spent teaching phonological awareness in Grade 1 is highly correlated with MEAP scores, first-grade teachers who accept MEAP as a valid measure of reading achievement would include phonological awareness as part of their reading instruction. Depending on the strength of the relationship, teachers who already teach phonological awareness may want to increase its use.

Introduction to Theoretical Framework

The framework for both general models under study, instructional decision making and school accountability, can be theoretically traced to behaviorism (Kohn, 1993, 2001; McNergney & Herbert, 1998; Parkay & Hardcastle-Stanford, 1998). Using behavioristic principles, both models attempt to break down complex behaviors involved in reading and its instruction into objective and measurable parts (Biehler & Snowman, 1993; Dembo, 1994; Doll, 1989; Leahy, 1987; McNeil, 1985). Each model also has a feedback system of consequences that is designed to alter specific behaviors (Nairne, 2000; NCLB Act, 2001). For instruction, reading is compartmentalized into specific subskills which are then taught in a lock-step, sequential fashion (Chall, 1967, 1983, 1996). The ability of students to utilize these skills is then assessed, and future instructional decisions are based on the measured performance (Biehler & Snowman, 1993; Popham, 1993; Stufflebeam, Madaus, & Kellaghan, 2000). For accountability systems, the same principles apply when states establish standards or benchmarks that students are expected to meet (MEAP, 2000; Murphy & Cohen, 1974). The standards equate to the specific skills which are expected to be learned within a tightly controlled time frame (NCLB Act, 2001). Actual performance is compared to expected results and both positive and negative consequences are handed out to schools and teachers based on the measured results of achievement (Durbin, 2000; Harper, 2000; Kohn, 2002; MEAP, 2000; NCLB Act, 2001; "To Close the Gap, Quality Counts," 2003, p. 7).

Research Design and Methodology

The purpose of this study was to address the gap between state accountability practices and reading instruction in schools in a Southwestern Michigan county by determining the relationship between the time allotted to use 19 reading instructional practices and scores on MEAP, a standardized achievement test. A nonexperimental design was selected because it was not possible for me to directly or actively manipulate the variables, instructional time, or MEAP scores. Correlational methods were used to determine the strength of the relationship between reported teaching practices and MEAP scores. Additionally, this study was descriptive in that it attempted to determine whether grade level differences in instructional time spent on these variables existed in the participating elementary schools.

Importance

Each year, student performance on standardized tests receives widespread public attention. As far as elementary schools are concerned, parents typically express the most interest in reading test scores (Barton, 1999; Peterson, 1997). Normal academic progress is expected of each student in every grade. The No Child Left Behind Act (2001) requires that all children reach certain standards in reading and that states implement a number of testing and accountability provisions to ensure that schools and teachers are doing their jobs. Schools fail that do not reach the specified standards or do not make annual yearly progress toward these standards. In Michigan, and in most states, the failure to achieve the state's standards can result in decreasing the amount of state funds for public

education available to a district (Grant, 2000; Michigan Department of Education, 2003; Peterson, 1997).

Michigan also offers parents the opportunity to choose the schools in which to enroll their children. Each district competes for the money allocated to educate each student. Thus students can enroll in a different district from the one in which they reside, adding increased pressure for schools to ensure positive academic progress. In 1999 and again in 2000, the governor of Michigan and the Michigan Senate Education Committee threatened to "take over" schools and school districts that did not meet the state's standards for academic success (MEAP, 2000). (One such potential takeover included a school whose teachers participated in this study.) The primary reason for this potential loss of local control was consistent substandard scores on the MEAP (Durbin, 2000; Harper, 2000; MEAP, 2000).

With efforts for school reform increasing, a school's teachers may be feeling increased pressure to raise the number of children who learn to read and to search for help in finding the best way (Adcock & Patton, 2001; Grant, 2000; Seymor, 2001; Shepard, 2000). Reading research findings, however, often provide more confusion than clarity, particularly since results are often contradictory (Camilli & Wolfe, 2004; Grossen, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Zemelman et al., 1998). Few national studies of reading instruction have been conducted, and few local resource dollars have paid for staff development to aid in research-based instructional decisions (Coles, 1998a; Kelleher, 2003; McPike, 1998; Peterson, 1997). Nonetheless, administrators and curriculum supervisors are still charged with identifying potential programs, recommending

instructional materials, and adopting reading curricula for their respective school districts (Bracey, 2002; Kohn, 2002; NCLB Act, 2001). And despite uncertainty about the instructional effects of specific reading methodologies, the effectiveness of public schools will continue to be evaluated yearly by state and federally mandated accountability models (Barton, 1999; Bracey, 2002; Grant, 2000; NCLB Act, 2001).

Before spending thousands of additional dollars on new teacher training programs, selecting different instructional programs, or creating new instructional materials to increase student performance on standardized tests, it is essential to determine current reading practices before linking outcomes to changes in instruction, staff development, or to other variables (Grant, 2000; Slavin, 1989). Only then is it possible to measure variables that affect reading achievement accurately and establish benchmark data of student achievement (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). To date, few if any data have been collected that quantify how reading is actually taught (Baumann et al., 2000; Drecktrah & Chiang, 1997) or the link between current practices in Southwestern Michigan elementary classrooms and MEAP scores (Jeanne Morris, Assistant Superintendent Instructional Services, & Jeff Siegel, Special Education Director, February 12, 2000). To effectively guide future decision making and to monitor curriculum changes, reading instructional practices of elementary teachers should be identified and related to the content of the MEAP. Once teachers are informed of the practices which are positively related to MEAP scores, the link between standards and assessment can be made and teachers can begin to make informed instructional changes.

This research provides a description of current practices used in each grade. With a comprehensive knowledge of the reading methodologies teachers actually use, districts can better determine how much effort, training, and money is needed to evoke change. With these data in hand, a baseline of student performance could be established upon which to base specific budget allocations to assess the effects of new instructional programs and staff development (Peterson, 1997). In addition, the effects of the new No Child Left Behind Act and its initiatives can be monitored to determine whether the provisions, incentives, and teacher training have altered classroom instruction by comparing the results of this study to future studies which attempt to describe instructional practices in this southwestern Michigan county.

The results of this study will be shared with the general public and interested parents, which may empower schools in several ways. First, it could be demonstrated that school districts allocate financial resources thoughtfully and adopt carefully the instructional practices used in other schools. Second, parents would know which reported instructional practices are potentially best for their children. Third, it could be shown that schools are proactive in identifying the best instructional practices. Fourth, local decision making would no longer need to rely on debates, controversies, and wars for adopting teaching practices, selecting instructional programs, or purchasing instructional materials. Finally, local schools would no longer have to rely on national descriptions of reading practices to determine how teachers are teaching in their own local schools.

Assumptions

Several assumptions underlie this study:

1. Every teacher in the county could participate in this study andembers of the sample were representative of the county's population of public school teachers.

2. The teaching practices used by participants were representative of the practices used throughout the county's public schools.

3. Self-reported demographic data and use of instructional practices were free of error to the extent possible.

4. The instructional practices surveyed were likely to be used across all five grade levels (K–4).

5. MEAP scores corresponded to the curriculum content taught throughout county public schools, although the technical aspects of MEAP are not being addressed.

6. Instruction does make a difference in helping children learn to read, and appropriate instructional decisions are made by teachers.

7. Although state standardized tests are administered only to fourth-graders throughout the county, it was assumed that MEAP results represent the collective teaching of Grade 4 teachers as well as teachers of Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3.

8. The percentage of students who pass the MEAP is an indication of reading achievement for a given school. Schools with a low percentage of students achieving a satisfactory score are therefore teaching fewer students how to read than a school with a high percentage of students.

9. Although schools are the primary focus of accountability sanctions, the individual teachers within the schools are labeled as teaching at a "good school" or "bad school." Since good and bad are defined by reading achievement, and since teachers, as a group, are responsible for reading instruction, the school's percentage of students who pass the MEAP can be linked to the group of teachers who taught those fourth-grade students in any given year.

10. There is less variability within each school in regard to factors which affect MEAP scores than there is across different schools.

11. Since instruction is one of the variables regarded as affecting MEAP, teachers participating in this study are representative of the teaching at the school in which they teach.

12. From year to year, the time teachers reported that they devoted to instructional practices during their language arts programs did not change to a significant degree.

13. The MEAP was administered in the standardized manner outlined in the administration manual of the test by each teacher in the school district.

Delimitations of the Study

The study included the following delimitations:

1. Of the numerous teaching methodologies that have been used to teach reading, only 19 variables were measured in this study.

2. Only reading practices used by teachers of Kindergarten through Grade 4 were investigated.

Limitations of the Study

Six limitations affected this research: the accuracy of self-reported information, the limited generalizability of the findings, the use of Likert-type scaling, the number of teachers responding, the differences between respondents and nonrespondents, and the link between student achievement and instruction.

1. The purpose of this study was clearly and accurately stated to each teacher who participated, and assurance of anonymity was provided in writing. Despite this expression of confidentiality, because the Intermediate School District coordinated the mailing of the surveys, teachers may have felt apprehensive regarding confidentiality. Conducting a survey of school employees by school employees likely resulted in some response bias. Especially since the superintendent or a local district designee with ties to the superintendent were involved in collecting the surveys. Some teachers undoubtedly regarded this type of survey as a classroom intrusion or an assessment of instruction. Nonetheless, all county teachers were extended the opportunity to participate.

2. The self-reporting procedure was the second limitation. No classroom observations were conducted to ensure teacher responses accurately portrayed classroom practices. Smithson and Porter (1994) demonstrated that reported instructional behavior agreed with actual (observed) instructional behavior. Other surveys involving elementary teachers' reports of instructional practice about reading instruction did compare favorably to observational studies (Barr & Sadow, 1989; Baumann & Heubach, 1996; Hoffman et al., 1995; Sosniak & Stodolsky, 1993).

3. A third limitation was the use of a 4-point Likert scale to determine the amount of time teachers devoted to each component or activity. The disadvantages of the Likert scaling include loss of accuracy and variability in responses.

4. A fourth limitation was in generalizing the findings. Because only teachers from public school districts in the participating southwestern Michigan county were included, it cannot be assumed that the findings apply to private schools or to schools outside of this county. The problem and purpose of this study, however, are important and relevant to public schools in this southwestern county.

5. Because the teachers who responded were volunteers, there may have been a difference between the instructional practices of teachers who completed the survey and teachers who did not participate. Several measures were taken to increase the response rate, although the difference in response rates of the two groups was not accounted for in this study.

According to, Pressley, Rankin, and Yokoi (1996), surveys can provide information about many aspects of instruction but only limited insight into a teacher's unique implementation of them. Surveys can generate only a limited amount of information about how aspects of instruction are integrated (e.g., how teachers plan lessons or how they integrate media and text readings).

6. The final limitation is using a school's MEAP results as an accountability score for groups of teachers (a school) rather than linking individual student scores to a teacher. Here, the instructional variables are not being linked to achievement; achievement results are being used as an accountability score and then the accountability score (numerically

the same) is linked back to teacher and instruction (within the school). This link is a primary assumption of school and teacher accountability systems (Hall & Kleine, 1992; Sacks, 1999).

In addition, students who moved to, or from, the participating schools were not taken into account when linking MEAP scores to instruction. Therefore, the school's accountability score given to teachers will include students that may not have had all five years of instruction at that school.

Definition of Terms

Ability Grouping: Assigning students of similar reading ability to small groups for reading instruction (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985; Parkay & Hardcastle-Stanford, 1998).

Comprehension: Meaning gained from print (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985; National Institute of Health and Human Development, 2000).

Controlled Vocabulary: Teacher controls the introduction of new words with sufficient repetition to allow students to learn the words easily (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985).

Critical Reading: Teaching students to evaluate written material and to make implications of what is read on the basis of the student's experience (Burns, Roe, & Ross, 1984; Ekwall & Shanker, 1985; Stoodt, 1981).

Handwriting Instruction and Practice: Instruction and practice on how to write, by hand, letters in the form of words or in isolation (New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary, 1987).

Formative Evaluation: The measurement of student achievement before or during instruction for the purpose of planning instruction (Dembo, 1994; McNergney & Herbert, 1998; Parkay & Hardcastle-Stanford, 1998).

Guided Reading: Teaching technique that helps students understand concepts and reading processes when reading a piece of literature. Teachers talk, coach, and walk students through sections of text using questions and student predictions (Booth, 1998; Cooper, 1997; Ekwall & Shanker, 1985).

Language Experience Stories or Charts: Instruction in which a story is developed by students then dictated to the teacher. The teacher prints the story and then uses the text for instruction (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985; Walker, 2000).

Literature Circles, Book Clubs, Literature Discussion Groups: This approach centers around the personal responses and interpretations the students have toward literature. Using discussion groups to talk about the literature, students integrate their own ideas with other student ideas as well as the author's (Booth, 1998; Cooper, 1997; Walker, 2000).

Oral Reading: Reading material aloud to build fluency and word recognition skills through auditory feedback (Booth, 1998; National Reading Panel, 2000; Stoodt, 1981).

Oral or Written Response to Literature: Students are guided through a text and then are expected to respond by writing or talking about what they have read. The emphasis is to help them gain a richer experience and to construct personal meaning (Booth, 1998; Cooper, 1997; Roe, Stoodt, & Burns, 1998).

Phonics/Decoding: The process of taking words in print and changing them to spoken words by emphasizing sounds represented by letters and letter combinations (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985).

Phonics-based instruction: Instruction that treats reading as a process whereby reading is broken down into skills and subskills which need to be taught in isolation and often in a prescribed sequence (Pearson & Rapheal, 1999; Tunmer & Chapman, 1999).

Phonological Awareness: Instruction focusing on the constituent sounds or the phonemic structure of a word as divorced from its meaning (Thompson & Nicholson, 1999).

Process Writing or Writing Workshop: Instruction where a block of learning time is devoted to student planning, drafting, and editing compositions for publication, often involving peer collaboration (Walker, 2000).

Reading Aloud: To build interest in reading, teacher reads a piece aloud to the students. Reading aloud exposes students to texts and vocabulary that they may not find on their own or may not be able to read on their own (Rasinski, 2003).

Reading in the Content Area: Teaching reading skills during regular subject area instruction (Burns et al., 1984; Ekwall & Shanker, 1985).

Reading Strategies Instruction: Teaching procedures related to print and meaning processing by modeling the processes or strategies related to an unfamiliar task, and to develop strategies for understanding text and for monitoring their own reading. Here, students learn to self-correct and self-monitor their reading of a text (Booth, 1998; Walker, 2000).

Reading Vocabulary: Helping students increase the store of words they can recognize and understand instantly and automatically (Cooper, 1997; Ekwall & Shanker, 1985).

Silent Reading: Teachers set aside a time for students to practice the act of reading. The reading is done mentally and does not involve oral pronunciation of reading content (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985; Walker, 2000).

Spelling Lists, Activities, or Games: Methods for teaching decoding skills by having students name or write the letters of a word in order to learn generalizations about the English spelling system and its relation to word sounds. Spelling also increases a student's knowledge of word patterns (Booth, 1998; Burns et al., 1984).

Students Reading Independently: Students are directed to read an entire selection or part of a selection at their own pace and without support and usually silently (Booth, 1998; Cooper, 1997).

Study Skills: Teaching students what to do before they read, what to do during the reading, and what to do after the completion of the reading assignment (Devine, 1981; Ekwall & Shanker, 1985).

Shared Book Experiences: Teacher reads aloud familiar stories, rhymes, or poems then invites the children to join in the reading or rereading when they feel comfortable (Cooper, 1997).

Standardized Test: A test that provides uniform procedures for administering and scoring. Standardized tests can be norm- or criterion-referenced (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993).

Summative Evaluation: Assessment designed to inform a summary decision such as the determination of how well students attained an instructional objective, grades, and/or to evaluate teacher effectiveness (Dembo, 1994; McNergney & Herbert, 1998).

Technological Applications to Literacy (e.g., Microcomputers, video, multimedia): Using technology as a means for delivering and enriching reading instruction (Booth, 1998; Borman & Levine, 1997; Wittich & Schuller, 1979).

Whole-language instruction: Instruction centered around comprehension with minimal focus on letters and word-based activities. Whole-language theorists regard reading as a natural process (Gambrell et al., 1999; Pearson & Rapheal, 1999; Tunmer & Chapman, 1999).

Summary

This study used a survey to assess the amount of time that Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 teachers reported they allotted for each of 19 reading instructional practices. To provide detailed information about the instructional practices, data were collected from teachers of Kindergarten through Grade 4 for each of the 19 practices. Comparisons of the instructional practices were made to determine whether instructional time differed significantly by grade level.

After determining the amount of time that each of these 19 practices were reportedly used by participating teachers, correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the strength of association between the percentage of Grade 4 students who

recorded a satisfactory MEAP score and the amount of time teachers who taught these students reportedly devoted to these practices.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Many novice readers in the nation's public schools do not learn to read easily

(Coles, 1998b; Collins, 1997; Grossen, 1997; Levine, 1994; Quatroche, 1999). Although

the prior knowledge, language, culture, and life experience of students who enter public

schools vary widely, teachers are expected to teach each child to read fluently (Dembo,

1994; Gambrell et al., 1999; No Child Left Behind Act, 2001). The effect of the teacher

on student achievement has shown to be as important as class size, school, and student

socio-economic status (Education Trust, 1998; Sanders & Horn, 1998). To fulfill their

goal of teaching each child to read, teachers rely on their education, experiences teaching

methodologies, instructional techniques, and instructional materials (Borman & Levine,

1997; Palardy, 1975; Thompson & Nicholson, 1999). Controversy has existed for

decades, however, regarding which reading skills to teach and the scope and sequence of

their presentation (Swanson, 1999; Thompson & Nicholson, 1999). Limited by the

prevailing lock-step approach of the traditional grade level system, no systematic

instructional methodology has yet been found whose use guarantees that all children learn

to read (Smith, 1999). On the other hand, regardless of the teaching methodology used for

23

teaching young readers, the majority of children, taught by any method, learn to read (Connelly, Johnston, & Thompson, 1999, Gambrell et al., 1999; Smith, 1999, 2001). How, then, do teachers select the reading methodologies they use? More important, how do the accountability measures used to judge teacher effectiveness impact classroom instruction? And how will insights from findings of reading research shape the future of reading instruction?

Zemelman et al. (1998) concluded that early reading instruction will likely become the principal focus for potentially changing reading instruction. The passing of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 supported their claim with its provisions and expectations. The majority of recent large research projects have focused on early intervention and beginning reading (National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Despite efforts for teaching reading "across the curriculum," the responsibility for reading instruction continues to rest solely on reading teachers (Goertz, Floden, & O'Day, 1996; Irvin & Conner, 1986). Because systematic reading instruction often ends as early as Grade 5 (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985), it is elementary reading teachers who may feel the most pressure to teach reading effectively.

Influences on Instructional Decision Making

External Influences on Instruction

It has long been assumed that teachers are left to select teaching methodologies and instructional materials on their own with limited external influence (Hamachek, 1969; Hough & Duncan, 1970). However, considerable outside pressure has influenced, and continues to influence the nature of instruction in the classroom (Collins, 1997;

Goertz et al., 1996; Hamachek, 1969; Hough & Duncan, 1970; Sacks, 1999). Easily overlooked is the fact that school district administrators, school principals, and curriculum directors commit hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars in adopting and purchasing instructional materials for teaching reading (Doll, 1989; Hamachek, 1969; Hough & Duncan, 1970, McNeil, 1985; McNergney & Herbert, 1998). Instructional materials often serve as guidelines that teachers can turn to when shaping instruction, but these materials can also markedly affect the instructional practices teachers follow (Collins, 1997).

Many influential politicians try to influence reading practices by espousing a particular point of view or by legislating reading achievement by passing new bills to provide more money for reading instruction (Bush, 2000; Goodman, 1998; Gore, 2000; Zemelman et al., 1998). Some politicians do more than express their opinions and actually endorse specific reading programs or instructional methods (Thompson & Nicholson, 1999). Some states have even mandated specific approaches to teach reading (Coles, 1998a). Most states, however, limit the type of instruction more subtly by using standardized tests as measures of student achievement. For example, assessing only those skills that can be measured encourages instruction tailored to drill-and-practice over discovery learning (Kohn, 2001).

Curriculum directors and school officials have acquired experience in assessing and evaluating the merits of instructional materials. Legislators, however, often mandate and endorse programs that ignore or misuse research findings to influence reading instruction (Foorman, Fletcher, Francis, & Schatschneider, 2000). Reutzel,

Hollingsworth, and Vigas-Cox (1996) reported that two-thirds of the legislator participants in their study reported that even though the states represented by participants were implementing new assessment programs, they expressed ignorance about school curriculum and instructional practices. Lacking classroom experience, these legislators read newspaper articles and popular magazines, tuned in to radio and television broadcasts, and listened to purported reading experts as the basis for their legislative decisions (Reutzel et al., 1996). According to Coles (2000), legislators failed to mention that they also succumb to lobbyists, petitions, mailgrams, and similar forms of pressure to pass legislation that encourages or mandates the use of specific approaches to reading instruction.

It is not surprising that teachers have often regarded methodologies or instructional materials mandated by legislators or district administrators as ineffective (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Shannon, 1982). The effectiveness of mandates, however, is typically measured by standardized tests which are not linked directly to the methodology or materials themselves (Bracey, 2000, 2002; Kohn, 2002; Shepard, 2000).

Teacher Training

Lacking an univocal endorsement of a particular reading methodology by reading and language theorists, teachers attempt to accommodate young readers by relying on the knowledge they gained about learning and motivation principles during their teacher preparation programs (National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow et al., 1998). Their scope of understanding, however, ranges from believing that schooling does not make a marked difference in students' lives to understanding the substantial body of research literature

has concluded that teacher behavior does make an important contribution to academic achievement (Rosenfield, 1987; Sanders & Horn, 1998). Thus the focus on learning difficulties ranges from blaming the student for substandard performance to investigating instructional variables that teachers use (Blumenfield, 1993; Sanders & Horn, 1998; Snow et al., 1998).

Whenever teachers fulfill the requirements set by federal and state standards for teaching reading in elementary schools, it is assumed that teachers know how to teach reading effectively. Although certification requirements for teachers have varied markedly from state to state (McNergney & Herbert, 1998; Rafferty, 1975; Winkeljohann, 1976), an alarming number of studies have found many teachers throughout the nation feel unprepared to provide daily reading instruction (Cheek, 1982; Hill & Beers, 1993; Jamar & Pauls, 1986; Lyon, Vassen, & Toomey, 1989; Miller, 1987; Moats, 1995; Moore & Harris, 1986; Nolan, McCutchen, & Berninger, 1990; Roeder, Dalls, & Eller, 1971). In fact, teachers often show concern and admit their lack of knowledge regarding how to teach nonfluent and unmotivated readers (Hills & Beers, 1993), evidence that supports an examination of the adequacy of teacher education programs. Too frequently educators not only lack supervised experiences with diverse students but they also lack content expertise and knowledge of effective teaching and learning principles (Lyon et al., 1989).

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) analyzed schools of education and reported that they had major flaws in teacher preparation. After reviewing studies on teacher preparation, Anders, Hoffman, and Duffy (2000) believe there are still many questions and concerns about the nature of preservice reading

education. Feng (1990) concluded that one way teacher training programs are limited is that they do not provide prospective and practicing teachers with information regarding different instructional strategies. Instead, they often endorse only one reading theory or instructional practice. Some contest that college and university professors may have become too far removed from real teaching conditions in contemporary schools (Backman, 1984; Grace, 1991; Jamar & Pauls, 1986; Miller, 1987). Grace (1991) revealed how administrators, colleagues, and parents encouraged teachers to use basal readers and workbooks during the same period that college and university professors advocated the use of language experiences, learning centers, and independent silent reading. Taylor, Pickert, and Chase (1978) and Jamar and Pauls (1986) found that practicing teachers and college professors disagreed regarding fundamental questions about reading instruction, such as the most effective reading methods and the importance of teaching practical reading strategies.

With all these problems associated with teacher training, it is not surprising that the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) addresses the issue of teacher quality. In response to this act, states are called to improve the quality of teachers by demonstrating competence in subject knowledge and in teaching (NLCB Act, 2001). Funding is provided to support a wide array of activities, including interventions for teacher professional development, so long as the activities are grounded in scientifically based research (NCLB Act, 2001).

Personal Experiences

Future teachers, unlike trainees in other professions, can observe their own teachers at work for many years (Biehler & Snowman, 1993; Dembo, 1994). Throughout

this process, young teachers internalize to some extent the values, beliefs, and practices of their former teachers (Biehler & Snowman, 1993; Dembo, 1994). Considering the attrition rates of first-year and second-year teachers, the transition from learners to teachers is not a simple process (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Huling-Austin, 1986). Clark (1988) suggested teacher candidates enter teacher education programs with well-established ideas and beliefs about the essence of a successful teacher, ideas and beliefs based upon memories of the activities of their former teachers, prior teaching experiences, and childhood events. Teachers recalling with positive recollections of specific reading tasks may be more likely to teach similarly; teachers recalling negative recollections may select different instructional paths to follow (Parkay & Hardcastle-Stanford, 1998; Wood, 1978). Such experiences may filter out the knowledge and experience acquired while enrolled in teacher education programs, accounting for the acceptance or rejection of particular teaching methods (Grossen, 1997). A study reported by Feng (1990) found that teachers cited their prior classroom experiences as a student as the single most important factor that influenced their beliefs about teaching and the methodologies they selected to teach reading. Thus, many teachers tend to teach the way they were taught (Clark, 1988; Kagan, 1992).

<center>Research-Based Decision Making</center>

As new teachers begin classroom instruction, they quickly realize the need to adjust instructional practices based upon their classroom experiences (Zemelman et al., 1998). Stubbs (1982) identified two factors that prevent teachers from seeking instructional changes based upon substantive research. First, the research literature is

viewed as inaccessible by teachers, and second, findings do not always substantiate

conclusions teachers have drawn from their own experiences.

Not only do teachers regard the professional literature as inaccessible, but making

sense of the professional literature is complicated (Grossen, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler,

1999; Zemelman et al., 1998). Even the most comprehensive, "scientifically based"

research in recent times conducted by the National Reading Panel has its critics

(Allington, 2004; ; Camilli & Wolfe, 2004; Coles, 1998b). In addition, information about

instructional practices and reading instruction are no longer limited to education

magazines. Developmental psychology, linguistics, cognitive psychology, learning theory,

language theory, and brain research have contributed extensive amounts of information

about how humans learn language and how children learn to read (Zemelman et al.,

1998). Although difficult, it is essential that teachers read the research literature

throughout their teaching careers. Maintaining currency in the educational environment

requires that teachers attend professional development workshops, join teacher

organizations, and enroll in additional course work beyond their initial certification

(NCLB Act, 2001). Some authorities, however, argue that educational practice is moving

ahead of researchers and that "proof" of appropriate instruction lies only in classroom

experiences and student successes (Goodman, 1989).

Professional Development

Burhans (1985) sought to relate instructional practices to professional

development. Studying the professional development habits of teachers in lower

Michigan, he determined that teachers did little professional reading. As a consequence,

31

teachers used obsolete information and lacked knowledge about new instructional practices. He concluded that teachers knew little more than the knowledge they acquired during their academic past, knowledge that increasingly became outdated.

Other studies investigating professional development suggest the inclusion of provisions for quality teachers in the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) may be necessary. Traditionally, researchers have found professional development not necessarily to have any observable effect on education (Kelleher, 2003; Paez, 2003). Even with the calls to improve professional development, according to Guskey (2003), there is no consensus among researchers and practitioners on which factors contribute to a successful professional development experience. As a consequence, teacher practices tend not to be impacted by familiarity with new research on best practices (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999).

Beliefs Held About Reading Development

Since teacher education does not markedly alter teacher beliefs (Weinstein, 1989), and changes in practices do not necessarily accompany changes in beliefs (Prawat, 1992), when selecting instructional methods and materials, decisions based on the beliefs teachers hold about the development of reading may be the most powerful indicator (Bawden, Burke, & Duffy, 1979; Feng, 1990; Gove, 1983).

During the 1990s, teacher beliefs received increased attention (Gambrell et al., 1999; Zemelman et al., 1998). Beliefs that teachers held during the first half of the 20th century can be understood by the instructional materials and methodological approaches they used: The basal reader and phonics (Zemelman et al., 1998). In the early 1960s, Austin and Morrison (1963) reported that 95% of teachers used a basal reader, a

systematic approach to teaching reading. By the late 1960s, criticism over the extensive use of basal readers began to surface (Goodman, 1989). Responding to this criticism, Bond and Dykstra (1967) compared the effectiveness of traditional basal approaches to other innovative methodologies. These researchers not only acknowledged the important role of the teacher, but they also reported that using a basal approach was not significantly more effective than using any other reading methodology. Nevertheless, the basal readers remained the most widely used approach to teach reading in elementary school classrooms for many years following the publication of this study (Callaway & Jarvis, 1972; Goodman, 1989). The latest challenge to the basal reader, whole-language, has continued to gain acceptance as an approach to teaching reading (Gambrell et al., 1999; Krashen, 2002).

As a method for teaching beginning reading, whole-language emerged in part as a rejection of the behaviorist-based "skill-and-drill" approach common to many basal reading programs (Thompson & Nicholson, 1999). Skill-based approaches treat reading as a process whereby hundreds of skills and subskills need to be taught in isolation and in a prescribed sequence (Pearson & Raphael, 1999; Tunmer & Chapman, 1999). Whole-language theorists and advocates have regarded reading as a natural process, arguing that children can learn to read as easily as they can learn to speak (Pearson & Raphael, 1999; Tunmer & Chapman, 1999). Comprehension-centered reading instruction and a minimal focus on letters and word-based activities and skills characterize the whole-language approach (Gambrell et al., 1999; Pearson & Raphael, 1999; Tunmer & Chapman, 1999).

According to Goodman (1989), whole-language instruction was based on language research and supported by developmental psychologists such as Jean Piaget and Lev Vygostsky. Teachers who completed the transition from following traditional reading teaching practices to more progressive, humanistic philosophy altered their view of classroom management as well (Morrison, Wilcox, Madrigal, McEwan, 1997). Committed advocates of whole-language have argued that a teacher could not merely adopt instructional practices of whole-language; the whole-language teacher needed to adopt the philosophical and psychological principles upon which whole-language has been based (Goodman, 1989).

The movement to abandon the use of basal readers represented an emerging trend of teachers who concluded that they could create an effective reading curriculum and prepare useful reading lessons without depending upon basal readers (Barry, Moskow, Peek & Randolph, 1992). Many whole-language teachers, not surprisingly, have felt empowered by using this method and strongly support the whole-language movement (Pearson & Raphael, 1999). Others continue to believe in the effectiveness of basal reading programs (Cloud-Silva & Sadonski, 1987). Thomson and Miller (1991) suggested that traditional teachers may not accept whole-language because it does raise concerns associated with daily routines and classroom management (Pearson & Raphael, 1999). Others have expressed concern that boarding the whole-language bandwagon would represent another example of how educators have historically showed a dangerous willingness to adopt innovative practices that are neither argued carefully nor validated thoroughly (Kohn, 1999; Slavin, 1989; Zemelman et al., 1998).

During the early debates regarding the effectiveness of basic skill approaches and whole-language teaching, advocates of each reading methodology advanced compelling arguments in professional reading journals, attacking or defending a particular point of view. In 1985, Grundin revisited the study by Bond and Dykstra (1967), reanalyzing the data. No evidence was found to support the use of basal readers instead of using other reading methodologies. Stahl and Miller (1989) subsequently criticized Grundin (1985) on methodological grounds. Findings by Stahl and Miller (1989) were subsequently criticized because of their use of inaccurate definitions of whole-language (McGee & Lomax, 1990). McGee and Lomax (1990) contended that Stahl and Miller (1989) misrepresented whole-language and its concepts, thereby presenting spurious findings. Many more criticisms and arguments as well as counterarguments have been heard and read in volumes of professional forums and journals since the birth of whole-language (Carbo, 1998; Coles, 2000; Foorman, Fletcher, Francis, Schatschneider, & Mehta, 1998; Innis, 2002; Krashen, 2002; Pressley, 1998; Taylor, 1998).

In response to Slavin and other critics, whole-language supporters moved from criticizing the findings of studies that favored basal readers to creating their own research support (Zemelman et al., 1998). Although Reutzel and Cooter (1990) criticized the vague definitions of whole-language used in prior research, they compared whole-language instructional strategies to basal reading techniques. They concluded confidently that whole-language was moderately more effective than other reading methodologies and that its use did not result in a decline in literacy levels as suggested by findings in earlier studies. Zucker (1993) reported that even when used to teach children with learning

disabilities, the whole-language approach showed merit. Whole-language enthusiasts began arguing for the abandonment of traditional skill-based approaches to teaching reading and the universal adoption of whole-language instruction.

Hall and Ramig (1980) asked how either approach could explain to teachers the research that found no difference or inconsistent differences between the effectiveness of different reading methods. Freeman and Freeman (1987) suggested that contradictory and insignificant findings of earlier studies may have resulted from common components supported by advocates on both sides of the methodology controversy. For example, when comparing the two approaches, teachers from both sides were observed reading to students, making supplementary language arts activities available, using group experience stories, and fostering daily journal writing.

It may have been prophetic that, in 1989, with the great reading debate in its infancy, Stahl and Miller (1989) attempted to merge the two approaches. They conceded that the whole-language approach may fulfill an important function early in the process of learning to read but that as the child's reading needs shift, from learning to read to reading to learn, it became less effective. They predicted that whole-language would be most effective in teaching functional aspects of reading and direct approaches might be better in helping students master skills of word recognition.

Stanovich (1994) concluded it was a waste of energy to debate reading approaches because teachers, regardless of their point of view, would not admit that some teachers overdo basic skill approaches and that some children need explicit instruction in decoding skills. Adams (1991) was one of the first to ask, "Why not phonics and whole-language?"

Furthermore, supporting an extreme viewpoint could threaten the positive effects of both methodologies and deny the individualized nature of instruction for all children (Pearson & Raphael, 1999; Thompson & Nicholson, 1999).

Does research support a balanced approach to reading instruction? Gambrell et al. (1999) and Zemelman et al. (1998) believe it does. Stein and Osborn (1993) found that effective teachers often integrated instructional practices. According to Dembo (1994), the teaching methodologies used by the majority of teachers are eclectic, including components of different instructional practices. Drecktrah and Chiang (1997) reported that a majority of teachers (more than 70%) of several different grades believed a combination approach was the most effective. Gerstein and Dimino (1993) agreed, finding that 70% of teachers supported a combination approach.

Local school officials, however, cannot assume that teachers apply research findings and employ an eclectic approach. Other studies have revealed inconsistent findings regarding the classroom prevalence of whole-language or basal approaches. For example, Pressley and Rankin (1994) found that 80% of teachers they studied regarded themselves as whole-language teachers. Barry et al. (1992) and Feng (1990) found that the majority of teachers supported a basic skills approach. Drecktrah and Chiang (1997) found a significant difference among teaching methodologies used across grade levels and teachers identifying with one approach or another. Older research by Callaway and Jarvis (1972) and Gove (1983) indicated that more teachers described themselves as eclectic or balanced, more than identifying themselves as supporting one approach or another. The most recent and largest research study supported the idea that teachers

throughout the nation were more likely to apply a balanced approach to teach reading (Baumann et al., 2000).

Related Studies Describing Reading Instruction

National Studies

As mentioned previously, information regarding "how" teachers teach reading is largely unknown (Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, & Duffy-Hester, 1998; Zemelman et al., 1998). Aside from teachers' beliefs, Zemelman et al. (1998) questioned the knowledge acquired about instructional practices from the few studies that have peeked inside classrooms to examine the use of reading methods.

A study by Austin and Morrison (1963), *The First R: Harvard Report on Reading in Elementary Schools*, reported the results of a national survey about the state of teaching reading in U. S. public schools. They concluded that reading instruction was "mediocre at best" and described stagnant learning environments throughout the nation's elementary schools along with ill-prepared teachers.

Based on the findings of Austin and Morrison (1963), Baumann et al. (1998) examined the general status of current elementary reading instruction programs. They concluded that classroom reading instruction had improved. They found teachers committing more instructional time to comprehension activities, oral reading, teaching vocabulary, reading in the content areas, independent reading, literature response activities, silent reading, critical reading, and process writing. The majority of teachers, however, still used the basal reader as their foundation of reading instruction,

supplemented by trade books whenever necessary. Very few teachers used trade books or basal readers exclusively.

Drecktrah and Chiang (1997) found that Grade 2 and Grade 5 teachers identified journal writing, thematic units, and sustained silent reading as the most commonly used instructional strategies in their classrooms. The use of trade books was common among Grade 2 teachers and teachers of students with learning disabilities. Guided reading was commonly used by Grade 5 teachers and teachers of students with learning disabilities. Grade 2 teachers also reported a high use of writer's workshops and shared-book experiences. Teachers of students with learning disabilities reported extensive use of individualized reading. The fewest teachers who reported using whole-language were Grade 2 teachers (13% of the teachers surveyed).

Drecktrah and Chiang (1997) identified literature circles as the least used instructional practice to teach reading. Also rarely used by Grade 2 and Grade 5 teachers were controlled vocabulary, ability grouping, and workbooks. Phonics lessons, unison oral reading, and reader workshops were rarely used by Grade 5 teachers and by teachers of students with learning disabilities.

Michigan Studies

Although Goertz et al. (1996) studied the effects of education reform, some of their questions related to instructional practices. Teachers in their survey indicated that 50% used trade books, while only 36% relied on basal readers for reading instruction. As reported by these teachers, comprehension was allotted the most time per week in their reading programs, and time for phonics only received, on average, less than 13 minutes a

week. Faith Stevens, a Michigan Department of Education Reading First consultant, told a reporter that Michigan is generally considered a "balanced literacy" state that uses the best of both whole-language and traditional phonics (Putnam, 2002).

Implications for Local Districts

With only a few studies actually looking at how teachers perform in the classroom and how that performance translates into both student achievement and school evaluations, teachers are limited in their ability to find support for, and validation of, their own instructional practices. Because teachers have felt reluctant and uncomfortable in depending upon research findings for acquiring new knowledge, districts are left to identify instructional changes to implement within local classrooms, with little to no research support for their decisions.

Teacher Accountability

Conventional wisdom has assumed that teachers function as public servants, accountable to local taxpayers (Evers & Walberg, 2002; MacPherson, 1996; Parkay & Hardcastle-Stanford, 1998). Although McNeil (1985) and Popham (1993) asserted that evidence of effective teaching is determined by evaluating student learning, achieving a fair and objective assessment of teacher performance may be impossible. Nevertheless, the two most commonly used methods for evaluating teacher effectiveness have been student scores on standardized tests (Hall & Kleine, 1992; Sacks, 1999) and drawing comparisons among schools and districts to establish success in educating students (Cooley & Bernauer, 1991; Haladyna, 1992; Sacks, 1999). Using standardized

test scores to assess teacher performance has limitations, particularly because of ever-increasing ethnic and cultural differences among students who complete standardized tests (Gambrell et al., 1999; Nicholson, 1999; Sacks, 1999). Whenever policymakers create accountability systems based upon student test scores, they assume that higher test scores represent better instruction (Popham, 2001). Performance, however, results from a variety of factors, including prior knowledge, student ability and effort, parental inputs, teacher inputs, and school programs and resources (Hanushek & Raymond, 2001; Popham, 2001; Sacks, 1999). Hanushek and Raymond (2001) concluded that the best way to distinguish among different factors that influence student performance is unknown.

Since evaluating the effectiveness of public schools became mandatory, quantitative measures of student outcomes have often been the only criteria applied and accepted by taxpayers and public officials (Dorn, 1998; MacPherson, 1996). In nearly all states, the results of standardized tests are accepted as the measure of student learning (Bracey, 2002; Grant, 2000; Kohn, 2001; NCLB Act, 2001). Thus teachers have been pressured to adopt teaching methods that boost scores quickly (Adcock & Patton, 2001; Evers & Walberg, 2002; Grant, 2000). Opponents of using standardized tests as an accountability measure suggest that the use of these tests only encourages measurement corruption and does not improve instruction (Corbett & Wilson, 1991; Grant, 2000; Kohn, 2001). Student scores may increase, but teachers may be cheating, coaching, or teaching the test (Burns, 1998; Cizek, 2001; Hall & Kleine, 1992; Jacob & Levitt, 2004). Besides the unfair tactics used to raise scores, other problems result: risk-taking by

students—critical for learning any subject—decreases, instruction focuses on a narrow range of outcomes, test scores replace learning as the goal of instruction, and engagement and sensitivity to diversity decrease (Kohn, 2001; MacPherson, 1996).

Although educators and school boards sometimes resist the idea of accountability, the majority of educators and school boards believe that school accountability is needed (Evers & Walberg, 2002). Others have defended the use of standardized tests, since a single test is clear, definitive, and presents a challenge that students and teachers feel a strong incentive to meet (Evers & Walberg, 2002). Twenty-five years ago Airasian (1979) argued for using standardized tests only if supplemented with other information. Outside the classroom where other information may be less available, however, the use of tests for accountability decisions seems questionable, despite strong demands for student and teacher accountability.

States that have sought to find better systems and policies for accountability typically focus on methods of data collection (MacPherson, 1996). Yet, even using a technically sound instrument, extraneous variables confound the true scores of individual students (Grant, 2000). The latest practices of disaggregating data or pretesting and posttesting students each year actually serve to increase measurement error by decreasing the overall number of students evaluated (Evers & Walberg, 2002; Howell, 1997). To measure student achievement accurately, a tradeoff between reliability and validity is required (Izumi & Evers, 2002).

Michigan was one of the first states to adopt a comprehensive testing program to assess basic skills (Murphy & Cohen, 1974). In 1993, Michigan attached high-stakes to

these tests in Kindergarten through Grade 8 (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). Amrein and

Berliner (2002) investigated the effects of high-stakes testing in several states including

Michigan. In describing Michigan's use of state testing, they found the state had authority

to close, revoke the accreditation of, take over, or reconstitute low-scoring schools. In

addition, Michigan's policy calls to replace principals or teachers due to low test scores.

Monetary rewards were also given to high performing or improving schools, and students

in failing schools were allowed to enroll elsewhere (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). Amrein

and Berliner (2002) pointed to strong evidence that after these stakes were attached to

tests in Michigan, reading achievement scores increased. However, after investigating all

states which attach high-stakes to their tests, the evidence suggested that increases may be

more due to students learning the content of the test, with limited to no meaningful

carryover effects in actual student achievement.

Testing the idea that poverty was an extraneous variable to achievement scores

obtained on state standardized tests, Bower (1983) found that a higher percentage of low

income students (defined by qualifying for free lunch) performed less well on the MEAP

compared to students as a whole. Burns (1998), questioning the psychometric properties

of the MEAP, concluded that it lacked adequate reliability or validity to use as a basis for

instructional decision making. According to Burns (1998), the MEAP has not been

validated for the purpose of accountability, and to use it for this purpose represents

another example of misusing a standardized test.

In theory, the goal of school accountability systems is improving student

performance (Hanushek & Raymond, 2001). Advocates of school accountability admit to

problems in its application, and acknowledge that the best accountability practices remain

inadequate (Evers & Walberg, 2002). Cunningham (1999) offered a different critique of

accountability, suggesting that practices, not professionals, should be held responsible for

teaching students to read and write fluently. Grant (2000) concluded that in all of the

debate about standardized testing there is scant information regarding how test results

affect instructional practice. Firestone, Mayrowetz, and Fairman (1998) claimed that tests

may influence *what* is taught, but there appears virtually no influence on teacher decisions

about *how* to teach. Grant (2000) also suggests that empirical evidence is surprisingly thin

on the question of which instructional approaches lead directly to higher test scores.

Why are teachers unaware of the "teacher behaviors" or instructional

methodologies which correlate with measures used to evaluate them (Bracey, 2000;

Grant, 2000)? Notwithstanding whether test scores should be used for school and teacher

accountability, accountability should be limited within a system only to factors over

which the person held accountable can exert control (Biehler & Snowman, 1993, Dembo,

1994). Without directly connecting the incentives or sanctions to the teacher behavior in

need of change, no learning will occur (Nairne, 2000). It is critical that teachers

understand these connections in order to make appropriate instructional decisions and

plan instruction effectively (Dembo, 1994).

Theoretical Framework

Behaviorism and Reading Instruction

Berliner and Calfee (1996) argue that behavioral practices are so embedded in the

culture of our schools that they appear as givens. Numerous instructional models and

practices that teachers employ are founded on behavioristic principles (O'Neil, 1998; Owens, 1998). Although some argue that accountability systems lack theoretical support (Scriven, 1988; Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984), the notion of using rewards and punishments is tied directly to behaviorism as well (Dembo, 1994; Nairne, 2000; McNergney & Herbert, 1998; Parkay & Hardcastle-Stanford, 1998; Popham, 1993; Stufflebeam et al., 2000).

To the behaviorist, all behavior, even the most complex, consists of a pairing of a stimulus and response. The response, in the form of behavior, is either rewarded or punished, which influences the likelihood of repeating (or not repeating) the same response. Behaviorism assumes that the objective measurement of behavior is the best way to study learning (Leahy, 1987). To measure behavior, however, even complex behavior, requires segmenting actions into bits and pieces (Leahy, 1987). To determine whether learning has occurred thus requires measurements of overt behavior. This notion of measuring learning and dissecting it into small steps found its way into schools through the use of behavioral objectives and measuring the mastery of these objectives following instruction (Biehler & Snowman, 1993; Dembo, 1994; Doll, 1989; McNeil, 1985).

According to Biehler and Snowman (1993), theories of instruction consistently follow a sequence of four basic components. Effective instruction results whenever teachers (a) take into account what students are like and how much they know, (b) specify instructional goals, (c) provide instruction, and (d) assess student learning.

Although pupil development, diversity, and variability are essential aspects for instructional consideration, traditionally, when schools take into account what students are like and how much they know (the first step of the instructional sequence), the first consideration is the grade placement of the student (Biehler & Snowman, 1993, Dembo, 1994). This is supported by state-adopted curriculum standards which are grade specific. The year-by-year sequential progression of these standards complements the linear model of development embraced by behaviorism and stimulus-response learning (Nairne, 2000; O'Neil & Willis, 1998; Owens, 1998).

Before classroom instruction can begin (step 2), teachers must identify instructional goals—the content of instruction (step 3). Goals of learning are typically expressed by educational objectives. General objectives can be found in state-adopted standards from which teachers develop more specific instructional objectives (Doll, 1989). According to Gagne and Briggs (1974), Dick and Carey (1996), and Kemp, Morrison, and Ross (1996), the crucial issue in instructional design is the specifying of educational objectives. Only after teachers have identified the desired student behavior to be demonstrated can the appropriate instructional sequence and teaching methods be selected. These educational goals or objectives are precise statements of student performance expected after instruction is delivered. The objectives are expressed in behavioral terms that can be observed and measured. Behaviorists use specific objectives and endorse the practice of sequencing instruction, presenting basic facts first, then addressing more complex information (Biehler & Snowman, 1993; Dembo, 1994). This

linear approach to teaching and learning is reflected in the scope and sequence of reading skills taught to students in each successive grade.

The idea that reading is best learned by mastering a series of skills, beginning with letter skills before progressing to word skills, rests upon behaviorism as well. This same lock-step, sequentially taught curriculum has been applied to the teaching and learning of all subjects. The belief is that only by breaking reading down into basic skills and then teaching these individual skills will students learn to read.

Jeanne Chall (1967, 1983, 1996) endorsed this behaviorist-based approach to teaching reading, advocating that teachers use phonics to teach beginning reading. She assumed reading consisted of decoding, beginning with mastering letter sounds before proceeding to sounding-out syllables and words. She assumed that a code-emphasis approach resulted in word identification and that their successful word identification resulted in comprehension and fluent reading. Chall also developed a stage theory of reading development which begins with basic skill instruction and moves toward more complex behaviors requiring instruction such as inferential and critical comprehension (Chall, 1983, 1996).

The third basic component of instructional models, providing instruction, requires the greatest amount of a teacher's instructional time. Based in behaviorism, instruction involves sequencing content and helping students learn each specifically stated instructional objective. Teachers thus present students with small amounts of information in a prescribed sequence, providing reinforcement and offering immediate feedback to student responses (Biehler & Snowman, 1993).

The influence of behaviorism can also be found when teachers determine whether learning has occurred. This fourth component, or assessment piece, is typically the final step of many instructional models. Teachers are rewarded for their efforts by observing whether students are learning the content they are teaching. Reward means student achievement. Based on student feedback, changes in instructional methodology can be made immediately and content can be retaught. This form of evaluation that occurs in the classroom is often called *formative evaluation* (Popham, 1993; Stufflebeam et al., 2000). Formative evaluation not only links learning with assessment, it also may inform future instruction. Another form of assessment, summative evaluation, measures the effectiveness of a completed instructional sequence. Summative evaluation is the result of many attempts at formative assessment and is the foundation for accountability models (Popham, 1993; Stufflebeam et al., 2000).

Behaviorism and Educational Accountability

In addition to its presence in common instructional models, behavioristic practices can be found outside the classroom as well. Based on student performance, school districts, schools, and teachers are often punished by sanctions or rewarded with incentives. According to behaviorism, rewards are coined *reinforcement,* which is a consequence of a behavior that increases the likelihood it will occur again (Nairne, 2000). Punishment is a consequence of a behavior that decreases the likelihood that a particular behavior will occur again (Nairne, 2000). Reinforcement can be positive or negative. Positive reinforcement occurs whenever the actor of the behavior is rewarded. Negative reinforcement occurs whenever a behavior is rewarded by removing a negative stimulus.

There also exists positive and negative punishment. Negative punishment occurs whenever something is removed to decrease behavior; positive punishment occurs by adding something negative to a situation that decreases the likelihood of a behavior recurring.

Educational systems, state and local, have incorporated all aspects of behaviorist principles in the hope of improving student achievement (McNergney & Herbert, 1998, Parkay & Hardcastle-Stanford, 1998). Of course, student achievement is determined principally by student scores on standardized tests. States that withhold funding because of poor standardized test scores use negative punishment. States that offer financial incentives for increasing scores on standardized tests use positive reinforcement. Whenever a school district or school is taken over by the state with a plan of returning local control, state officials are using negative reinforcement. Positive punishment may be more indirect, coming in the form of public opinion and in decisions by policy makers in response to results on accountability measures.

An important consideration when using accountability and instructional models based on behaviorism in schools is that the behaviors punished or rewarded can be very complex. According to behaviorism, an organism learns to continue or discontinue a behavior based on the consequence of that particular behavior. Complex behaviors, such as instructional decision making, are typically learned during smaller sessions of reinforcement. In the classroom, teachers utilize formative evaluations for short-term assessments of student learning and then use the evaluation feedback to adjust their instruction. In contrast, accountability models use the results of summative evaluations,

such as state standardized test scores, to reinforce or punish schools and their teachers'

instructional decision making.

This study peeks into the classrooms of a Southwestern Michigan county in order

to describe current reading practices. This study also attempts to help teachers and

districts identify instructional strategies that are related to positive outcomes on the state

accountability measure, the MEAP. Nineteen specific reading strategies and activities

taken from both the whole-language and basic-skills approaches are examinied to

determine if a relationship exists between the amount of time teachers report using these

techniques and a school's performance on the MEAP.

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the research design and methodology used in this study. It

includes (a) a description of the population and sample, (b) a description of the data

collection instrument, (c) the variables studied and their corresponding hypotheses, and

(d) the procedure for data collection.

Research Design and Methodology

The purpose of this study was to address the gap between state accountability

practices and reported reading instruction in schools in a Southwestern Michigan county

by determining the relationship between the time reportedly allotted to use each of 19

reading instructional practices and scores on the MEAP, a standardized achievement test

and a state accountability instrument. Using a survey adapted from Baumann et al.

(1998), Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers were asked to report the amount of time

they devoted to 19 reading activities or components within their language arts programs.

The percentage of students in each school who obtained a "Satisfactory" score on the

reading portion of the MEAP were translated into MEAP scores. All teachers in one

school received the same score, the school's score. At a school where 30% of the students

50

passed the MEAP, the school's MEAP score would be 30 and all Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers participating in this study from that school were assigned the same score--30. The rationale for the assignment of this score is the state of Michigan department of education's practice of using MEAP scores (the percentage of Grade 4 students passing the MEAP) as a means to inform instruction and distribute consequences to high or low performing schools. A nonexperimental design was selected because it was not possible for the researcher to directly or actively manipulate the instructional time as a variable. Correlational methods were used to determine the strength of the relationship between teaching practices and MEAP scores. MEAP scores are derived by accepting the assumption that the number of students who pass the Grade 4 reading portion of the MEAP can be linked to the group of teachers (Kindergarten through Grade 4) who taught these fourth grade students. Additionally, this study is descriptive in that it attempted to determine whether differences exist in student achievement between grade and reported teaching practices in participating elementary schools.

Research Questions and Related Null Hypotheses

Four research questions guided this study. Only two of these research questions generated a corresponding hypothesis.

Research question 1 asked: How much instructional time is reportedly allotted to using each of the 19 reading practices?

No null hypothesis is stated for this descriptive research question.

Research question 2 asked: What is the difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the overall means of the total reported time allotted for all 19 reading practices?

No null hypothesis is stated for this descriptive research question.

Research question 3 asked: Is there a significant difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the reported amount of time allotted to use each of the 19 reading practices?

Null hypothesis associated with research question 3 states: There is no significant difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the reported amount of time allotted to use each of the 19 reading practices.

Research question 4 asked: What is the extent of the relationship between the amount of time teachers report allotting to each of the 19 reading practices and MEAP scores?

Null hypothesis associated with research question 4 states: There is no significant relationship between the amount of time teachers report allotting to each of the 19 reading practices and MEAP scores.

Support for Research Design and Methodology Used

A principal concern of this study was to determine the relationship between two variables—standardized test scores and reported teaching practices. A correlational design was used because the professional literature regarding theory, research, and practice reviewed in chapters 1 and 2 suggested a probable relationship between these variables.

Descriptive research is concerned with determining the current status of something; for example, the effectiveness of a particular teaching method. It answers the question "What is?" and reports the findings observed (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). Elements of the descriptive design were used in this study because scant information could be found in previous research that identified how instructional time was allocated across the grades for reading instruction.

Procedures

During discussions with a committee consisting of this county's assistant superintendent of instructional services, special education director, reading consultant, and this researcher, the desire was expressed to identify teaching practices of effective reading teachers. They wanted to know the "how" and "what" of effective reading instruction. A committee was developed to determine how to collect teacher instructional data. The committee suggested conducting a survey to identify teacher attitudes, beliefs, instructional practices, and other factors related to reading instruction.

The committee recommended the use of a survey instrument by Baumann et al. (1998). Based upon a sound research design and considering that the instrument received a positive review by researchers at Georgia University, the items covered a wide range of instructional information, and the questions were similar to those the committee wanted, the committee approved its use. After minor revisions, the survey was disseminated in May of 2000 to every public school superintendent's office in the participating county. Each school district in the county designated a contact person who would receive and distribute the surveys.

Demographic teacher data and data collected on instructional time devoted to 19

reading practices as measured by this survey were utilized for this study.

Population and Sample

Surveys were forwarded to each full-time and part-time teacher of reading in a

public elementary school in a Southwestern Michigan county. Because this study focused

on early reading development, reading instruction, and scores of Grade 4 readers on the

MEAP, only the responses of general education teachers and Kindergarten through Grade

4 teachers were used in this study. During the 1999-2000 school year, MEAP scores of

special education students were not included with general education student scores and

therefore the responses of special education teachers were omitted as well. The

superintendent's office in each school district was contacted to determine the number of

years of experience that each participating teacher had taught the grade they were

teaching at the time they filled out the survey and whether the teachers taught

continuously for all those years. This study attempted to connect a school's Grade 4

MEAP results to the instruction of all early elementary teachers associated with that

school. Since this study was limited to 1999-2000 Grade 4 results, only teachers who

provided instruction to the students in Grade 4 during the 1999-2000 school year were

included. Therefore, Grade 4 teachers whose students completed the MEAP in 1999-2000

were included. To establish the connection between Kindergarten through Grade 3

teachers teaching in 1999-2000 and a school's MEAP score, this study included the

following teachers: (a) Kindergarten teachers who taught Kindergarten during

1995–2000, Grade 1 teachers who taught during 1996–2000, Grade 2 teachers who taught

during 1997–2000, Grade 3 teachers who taught during 1998–2000, and Grade 4 teachers who taught during 1999–2000. Potentially, each teacher included in this study had taught the Grade 4 students who completed the MEAP in 1999 at the reported grade level.

Demographic Data

Demographic data from the Census Bureau helped describe population characteristics found in this Southwestern Michigan county. The urban population constituted 54% of the county's population; 46% lived in rural communities. Nearly 82% of the population had completed high school or attended college. The median household income was $38,567. Nine percent of families lived below the poverty level. With only one metropolitan area included in the sample, breakdown by race is 79.7% Caucasian, 15.9% African American persons, 3.0% Latino, 0.4% Native American and Alaska Native persons, and 1.1% Asian American persons. Demographic data describing this Southwestern Michigan county's schools in 1998–1999 are presented in Table 1.

Survey Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a slightly modified version of the survey used by Austin and Morrison (1963) and redesigned by Baumann et al. (1998). Baumann et al. (1998) used the consultation services of the Survey Research Center at the University of Georgia in modifying the survey. After the survey was piloted in public elementary schools, university researchers evaluated the instrument for breadth of coverage, item bias, clarity, and format. The survey was finalized after revisions recommended by reviewers were completed (Baumann et al., 1998).

Table 1

School Characteristics of Participating County

Year	Characteristic	M	High	Low	Mdn
1999	Percentage receiving free lunch (%)	33.9	86.8	8.7	34.7
1999	District Enrollment	2,298	5,883	606	1,753
1999	Pupil/Teacher ratio	20.5	24.0	16.6	20.7
1999	Foundation allowance	5,969	8,989	5,278	5,455
1998	Revenue per pupil	7,066	8,886	6,004	6,674
1998	Expenditure per pupil	6,336	8,789	5,251	6,045
1998	Teacher salary	42,177	47,239	37,652	41,454
1998	Dropout rate (%)	6.2	10.9	0.4	6.6
1998	Graduation rate (%)	78.3	98.1	63.3	76.3
1999	Grade 4 MEAP (%)	63.7	78.4	40.1	62.8

Baumann's survey was then modified slightly to ensure accurate data encoding. Instead of teachers circling survey items, responses were recorded on a computer data sheet. Baumann granted permission to use the revised survey for this research (See Appendix A for survey and Appendix B for permission statement).

Two sections from Baumann's instrument were used. The first section collected demographic information and characteristics of participating teachers who completed and returned the survey. This section elicited information about respondents' educational background and professional development. Teachers were asked to indicate the highest education degree they had earned and the type of teacher education program they had completed to qualify for elementary certification. Teachers were also asked to assess the

quality of their certification program and the preparation they received for teaching reading and language arts.

The second section from Baumann's instrument measured the instructional time teachers reported that they allotted for using different reading activities. Teachers were asked to indicate the amount of time spent on each of the 19 specific activities or reading skills within their reading and language arts programs.

Administration of Data Collection Instrument

The survey was mailed to county districts on May 15, 2000, with a request that teachers complete and return them by May 31.

Before the mailing, the director of special education, discussed the purpose, distribution, and collection of survey protocols with the superintendents of each county school district. Along with directions for distribution and a reminder regarding their timely return, surveys were distributed via school mail or hand delivered to elementary school principals throughout the county (see Appendix A for survey and Appendix B for letter to principals).

The first page of the survey presented a brief background of the study and a statement of its purpose. To express appreciation for their participation, teachers were offered the opportunity to enter a drawing for a $50 gift certificate for dinner at a local restaurant or a 19" color television. Ten gift certificates were awarded. Teachers were informed that their returned protocols would be identified by name, but used only for processing the data collected and the drawing of prizes. Teachers were assured in writing that their responses would be kept strictly confidential and not released in any

individually identifiable form without their consent. Instructions for recording teachers'
responses were included on the survey and answer sheet. Teachers were reminded to
check to see if the number of statements in the survey corresponded to the number of
responses.

In addition to the survey, an insert reminded teachers to complete the surveys and
provided instructions for returning each survey. Names, numbers, and e-mail addresses of
the researchers and directors of this study were listed on the instructions so that teachers
could comment, question, or express their concerns directly (see Appendix B for teacher
instruction insert).

After surveys were completed and returned, I examined the answer sheets for
errant marks and for accurate completion. The answer sheets were forwarded to the data
processing center at the Southwestern Michigan county's Intermediate School District
Office to obtain frequency data. The data collected were entered into a Minitab database
where 1999-2000 school MEAP scores were added to the teacher database (Minitab,
2000). Teachers who, at any grade level, taught the Grade 4 students taking the MEAP in
their respective schools were assigned the MEAP score for that school. The MEAP score
assigned to each teacher corresponded to the percentage of Grade 4 students who
achieved a satisfactory score at the teacher's school. Statistical analysis was performed
using Minitab, a statistical program, after the appropriate MEAP score was assigned to
each participating teacher.

Variables

Instructional Activities and Components

The 19 variables listed were ordered as they appeared on the survey. The 19 activities or components which formed the basis for answering each research question are listed below.

To test each null hypothesis, reported time devoted to each variable was used as the dependent variable. Using a Likert-type scale, teachers rated time spent as "Considerable," "Moderate," "Little," or "None."

1. Phonological awareness

2. Reading vocabulary

3. Comprehension

4. Critical reading

5. Oral reading

6. Silent reading

7. Study skills

8. Reading in the content areas

9. Phonics/Decoding

10. Reading aloud to students

11. Students reading independently (e.g., DEAR or Reading Workshop time)

12. Oral or written response to literature

13. Literature Circles, Book Clubs, literature discussion groups

14. Reading strategies instruction

15. Process writing or Writing Workshop

16. Language experience stories or charts

17. Spelling lists, activities, or games

18. Handwriting instruction and practice

19. Technological applications to literacy (e.g., microcomputers, video, multimedia).

MEAP Scores

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), a state-mandated standardized test, measures several areas of academics at three grade levels: Grade 4, Grade 8, and Grade 11. For this study, the percentage of Grade 4 students who passed the reading portion of the MEAP was used since this study was concerned with early elementary instruction of reading. MEAP scores were based on the percentage of students in each school who obtained a "Satisfactory" score on the reading portion of the MEAP. All of the teachers in any given school received the same score, the school's score. At a school where 30% of the students passed the MEAP, the school's MEAP score would be 30 and all Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers participating in this study from that school were assigned the same score--30.

Data Analysis

Minitab for Windows was used to construct a data file for each teacher, which included the teacher's name, ID number, grade taught, school, school MEAP score, and responses to the survey items (Minitab, 2000). The statistical analysis was completed by

61

the researcher and the methodological advisor on his dissertation committee working independently. The results of the two analyses were compared and found to be in agreement.

Descriptive Analysis

To describe the sample of teachers in this study, descriptive data were used to show the highest education degree held, years of teaching experience, type of teacher certification programs completed to qualify for elementary certification, an assessment of the quality of the teacher certification program completed, and an assessment of the quality of preparation teachers received for teaching reading and language arts. To answer research questions 1 and 2, descriptive data were used to identify the amount of time teachers reported spending on the 19 instructional variables. Grade level averages for each variable were calculated along with the overall average time reportedly spent for all 19 variables by each grade level.

Inferential Analysis

To test the null hypothesis associated with research question 3, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied to determine whether a significant difference existed between grade and the total time teachers used to teach 19 reading skills. Tukey's HSD was applied to determine the source of a significant F ratio (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1994). Because ANOVA assumes that although different samples may come from populations with different means, variance does not differ significantly; thus, equal

variance was assumed. Levene's procedure was used to test for equality or homogeneity of variance at the .05 level (Hinkle et al., 1994).

To test the null hypothesis associated with research question 4, Pearson product-moment correlation was applied to determine the relationship between the total time reportedly used to teach 19 specific reading instructional components or activities by Kindergarten and Grade 1–4 teachers and the percentage of students who recorded a "Satisfactory" MEAP score.

Reliability and Validity

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993), validity is the degree to which explanations are accurate or match the realities of the world. The purpose of this section is to assure readers that the procedures and instruments for this study were valid regarding the research problem, participants, and the setting of the study.

Content Validity

In order to describe reading instructional practices in this Southwestern Michigan county, a survey instrument was used that asked teachers to report the amount of time they spent on various activities or components within their language arts programs. The activities and components surveyed were chosen based on several factors. First, the entire survey used for this study was a slightly modified version of a pre-existing and published survey. The original survey was created by Baumann et al. (1998) and was based on a previous study conducted by Austin and Morrison in 1963. The purpose of both previously used instruments was to explore reading instructional practices in elementary

schools across the United States. Secondly, Austin and Morrison (1963) interviewed fifty

experts and prominent persons in the field of reading in order to develop the

questionnaire items. Thirdly, Austin and Morrison (1963) asked the superintendent or

delegated person of participating schools to report the prevailing practices and offer

detailed information about the instructional practices of reading programs in their school

district. Observations within the classrooms of these districts were also made to assure

items reflected actual classroom practices.

Baumann et al. (1998) modified the original study by updating language, adding

contemporary issues, and eliminating outdated ones. Wherever possible original wording

was retained. Pilot instruments were field tested with elementary teachers, administrators,

and university researchers. Revisions involving breadth of coverage, clarity of items,

format, and language were made based upon the pilot data. According to Baumann et al.

(1998), the Survey Research Center at the University of Georgia aided in designing and

implementing the survey.

The survey used for this study was a slightly modified version of the one used in

Baumann's study. The committee members of intermediate school district in this

Southwestern Michigan county charged with developing the survey added the item

"phonological awareness" to the list of activities and made minor modifications to fit the

data entry format of the local data processing center. Phonological awareness was

included due to initial research findings reported by the National Reading Panel

suggesting the importance of direct instruction in phonological awareness (National

Reading Panel, 2000). The survey was forwarded to educators with various backgrounds

(including the county's reading specialist and assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction) to assess its clarity and format. The survey was field tested by several reading educators who were not county employees and who lacked any direct contact with students regarding reading instruction. Items or directions were clarified and modified based upon their feedback. Sections used for the purpose of this study did not have to be modified based on the feedback of the educators, reading specialist, or assistant superintendent of curriculum.

In addition to instructional variables, this study used the percentage of students who achieved a "Satisfactory" level on the MEAP as a score to be assigned to each school. Because a student's performance represented the result of several years of reading instruction and not the efforts of one teacher, the accountability measure used by the state of Michigan has assigned ratings to schools and required the use of school MEAP scores as a measure of individual teacher accountability. Current political and educational practices in Michigan supports the use of MEAP scores in this manner. This study attempts to answer the extent to which associations can be made between the instruction of a group of teachers and the MEAP.

MEAP scores are associated with the performance of students in Grade 4 who attended the schools in which participating teachers taught and who completed MEAP in 2000. Scores of students who enrolled in or transferred from a particular school during the 5 academic years investigated by this study were not omitted. Neither did this study consider other extraneous variables associated with connecting student achievement with teacher effectiveness, as mentioned in chapters 1 and 2.

Internal Validity

The results of this study were limited to teachers in public elementary schools in a Southwestern county in Michigan; thus, external validity was not a principal concern. Instrumentation threats were minimized by adopting a standardized process for data collection so that all teacher responses were treated equally.

An important threat to internal validity may come from the source funding the survey. Because county school administrators participated in its distribution, teachers may have been concerned that their responses could be used as a personal measure of teacher accountability. To minimize this possibility, special emphasis was placed on providing assurance to participants that all data and information collected would be used only for research purposes.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). Sections which were not directly used to determine the extent of relationship between instructional practices and MEAP scores were used to consider consistency in responses. For example, teachers were asked to what extent did they consider themselves "traditional," "whole-language," or "balanced" in regards to reading instruction. The responses to this section were compared with their actual reported practices to determine whether responses were consistent with each other.

Threats to reliability were also minimized by standardizing the procedures for collecting and scoring surveys.

Summary

The research design in this study used a survey and reported descriptive statistics. The survey was a slightly modified version of a previously validated instrument. Usable surveys were completed and returned by 123 elementary teachers.

Data were encoded using a computer scan sheet for use with a Minitab worksheet. A column for school MEAP scores was added to the worksheet to perform correlational analysis. Computer analysis provided descriptive statistics for each variable investigated. ANOVA was performed to determine any significant differences among grades and instructional variables. Levene's procedure tested for homogeneity of variance. Tukey's HSD was used to determine the source of any significant F ratio. Significance was set at the .05 level of confidence for all analyses. Pearson product-moment correlation was applied to determine the relationships between reported instructional time and MEAP scores.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS SECTION

The purpose of this study was to address the gap between state accountability practices and reported reading instruction in public schools in a Southwestern Michigan county by determining the relationship between reported time spent on teaching specific reading skills or participating in specific instructional practices and the percentage of Grade 4 students who recorded a satisfactory reading score on the Michigan Educational Assessment Plan (MEAP). This percentage was referred to as a school's MEAP score.

Chapter 1 established the importance of this study, identified the problem, and asked the research questions. Chapter 2 reviewed the professional literature related to reading practices and school accountability. Chapter 3 described the population and sample, identified the variables, and discussed the survey instrument. This chapter reports the results of the survey and presents a detailed analysis of the data collected. The findings of this study are presented in the following three sections: (a) demographic summary, (b) general descriptive results, and (c) research questions, hypotheses, and findings. A summary and analysis of the data concludes this chapter.

Demographic Summary

Teacher Characteristics

Although not used to answer any research questions, demographic data were

obtained in an effort to describe the respondents and student population of this

Southwestern Michigan county. Teachers completed a survey by answering selected

questions that related to their education and professional development. Of the 123

teachers who completed and returned the survey, 41.3% indicated they held a BA degree

and 57.9% reported they had earned a MA degree. Data regarding the years of teaching

experience of respondents are presented in Figure 1. Approximately 17% ($n = 21$) of the

respondents had taught for 5 or fewer years. Approximately 16% ($n = 20$) of the

respondents had taught 6–10 years. Approximately 19% ($n = 23$) of the respondents had

taught 11–15 years. Approximately 9% ($n = 11$) of the respondents had taught 16–19

years. Approximately 39% ($n = 47$) of the respondents had taught 20+ years.
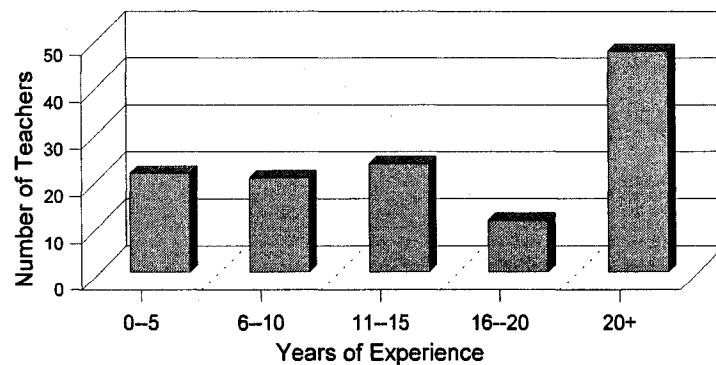
Figure 1. Years of teaching experience.

Since this study was interested in reading instruction, respondents rated the overall quality of their teacher certification program, including the preparation they received for teaching reading and language arts. Overall, 12.4% of the teachers rated their program as "Exceptional," 49.6% rated their program as "Very Good" and only 8.3% rated their program as "Poor." Regarding their overall preparation to teach reading and language arts, only 9.1% rated their program as "Exceptional" and 19.0% rated their preparation as "Poor." Table 2 summarizes these findings.

Table 2

Teacher Ratings of Certification Programs (in Percentages)

	Ratings				
Program	Exceptional	Very Good	Adequate	Poor	Totally Inadequate
Overall program	12.4	49.6	29.8	8.3	0.0
Preparation to teach reading	9.1	18.2	52.1	19.0	1.7

MEAP Scores

Because teachers were grouped by grade level, the MEAP scores associated with each group of teachers were tabulated for descriptive purposes. Table 3 displays a description of school MEAP scores by grade level of the corresponding respondents in this study.

Table 3

MEAP Scores for Respondent Schools

Grade	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*SE*	*Mdn*	Minimum	Maximum
K	15	59.35	18.55	4.79	60.0	14.3	75.9
1st	27	54.07	18.19	3.50	59.0	12.0	75.9
2nd	22	55.39	21.99	4.69	59.7	12.0	88.2
3rd	21	59.21	8.90	1.94	60.0	40.7	75.0
4th	38	60.67	13.17	2.14	60.0	22.7	88.2

In an effort to determine whether teachers with high or low MEAP scores were under- or overrepresented at any one grade level, a one-way ANOVA was used to determine whether a significant difference in variability existed across grade scores. As seen in Table 4, no significant difference was found (.05 level of confidence) between teacher MEAP scores by grade level.

Table 4

One-Way ANOVA for Grade Scores and MEAP Scores

Source of Variance	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Regression	985	4	224	.84	.505
Residual	31577	118	268		
Total	32472	122			

* significant at $p < .05$.

General Descriptive Results

Research Question 1 asked: *How much instructional time do teachers reportedly allot to each of the 19 reading practices?*

Using a Likert-type scale, teachers rated instructional time devoted to 19 specific reading instructional components or activities as "Considerable," 4; "Moderate," 3; "Little," 2; or "None," 1. Each item was given a certain weight, represented by the number in parentheses. The mean reported use of all 19 reading instructional strategies was 3.05, a moderate score (see Table 5). Grade 2 teachers were instructionally the most eclectic, recording the highest mean use of all instructional variables (3.02); Kindergarten teachers were the least eclectic (2.69). Table 5 also presents the mean reported use in each grade of the 19 instructional variables. Because the n for each grade differed, the average use across all five grade levels (labeled ALL in Table 5) may have been influenced by the group with the largest n and thus may overestimate or underestimate the mean use of a particular variable (see ALL). To determine if ALL was influenced, the variables were ranked for each grade based upon the mean times a variable was used. Ranking of these variables was averaged across grades and ranked from least (consistently highest use) to greatest (consistently not used). Rankings are displayed in parentheses after each variables grade mean score. No difference was found in the order of use between the weighted ranks and variable ranks according to ALL. Comprehension was the most frequently reported instructional practice used by all grades (3.66). The next most commonly used techniques reported were reading aloud (3.56), independent reading (3.35), silent reading (3.25), and phonics/decoding (3.25). The least reportedly used

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Variables by Grade

Variables	K	Rank	1	Rank	2	Rank	3	Rank	4	Rank	All	Rank
					Grade and Variable Rank							
1 Phonological awareness	3.53	3	3.56	6	3.41	7	2.81	17	2.32	18	3.13	8
2 Reading vocabulary	2.53	11	3.67	4	3.48	6	3.29	7	3.29	7	3.25	5
3 Comprehension	3.13	5	3.74	3	3.82	1	3.76	1	3.86	1	3.66	1
4 Critical reading	1.86	18	2.70	17	3.00	13	3.14	11	3.43	5	2.83	17
5 Oral reading	2.47	12	3.67	4	3.31	10	3.32	6	3.27	9	3.21	7
6 Silent reading	2.73	8	3.22	10	3.55	5	3.29	7	3.51	2	3.26	4
7 Study skills	2.20	15	2.74	16	2.96	15	3.05	14	3.27	10	2.84	16
8 Content area reading	2.40	13	2.85	15	3.27	11	3.52	2	3.47	3	3.10	9
9 Phonics/decoding	3.33	4	3.89	1	3.64	3	2.91	15	2.49	15	3.25	5
10 Reading aloud	4.00	1	3.78	2	3.59	4	3.24	10	3.19	12	3.56	2
11 Independent reading	2.93	6	3.30	7	3.68	2	3.38	3	3.45	4	3.35	3
12 Responses to literature	2.57	10	3.04	13	3.00	13	3.14	11	3.11	13	2.97	13
13 Lit circles. book clubs	1.54	19	1.88	19	1.96	19	2.16	19	2.39	16	1.99	19
14 Strategy instruction	2.40	13	3.30	7	3.36	9	3.14	11	3.26	11	3.09	10
15 Process writing	2.13	17	3.11	12	3.18	12	3.38	3	3.42	6	3.04	12
16 Lang. experience stories	3.60	2	3.30	7	2.59	18	2.40	18	2.50	14	2.88	14
17 Spelling	2.20	15	3.19	11	3.41	7	3.38	3	3.29	7	3.09	10
18 Handwriting	2.87	7	3.04	13	2.86	16	3.24	9	2.36	17	2.87	15
19 Technology	2.60	9	2.30	18	2.77	17	2.86	16	2.21	19	2.55	18
Overall Mean	2.69		3.17		3.20		3.13		3.06		3.05	
n	16		15		27		22		38		123	

72

techniques for teaching reading were literature circles and book clubs (1.99), technological applications to literacy (2.55), critical reading (2.83), study skills (2.84), and handwriting instruction (2.87).

Descriptive Results by Grade

Research question 2 asked: *What is the difference among Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 in the total reported time teachers allot for 19 reading practices?*

Grouping time devoted to these practices by grade level, the similarities and differences which exist across early elementary instruction in this county can be seen. Table 6 lists the five most frequently used instructional variables for each grade. For Grade 4, these variables were comprehension (3.86), silent reading (3.51), content area reading (3.47), independent reading (3.45), and critical reading (3.43). The least used variables were technological applications to literacy (2.21), phonological awareness (2.32), handwriting instruction (2.36), literature circles (and books clubs) (2.39), and phonics/decoding (2.49). Table 7 lists the five least used instructional variables for each grade.

Grade 3 teachers indicated using comprehension (3.76) the most, followed by content area reading (3.52), spelling lists (3.38), process writing (3.38), and independent reading (3.38) (Table 6). The least used were literature circles (2.16), language experience stories (2.40), phonological awareness (2.81), technological applications to literacy (2.86), and phonics/decoding (2.91) (Table 7).

Table 6

Instructional Variables Reportedly Used Most Frequently, by Grade

Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Reading aloud to students	Phonics/ decoding	Comprehension	Comprehension	Comprehension
Language experience	Reading aloud to students	Independent reading	Content area reading	Silent reading
Phonological awareness	Comprehension	Phonics/ decoding	Spelling lists	Content area reading
Phonics/ decoding	Oral reading	Reading aloud	Process writing	Independent reading
Comprehension	Reading vocabulary	Silent reading	Independent reading	Critical reading

Table 7

Instructional Variables Reportedly Used Least Frequently, by Grade

Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Literature circles, book clubs, etc.	Literature circles, book clubs, etc.	Literature circles, book clubs, etc.	Literature circles, book clubs, etc.	Technology
Critical reading	Technology	Language experience stories	Language experience stories	Phonological awareness
Process writing	Critical reading	Technology	Phonological awareness	Handwriting
Study skills	Study skills	Handwriting	Technology	Literature circles, book clubs, etc.
Spelling	Content area reading	Study skills	Phonics/ decoding	Phonics/ decoding

The most commonly practiced reading instructional techniques for Grade 2

teachers begin with comprehension (3.82), followed by independent reading (3.68),

phonics/decoding (3.64), reading aloud (3.59), and silent reading (3.55). The least used

instructional techniques were literature circles and book clubs (1.96), language

experience stories (2.59), technological applications to literacy (2.77), handwriting (2.86),

and study skills (2.96).

Grade 1 teachers reported using phonics/decoding (3.89) the most frequently,

followed by reading aloud (3.78), comprehension (3.74), oral reading (3.67), and reading

vocabulary (3.67). Least used practices included literature circles and book clubs (1.88),

technological applications to literacy (2.30), critical reading (2.70), study skills (2.74),

and content area reading (2.85). Kindergarten teachers indicated using reading aloud to

students the most (4.00), language experience stories (3.60), followed by phonological

awareness (3.53), phonics/decoding (3.33), and comprehension (3.13). Kindergarten

teachers reported using literature circles and book clubs (1.54), critical reading (1.86),

process writing (2.13), study skills (2.20), and spelling (2.20) the least.

Inferential Statistical Results

The above data describe how much time teachers of different grades report

spending on the 19 instructional variables under study. This section will investigate the

significance of these differences as well as determine whether a relationship exists

between the amount of time reportedly spent on these variables and a school's MEAP

score.

Research Question #3

Research Question 3 asked: *Is there a significant difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the reported amount of time allotted to use each of the 19 reading practices?*

Null hypothesis associated with research question 3 states: There is no significant difference among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers in the reported amount of time allotted to each of the following 19 reading components or activities.

1. Phonological awareness

2. Reading vocabulary

3. Comprehension

4. Critical reading

5. Oral reading

6. Silent reading

7. Study skills

8. Reading in the content areas

9. Phonics/Decoding

10. Reading aloud to students

11. Students reading independently (e.g., DEAR or Reading Workshop time)

12. Oral or written response to literature

13. Literature Circles, Book Clubs, literature discussion groups

14. Reading strategies instruction

15. Process writing or Writing Workshop

16. Language experience stories or charts

17. Spelling lists, activities, or games

18. Handwriting instruction and practice

19. Technological applications to literacy (e.g., microcomputers, video,

multimedia).

<div style="text-align: center">

Results of Testing Null Hypothesis Associated
with Research Question 3

</div>

When determining whether significant differences existed among Kindergarten

through Grade 4 teachers in the reported time allotted to 19 different reading components

or activities, the only null hypothesis retained for the 19 ANOVA tests was for time

devoted to oral or written responses to literature $F\,(4, 116) = 1.50\,(p > .05)$. The amount

of reported time devoted to oral or written responses to literature did not differ

significantly among Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers.

Following the significant F ratios of the other 18 ANOVA tests, post hoc analysis

was performed using Tukey's pairwise test (alpha level at .05) to determine which grade

level means were significantly different. Although according to the ANOVA test null

hypothesis 1 was rejected for technological applications to literacy, post hoc comparisons

found no significant effects among the five different grade levels. Hinkle et al. (1994)

state that due to the Tukey's pairwise test's very conservative nature in controlling Type 1

error, no significant comparisons may be found even when the F ratio of the ANOVA is

significant.

Using Levene's test to test for homogeneity of variance (alpha at .05), null hypothesis 1 for equal variances was retained for only three variables: phonics/decoding, reading aloud to students, and handwriting instruction and practice. The presence of unequal variance violates an assumption relevant to ANOVA; however, the ANOVA is considered reasonably robust with respect to the violation of this assumption (Hinkle et al., 1994). Results of the one-way ANOVA for each variable can be found in Table 8.

To get an overall view of the number of statistically different reported practices found among grade levels, a count of these differences is given in Table 9. According to the table, Kindergarten teachers differed significantly from Grade 1 teachers in regard to the amount of time reportedly spent on seven of the instructional techniques. In contrast, all successive grades (first-second, second-third, third-fourth) differed on only one variable from one another. Compared to Grade 2 teachers, Kindergarten teachers reportedly devoted significantly different amounts of time on 11 variables. Twelve variables were found to be significantly different from Grade 3 teachers and 15 variables to a significant degree compared to Grade 4 teachers.

Table 9 also shows that Grade 1 teachers reported using 7 of the 19 practices to significant differing degrees when compared to Grade 4 teachers and 5 variables when compared to Grade 3 teachers. Grade 2 teachers differed only from successive grades (Grades 1 and 3) on 1 variable; however, these teachers did differ on 2 variables when compared to Grade 4 teachers.

Table 8

One-Way ANOVA for Each Reported Reading Instructional Variable

Variable	Source of Variance	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Phonological awareness	Grade	4	34.80	8.70	14.03***	0.000
	Error	118	73.17	0.62		
	Total	122	107.97			
Reading vocabulary	Grade	4	13.09	3.27	7.50***	0.000
	Error	117	51.07	0.44		
	Total	121	61.16			
Comprehension	Grade	4	6.199	1.55	6.89***	0.000
	Error	117	26.33	0.23		
	Total	121	32.53			
Critical reading	Grade	4	27.80	6.95	13.66***	0.000
	Error	117	59.00	0.519		
	Total	121	86.79			
Oral reading	Grade	4	14.20	3.55	7.32***	0.000
	Error	117	56.76	0.49		
	Total	121	70.96			
Silent reading	Grade	4	7.95	1.99	4.42**	0.002
	Error	117	52.58	0.45		
	Total	121	60.53			
Study skills	Grade	4	13.55	3.39	5.44***	0.000
	Error	117	72.79	0.62		
	Total	121	86.36			

Table 8–*Continued.*

Reading in content areas	Grade	4	17.98	4.50	8.03***	0.000
	Error	118	66.08	0.560		
	Total	122	84.07			
Phonics/decoding	Grade	4	37.89	9.47	23.02***	0.000
	Error	117	48.14	0.41		
	Total	121	86.03			
Reading aloud to students	Grade	4	11.03	2.76	8.17***	0.000
	Error	117	39.47	0.34		
	Total	121	50.50			
Students reading independently	Grade	4	5.36	1.34	2.74*	0.032
	Error	118	57.68	0.49		
	Total	122	63.04			
Oral or written response to literature	Grade	4	3.44	0.86	1.50	0.207
	Error	116	66.53	0.57		
	Total	120	69.97			
Literature Circles, Book Clubs, literature discussion groups	Grade	4	8.68	2.17	3.12**	0.018
	Error	109	75.89	0.70		
	Total	113	84.57			
Reading strategies instruction	Grade	4	10.49	2.62	4.53**	0.002
	Error	118	68.26	0.58		
	Total	122	78.75			

Table 8–*Continued.*

Process writing or Writing Workshop	Grade	4	19.48	4.87	9.28***	0.000
	Error	118	61.89	0.52		
	Total	122	81.37			
Language experience stories or charts	Grade	4	23.82	5.95	8.62***	0.000
	Error	117	80.85	0.69		
	Total	121	104.66			
Spelling lists, activities, or games	Grade	4	16.85	4.21	7.70***	0.000
	Error	118	64.56	0.55		
	Total	122	81.42			
Handwriting instruction and practice	Grade	4	12.60	3.15	4.49**	0.002
	Error	116	81.40	0.70		
	Total	120	94.00			
Technological applications to literacy	Grade	4	8.75	2.19	2.87*	0.026
	Error	118	89.98	0.76		
	Total	122	98.73			

* significant at $p < .05$.
**significant at $p < .01$.
***significant at $p < .001$.

Table 9

Number of Reported Instructional Variables Found to Statistically Differ Between Grades

Level	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Kindergarten	---				
Grade 1	7	---			
Grade 2	11	1	---		
Grade 3	12	5	1	---	
Grade 4	14	7	2	1	---

After significant ANOVA tests, the data indicate Kindergarten teachers reportedly spent significantly less time than each of the other grades on reading vocabulary, comprehension, critical reading, oral reading, reading strategies instruction, process writing or Writing Workshop, and spelling lists. Table 10 shows the average reported use and the level of significance for these variables.

Kindergarten teachers also reported spending significantly less time than Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 teachers on study skills and reading in the content areas (see Table 10). Silent reading also proved to have less time reportedly devoted to it in Kindergarten classrooms compared to Grade 2 and Grade 4 teachers. Kindergarten teachers did report devoting significantly more time to language experience or language charts than Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 teachers, reading aloud more than Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers, and phonological awareness and phonics/decoding more than Grade 4 teachers (see Table 10).

Table 10

Time Reportedly Devoted to Instructional Variables by Kindergarten Teachers Found to Be Significantly Different From All Other Grades

Variable	K	Grade			
		1	2	3	4
Reading vocabulary	2.53	3.67 ***	3.49 ***	3.29 **	3.29 **
Comprehension	3.13	3.74 **	3.82 ***	3.76 **	3.87 **
Critical reading	1.86	2.70 **	3.00 ***	3.13 ***	3.43 ***
Oral reading	2.47	3.67 ***	3.32 **	3.38 **	3.27 **
Reading strategies instruction	2.40	3.30 **	3.36 **	3.14 *	3.26 **
Process writing or Writing workshop	2.13	3.11 ***	3.18 ***	3.38 ***	3.42 ***
Spelling lists	2.20	3.19 ***	3.41 ***	3.38 ***	3.29 ***
Study skills	2.20	2.74	2.96 *	3.05 *	3.27 ***
Reading in the content area	2.40	2.85	3.27 **	3.52 ***	3.75 ***
Silent reading	2.73	3.22	3.55 **	3.29	3.51 **
Language experience stories or charts	3.60	3.30	(2.59)**	(2.40)***	(2.50)**
Reading Aloud	4.00	3.78	3.59	(3.24)**	(3.19)***
Phonological Awareness	3.53	3.56	3.41	2.81	(2.32)***
Phonics/Decoding	3.33	3.89	3.64	2.90	(2.49)***

Note. () indicates significantly less than lead variable Kindergarten.
* significant at $p < .05$.
**significant at $p < .01$.
***significant at $p < .001$.

Besides the seven variables of which Grade 1 teachers reported devoting significantly more time on as compared to Kindergarten teachers (Table 10), Grade 1 teachers also reported devoting significantly more time than Grade 2 teachers on language experience stories or charts (see Table 11). Compared to Grade 3 teachers, Grade 1 teachers reported devoting significantly more time on phonological awareness, phonics/decoding, reading aloud to students, and language experience stories or charts and significantly less time devoted to reading in the content areas. In relation to Grade 4 teachers, Grade 1 teachers reported devoting significantly more time on phonological awareness, phonics/decoding, reading aloud to students, language experience stories or charts, and handwriting instruction and practice, and significantly less time on reading in the content areas and critical reading instruction.

In addition to reporting the use of 10 reading variables mentioned above significantly more than Kindergarten teachers (Table 10) and language experience stories less than Kindergarten (Table 10) and Grade 1 teachers (Table 11), Grade 2 teachers reported using phonics/decoding significantly more than Grade 3 teachers and phonics/decoding and phonological awareness significantly more than Grade 4 teachers (see Table 12).

As shown in Table 10, Grade 3 teachers report utilizing nine instructional variables significantly more than Kindergarten teachers (Table 11). Grade 3 teachers also indicated that they spent significantly more time than Grade 1 teachers report spending on reading in the content areas but less time on phonological awareness, phonics/decoding, reading aloud to students, and language experience stories and charts than Grade 1

Table 11

Time Reportedly Devoted to Instructional Variables by Grade 1 Teachers Found to Be
Significantly Different From Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 Teachers

Variable	Grade			
	1	2	3	4
Language experience stories or charts	3.30	(2.59) *	(2.40) **	(2.50) **
Phonological awareness	3.56	(3.41)	(2.81) *	(2.32) ***
Phonics/decoding	3.89	(3.64)	(2.91) ***	(2.49) ***
Reading aloud to students	3.78	(3.59)	(3.24) *	(3.19) **
Handwriting instruction and practice	3.04	(2.86)	3.24	(2.36) *
Reading in the content area	(2.85)	3.27	3.52*	3.47*
Critical reading	(2.70)	3.00	3.14	3.43***

Note. () indicates significantly less than lead variable Grade 1.
*significant at $p < .05$.
**significant at $p < .01$.
***significant at $p < .001$.

Table 12

Time Reportedly Devoted to Instructional Variables by Grade 2
Teachers Found to Be Significantly Different From Grade 3 and
Grade 4 Teachers

Variable	Grade		
	2	3	4
Phonics/decoding	3.64	(2.91) **	(2.49)***
Phonological awareness	3.41	2.81	(2.32) ***

Note. () indicates significantly less than lead variable Grade 2.
*significant at $p < .05$.
**significant at $p < .01$.
***significant at $p < .001$.

teachers (Table 11). When compared to Grade 2, Grade 3 teachers reported spending

significantly less time on phonics/decoding (Table 12), and when compared to Grade 4

teachers reportedly spent significantly more time on handwriting instruction (see Table

13).

Compared to Grade 3 teachers, Grade 4 teachers report spending significantly

more time than Kindergarten teachers on the 10 variables listed in Table 10. Also like

Grade 3 teachers, they report spending significantly more time reading in the content

areas as well as less time on phonological awareness, phonics/decoding, reading aloud to

students, and language experience stories and charts than Grade 1 teachers (Table 11).

Unlike Grade 3 teachers, however, Grade 4 teachers also report spending

significantly more time on critical reading and significantly less time on handwriting and

instruction than Grade 1 teachers. Compared to Grade 2 teachers, Grade 4 teachers report

spending significantly less time on phonics/decoding, and phonological awareness (Table

Table 13

*Time Reportedly Devoted to Instructional Variables by Grade 3
Teachers Found to Be Significantly Different From Grade 4
Teachers*

	Grade	
Variable	3	4
Handwriting instruction and practice	3.24	(2.36) **

Note. () indicates significantly less than lead variable Grade 3.
*significant at $p < .05$.
**significant at $p < .01$.
***significant at $p < .001$.

10). The only variable in which Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers significantly differed was on reported instruction time spent on handwriting and handwriting practice (Table 11). Here, Grade 4 teachers indicated that they devoted significantly less time to this practice than teachers at the previous grade.

Research Question 4

Research question 4 asked: *What is the extent of the relationship between the amount of time teachers report allotting to each of the 19 reading practices and MEAP scores?*

Null hypothesis associated with research question 4 states: There is no significant relationship between the amount of time teachers report allotting to each of the 19 reading practices and MEAP scores.

Results of Testing Null Hypothesis Associated with Research Question 4

In order to determine the extent of the relationship between teacher reported instructional time allotted to each of the 19 reading practices and MEAP scores, a correlational analysis was conducted. Only eight of the 19 variables showed significant correlations (See Appendix C for correlation table containing coefficients for all grades and variables). Table 14 lists the eight variables, along with the correlation coefficients and level of significance, of the 19 instructional variables under study showing a significant correlation between the amount of time teachers report having devoted to a specific instructional variable and MEAP scores.

Combining all grades (Grade All), a significant negative correlation was found

between the amount of time teachers reported instructing students in phonological

awareness ($r = -.292$, $p = .001$), phonics/decoding ($r = -.250$, $p = .005$), language

experience stories or charts ($r = -.216$, $p = .017$), and handwriting practice and instruction

($r = -.336$, $p = 000$). Table 14 shows that a significant positive correlation was found

Table 14

Significant Values of r Found Between Reported Reading Instructional Variables and Percentage of Students Who Passed the Reading Portion of the Grade 4 MEAP

	Grade					
Variable	K	1	2	3	4	All
Phonological awareness	-.492	.007	-.119	-.713***	-.419***	-.292***
Comprehension	-.332	-.193	.548***	-.112	.071	-.015
Phonics/Decoding	-.247	-.421*	-.006	-.404	-.221	-.250**
Students reading independently	.350	.293	.402	.284	.117	.247**
Process writing	-.104	-.407	.200	.452*	.017	.063
Language experience	-.258	-.166	-.100	-.312	-.332*	-.216*
Spelling lists, activities, etc.	-.111	.040	.045	-.140	-.409**	-.097
Handwriting instruction	-.378	-.245	-.179	-.384	-.521***	-.336***

*significant at $p < .05$.
**significant at $p < .01$.
***significant at $p < .001$.

between reported time for students reading independently and Grade 4 MEAP results

$(r = .247, p = .006)$.

There were no significant relationships found between the amount of time

Kindergarten teachers reportedly devoted to any of the specific instructional variables and

MEAP scores. Even though a moderate relationship was found between reported time

spent on phonological awareness and MEAP scores (-.492), the results were not

significant.

A significant negative correlation was found between the amount of time Grade 1

teachers reportedly devoted to phonics/decoding $(r = -0.421, p = .029)$ and MEAP scores

(see Table 14).

Table 14 also shows the positive correlation found between the amount of time

Grade 2 teachers reported spending instructing their students in comprehension

$(r = 0.548, p = .008)$ and the results of MEAP scores.

Two correlations, one positive and one negative, were found between Grade 3

teachers' reported use of instructional strategies and MEAP scores. The reported use of

phonological awareness showed a negative correlation with MEAP scores $(r = -0.713,$

$p = .000)$, while reported use of instructional time devoted to process writing was found

to be positively correlated $(r = 0.452, p = .040)$ (see Table 14).

Table 14 shows four significant negative correlations found between the amount

of time Grade 4 teachers report devoting to phonological awareness $(r = .-0419, p = .009)$,

language experience stories or charts $(r = -0.332, p = .042)$, spelling lists, activities, or

games (r = -0.409, p = .011), and handwriting instruction and practice (r = -.521,

p = .001).

Summary of Results

Based on the data presented, there are significant differences found in the amount of time teachers at different grades report spending on various instructional strategies in their language arts programs. The closer the grades were to one another the more similar their reported time devoted to the instructional variables tended to be.

Correlational findings indicate several relationships between the time elementary teachers reported spending on various instructional components in their language arts programs and the percentage of students who achieved a "satisfactory" level on the Grade 4 Michigan Educational Assessment Plan (MEAP) in the buildings these teachers taught. Eight of the 19 variables showed a significant relationship.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 5 begins with restating the problem and purpose of this study. A brief summary of current research follows on teacher decision making and teacher accountability. The summary and implications derived from an analysis of the data and suggestions for applying the findings of this study to schools within and outside of this Southwestern Michigan county are outlined. This chapter closes with recommendations for further study.

Restatement of the Problem

Accountability for effectiveness of public schools and teachers in Michigan is determined principally by student performance on a state-mandated test, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Schools are to use MEAP scores as the most important consideration for improving instruction (MEAP, 2000). School districts with substandard or decreasing MEAP reading scores seek to adopt more effective reading practices, programs, and instructional materials that result in higher MEAP scores. According to the county superintendent of schools of this Southwestern Michigan county, the county special education superintendent, and the county reading specialist, neither district-wide nor county-wide data exist that describe the relationship between the reading

91

practices used to teach reading in local elementary classrooms in this Southwestern

Michigan county and MEAP scores—and it is the MEAP that Michigan uses as the

state's principal measure of reading achievement. The absence of these data poses a

problem for elementary school teachers, who are accountable for the daily classroom

decisions that are related to reading instruction.

Purpose of the Study

Because school accountability for public schools and teachers in Michigan

depends upon student achievement as assessed by MEAP, the purpose of this study was

to address the gap between state accountability practices and reading instruction in

schools in this Southwestern Michigan county by determining the relationship between

time reported to be allotted for specific reading instructional practices and MEAP scores.

This study determined the amount of time that teachers in Kindergarten through Grade 4

reported that they allotted each day for 19 reading strategies. These strategies were

selected because of their prior use in a national study that described reading instructional

practices and showed to be representative of language arts activities across the country

(Baumann et al., 1998). An analysis of data determined the strength of the

relationship between time reportedly allotted for the selected practices and satisfactory

scores on the MEAP.

A secondary purpose of this study was to describe reading instructional practices

in this Southwestern Michigan county. In describing practice, this study sought to

determine how much time teachers reported that they allotted for 19 different activities or

components within their language arts programs.

**Summary of Teacher Instructional Practices
and Accountability Methods**

Although conventional wisdom assumes that teachers select the instructional

methods of their choice and that their instructional decisions are determined by their

teaching experiences, personal beliefs about reading development, and their training,

considerable outside pressure exists that influences the nature of instruction (Collins,

1997; Hamachek, 1969; Hough & Duncan, 1970; Sacks, 1999). Teachers feel the pressure

from school administrators, college professors, parents, the general public, and even

politicians as they make their daily instructional decisions regarding reading (Bush, 2000;

Coles, 2000; Goodman, 1998; Gore, 2000; Grace, 1991; Reutzel et al., 1996; Zemelman

et al., 1998). Thus, decisions regarding materials used, time allotment for various

instructional practices, and methods of assessment involve more than choice. These

decisions involve balancing many factors which can influence classroom instruction

(Blumenfield, 1993; Dembo, 1994).

Teaching is a complex process requiring teachers to function as instructional

decision makers. As they proceed through each instructional day, they seek ways to

measure the effects of instruction by monitoring skills taught and whether students apply

the new knowledge. This formative evaluation is ongoing and is used as a basis for

subsequent instructional decisions.

At the end of an instructional sequence and before proceeding to the next, an

assessment, or summative evaluation, is conducted of the completed sequence. This

evaluation determines the effectiveness of instructional decisions by measuring student performance. Many noninstructional variables (e.g., socioeconomic status, intelligence, gender, race, parental attitude toward education, number of books in the home), however, can affect the assessment results. This is especially true when performance is measured by standardized achievement tests (Biehler & Snowman, 1993; Dembo, 1994; Ekwall & Shanker, 1985; Gambrell et al., 1999; Hanushek & Raymond, 2001; Popham, 2001; Raywid, 2002; Sacks, 1999).

Regardless of the external influences on instruction and the individual differences among students that could affect academic performance, federal, state, and local agencies hold teachers accountable for student scores on standardized tests. In Michigan, scores on the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) test determine reading achievement. After MEAP results are announced each year, schools and teachers receive rewards for high test scores or punishment for low test scores (Evers & Walberg, 2002; Michigan Department of Education, 2003; MEAP, 2000).

With these consequences, the Michigan State Department of Education sends the clear message that high MEAP scores are important and essential for school districts to maintain state financial support and to sustain a positive public perception of education. Conflicting research findings regarding the best reading instructional practices, however, have presented a problem for teachers to solve: How should they teach reading so that MEAP scores increase? Too often, administrators and teachers try to manipulate the system of measurement rather than to identify instruction associated with high MEAP scores (Burns, 1998; Cizek, 2001; Hall & Kleine, 1992; Jacob & Levitt, 2004). This study

attempted to identify the reading instructional practices that teachers were using and then to determine the relationship between the time reportedly allotted for these practices and MEAP scores.

Methodology

Using Baumann et al.'s (1998) survey, Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers were asked to report the amount of time they devoted to 19 reading activities or components within their language arts programs. A correlational research design was employed in order to identify the reported reading instructional practices of Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers and then determine the relationship between the time reported to be allotted for 19 specific practices and MEAP scores. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. How much instructional time is reportedly allotted to teach each of the 19 reading practices?

2. Is there a difference among Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 in the average reported time allotted for all 19 reading practices?

3. Is there a significant difference among grade levels in the time reportedly allotted for each of the 19 practices?

4. What is the extent of the relationship between the amount of time reportedly allotted for these practices and MEAP scores?

General Findings

The public expects that teacher education programs in colleges and universities prepare teachers to teach reading. The findings in this study presented a different picture: Twenty-one percent of the participants described their teacher education program as poor or entirely inadequate in preparing them to teach reading. Less than 10% of participants described their preparation to teach reading as exceptional. This is a major concern since Burhans (1985), Grossen (1997), and Zemelman et al. (1998) found that teachers participate in little professional development after completing their teacher education program, and they typically do not use findings of reading research for shaping instructional practices. As a result, many teachers are not getting the instructional guidance they need for teaching reading in this county.

Descriptive Findings

One of the purposes of this study was to describe reading instructional practices in this Southwestern county. In describing practice, this study sought to determine how much time teachers reported that they allotted for 19 different activities or components in their language arts programs.

The reported time spent on comprehension recorded the highest use of all activities with a mean score of 3.66 on a 4-point Likert Scale (Considerable = 4, Moderate = 3, Little = 2, None = 1). Comprehension ranked first in the amount of reported instructional time in Grades 2, 3, and 4 and was one of the five most frequently used activities in Kindergarten and Grade 1. Because comprehension is the principal goal

of reading (Adams, 1990; Michigan Reading Association, 2000), it was not surprising

that so much time was allotted to comprehension at all five grade levels.

The next three most commonly reported activities reported by elementary teachers

dealt with the reading act: Reading aloud (3.56), independent reading (3.35), and silent

reading (3.25). Reading aloud, which was the most commonly used practice by

Kindergarten teachers (4.00), was reportedly used to at least a "Moderate" degree by each

grade level. Silent and independent reading began gaining importance in Grade 1 and

continued to increase in use each successive grade.

As reported by elementary teachers (K - 4), phonics/decoding was the only skill-

based activity ranked in the top five most commonly used practices with a reported mean

of 3.25. Although used often in Kindergarten, time spent on phonics/decoding in Grade 1

was reported as the most used practice. After Grade 2, however, the reported use of

phonics declines rapidly and becomes one of the least used activities in Grades 3 and 4.

General results showed some consistencies in reported time spent on the least

used instructional practices in this county's elementary schools. Literature circles (and

book clubs) was the least used component reported to be found in elementary school

language arts programs with a mean of 1.99. This activity was one of the five least

reported practices in Grade 4 but the least reported by teachers of Kindergarten, Grade 1,

Grade 2, and Grade 3. Another infrequently used component was time devoted to

technological applications to literacy which was consistently ranked as one of the five

least frequently reported variables in Grades 1 through 4. Neither of these practices

require prerequisite skills. Compared to some practices, which are limited by the skill

level of the students (e.g., silent reading, and independent reading), the limited reported use of these practices may be related to other factors such as the lack of use when these teachers were enrolled in school, and, therefore, these practices were not modeled. As Feng (1990) indicated, teachers tend to teach in the way that they were taught. With literature circles and technology being fairly new innovations and 48% of the teachers in this study having more than 16 years of experience, a large number of teachers may not have been exposed to these practices during their teacher training programs.

An alternative explanation may be related to school resources. Some schools may not have the necessary funds to offer the option of using technology. Without enough computers for all students, teachers may report infrequent use even if they regularly use the computer for a small number of their students. With only a handful of students using the computer for either enrichment or support, teachers may not characterize this strategy as part of their overall language arts program. Even if teachers have computers available to them during language arts, they may not have software that complements what they are teaching. Buying the right software may be too difficult and time consuming. With teachers engaging in limited professional development beyond their schooling (Burhans, 1985), the advantages of using new innovations are not reaching the classrooms of this Southwestern Michigan county.

Grade Level Variation in Language Arts Programs

Although the general findings describe practices in elementary schools as a whole, results showed that summarizing the reported use of any one variable by averaging its use across five grade levels offers an inaccurate picture of current practice. To gain a more

accurate description of elementary reading practices, the reported time devoted by practice for each grade level was determined.

Kindergarten Language Arts Programs

The language arts programs reported in the Kindergarten classrooms consist mainly of reading aloud to students, language experience and stories, and the teaching of phonological awareness and phonics/decoding skills. All Kindergarten teachers indicated that they used reading aloud to a "Considerable" amount, whereas only 67% reported devoting as much time to language experience and stories and phonological awareness. Fifty-five percent of the teachers at the Kindergarten level reported devoting "Considerable" amounts of time to phonics and decoding skills. The five most often reported strategies in the Kindergarten classroom appear to be a blend of language immersion and basic skill approaches.

Grade 1 Language Arts Programs

At first glance, Grade 1 language arts programs look similar to that of Kindergarten programs. Both show a high percentage of teachers reporting that they spend considerable amounts of time teaching phonics/decoding skills, reading aloud, and comprehension. These components continue to be three of the top five most frequently reported instructional variables. However, Grade 1 instruction significantly differs from Kindergarten teachers more than any other successive grades (K-1, 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 4). The number of teachers reportedly using phonics/decoding to a "Considerable" degree jumps from 53% in Kindergarten to 89% in Grade 1. Reading aloud is still reportedly

used by many teachers; however, the percentage of teachers who report using it to a "Considerable" amount lowers from 100% to 81%. In addition, increases in 15 variables were reported, though only 7 of these were significant. The amount of time reportedly spent on comprehension, oral reading, reading vocabulary, critical reading, reading strategies, process writing, and spelling was found to be significantly more than reportedly used in the Kindergarten classrooms. The reported use of all the variables increased from an average of 2.69 by Kindergarten teachers to an average of 3.17. This would suggest that Grade 1 language arts programs are more variable in their approaches and techniques than are Kindergarten teachers.

Grade 2 Language Arts Programs

Grade 2 teachers continue to report variation in their language arts programs, with increases in time spent on 11 of the 19 practices. Although not significant, increases were reported in technological applications, content area reading, independent reading, silent reading, and independent reading. Independent and silent reading were reported as one of the five most frequently used variables in Grade 2. The only decrease of note occurred in language experience stories, or charts. In fact, this common component of Grade 1 teachers is reportedly used significantly less by Grade 2 teachers and becomes one of the least used. Starting in Grade 2, time spent on comprehension becomes reported as the most often used instructional component of early elementary language arts programs.

Grade 3 Language Arts Programs

Grade 3 teachers' language arts programs are reportedly dominated by comprehension, silent reading, and content area reading. Process writing, content area reading, and responses to literature become some of the most often reported components of Grade 3 language arts programs. Grade 3 teachers show a slight decline in instructional variation when compared to Grade 1 and Grade 2 teachers; however, the average reported use of all the variables remains in the "Moderate" range. Comprehension continues to be the variable to which teachers devote the most time; however, the percentage of teachers reportedly devoting "Considerable" amounts of time to it drops from 82% to 76%. The only significant difference between Grade 2 and Grade 3 teachers, however, is the amount of time reportedly spent on phonics and decoding. Results show that Grade 3 teachers report devoting significantly less time to phonics and decoding in their language arts programs when compared to Grade 2. Although 64% of Grade 2 teachers indicated they devoted "Considerable" time to phonics/decoding, only 19% of Grade 3 teachers report devoting the same amount of time. Language arts programs change from all teachers reporting this component to at least a "Moderate" degree to nearly 30% of teachers reportedly devoting "Little" time to the skills. Although this is clearly a shift in emphasis, Grade 3 teachers continue to report devoting time to these skills as no Grade 3 teacher indicated that they never include phonics and decoding as part of their language arts programs.

Grade 4 Language Arts Programs

According to teacher reports, Grade 4 programs are dominated by comprehension,

silent reading, content area reading, independent reading, and process writing (greater

than 50% reported a "Considerable" degree and at least 90% reported a "Moderate"

degree). These components are followed by reading vocabulary, critical reading, strategy

instruction, and spelling as 90% of teachers in this study reported at least "Moderate"

amounts of time devoted to each. Overall, Grade 4 language arts programs reportedly

show less variation in their approaches to teach reading when compared to all grade

levels except Kindergarten. Along with an increase in time spent on comprehension,

Grade 4 language arts programs report devoting more time to critical reading, study skills,

Literature Circles, and process writing when compared to Grade 3 programs. The decline

in reported use of phonics and decoding continues in Grade 4 as only 8% of teachers

devote "Considerable" amounts of time to phonics and decoding. Nonetheless, only 8%

of Grade 4 teachers reported that they "Never" devote any time to phonics and decoding

and the reported time devoted to these skills ranks as one of the five least frequently used

variables. The only significant difference between Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers,

however, is a reported decrease in time spent on handwriting instruction.

Instructional Trends

Although not all were statistically significant, consistent increases from

Kindergarten to Grade 3 language arts programs were reported in the amount of time

spent on study skills, content area reading, literature circles, and process writing. The only

consistent reported decrease is in reading aloud to students even though this activity rates

among the five most frequently teacher reported variables for Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2.

Comprehension and reading aloud were the only practices for which teachers of all grades consistently reported allotting at least "Moderate" amounts of time. The two least used practices reported were literature circles and book clubs and the use of technological applications for teaching reading. Not surprisingly, higher level reading skills such as study skills and critical reading were reported only sparingly during the first few years of schooling. In this Southwestern Michigan county, these reported increases were coupled with gradual declines in the reported use of skill instruction (e.g., handwriting, phonics/decoding, and phonological awareness).

Grade Level Descriptive Summary

In general, teachers in this Southwestern Michigan county reported a wide array of reading instructional practices. Clear changes in the reported use of practices occurred between Kindergarten and Grade 1 and between Grade 2 and Grade 3. The primary grades reported skill-based instruction and language experience activities; upper grades reportedly focused on reading, and, except for process writing, less on language experience activities. The practices reported among grades did not differ significantly on many variables but were far from similar in the techniques which dominated their language arts programs. The closer the grades (e.g., Grade 1 and Grade 2), the greater the similarities; the more distance between grades (e.g., Grade 1 and Grade 4), the greater the differences.

Connections to Current Research

As mentioned previously, few studies have attempted to describe the reading and language arts instructional programs of classroom teachers. Summaries of these studies follow and then their results are compared with the findings of this study conducted in Southwestern Michigan.

Drecktrah and Chiang (1997) studied reading instructional practices in Grade 2 and Grade 5 in Wisconsin. Grade 2 teachers represented primary grades, and Grade 5 represented intermediate grades. Teachers of both grades reported they "Commonly" used journal writing, thematic units, and sustained silent reading. Grade 2 teachers also indicated allotting time for writer's workshop and shared book experiences. Phonic skills were reported as "Commonly" used but only in context. No direct phonics instruction was reported in Grade 2. Findings from the Decktrah and Chiang study suggest that teachers in Wisconsin emphasized an immersion experience for novice readers by using whole-language as the core of language arts programs. In this Southwestern Michigan county, Grade 2 teachers reported that they tended to allot more time for teaching basic skills than immersing students in literature, with teachers reporting language experience (and stories) and literature circles as the least frequently used practices. Phonics use in Grade 2 in this Southwestern Michigan county was ranked third with an average reported use of 3.64.

Comparing the findings of Grade 5 from the study by Drecktrah and Chiang (1997) and the findings of Grade 4 teachers in Southwestern Michigan, similarity existed in that both indicate an extensive amount of time allotted for silent reading and the scant time allotted for phonics instruction. Another similarity was the integration of at least

some aspects of both skills-based instruction and immersion-based practices and practices that use an interactive reading-writing approach.

The findings from Southwestern Michigan teachers and the study by Baumann et al. (1998) found that time allotted for reading instruction varied according to grade. Because both studies used the same survey instrument, results are directly comparable. Compared with teachers throughout the nation, this Southwestern Michigan county's teachers seemingly allot similar amounts of time for a majority of the practices. The teachers participating in Southwestern Michigan, however, allotted somewhat more time than teachers in Baumann et al.'s (1998) study for phonics/decoding, independent reading, oral reading, silent reading, but less time for critical reading and literature response.

Baumann et al. (1998) found that 58% of Grade 1 teachers reported allotting "Considerable" time for phonics instruction. Grade 4 teachers reported a figure of only 3% for the same practice. In Southwestern Mighican, 88% of Grade 1 teachers reported allotting "Considerable" time for phonics instruction. This percentage dropped with each grade increase, yet 8% of Grade 4 teachers continued to devote "Considerable" amounts of time for phonics instruction, and 48% committed at least a "Moderate" amount of time for phonics. In both studies, more than 95% of Grade 1 teachers allotted "Considerable" or "Moderate" amounts of time for reading aloud to their students.

By Grade 3 and Grade 4, teachers in both studies reported a high percentage of teachers allotting "Considerable" or "Moderate" amounts of time for reading in the content areas (91%). In addition, both studies showed 81% of Grade 4 teachers allotted

"Considerable" or "Moderate" amounts of time for literature responses. Baumann et al. (1998) found that 86% of the teachers reported allotting "Considerable" or "Moderate" amounts of time for reading aloud. In Southwestern Michigan 81% of Grade 4 teachers reported reading aloud to students. Regarding the time reportedly allotted for independent reading, 94% of Grade 4 teachers participating in Southwestern Michigan reported allotting at least a "Moderate" amount of time for this activity; the national study found that only 86% of Grade 4 teachers allotted as much time.

In general, according to teacher reports students in the early grades in Southwestern Michigan elementary schools receive a wide scope of instructional practices through the integration of the teaching of basic skills and immersion approaches. These results are consistent with the findings by the few studies that have investigated classroom instructional practices (Baumman, et al., 1998; Drecktrah & Chiang, 1997). The differences seem to be the emphasis of a particular practice. Compared to the national study, teachers in this Southwestern Michigan county reported placing more emphasis on basic skills across more grade levels.

Inferential Findings

The primary purpose of this study was to address the gap between state accountability practices and reading instruction in schools in a Southwestern Michigan county. Because school accountability for public schools and teachers in Michigan depends upon reading achievement as assessed by the MEAP, this study sought to determine the strength of relationship between the time teachers reportedly spent on specific reading instructional practices and MEAP scores.

Kindergarten Instruction and the MEAP

No significant relationship was found between the amount of time reportedly spent on the reading practices of Kindergarten teachers and MEAP scores. Under the assumption that reading instruction can be associated with the MEAP, one explanation for no significant findings may be related to the fact that Kindergarten teachers reported including the fewest practices in which they allotted "Moderate" to "Considerable" amounts of time. Since these teachers reported using fewer practices – and the ones that they did use, they used often -- the lack of variation in their responses may underscore the statistical assumptions of linear variables (Hinkle et al., 1994). With only two possible responses -- "Moderate" or "Considerable" -- with which to relate MEAP scores, the linear assumption for time devotion as a variable is questionable. For example, all teachers reported spending Considerable amounts of time on reading aloud and therefore no correlation could be calculated. A better description of the use of reading aloud, and other Kindergarten variables, would require abandoning the Likert-type scale and using actual time reportedly spent.

An alternative explanation questions the summative nature of using only Grade 4 MEAP scores to inform elementary instruction. Grade 4 MEAP scores represent an accumulation of 5 years of instruction, thus, the effects of Kindergarten instruction may have been diluted during the 4 successive years of teaching the students were exposed to by the time they reached Grade 4. Some state accountability systems address this issue using statistical methods (Sanders & Horn, 1998); however, Michigan's model of accountability does not (MEAP, 2000).

Under the assumption that schools that perform poorly on the MEAP do not teach effectively, the effectiveness of language arts programs reported in this county by Kindergarten teachers cannot be determined. There were no significant relationships between the instructional variables reported to be used by Kindergarten teachers and the MEAP. Conversely, Kindergarten teachers cannot use the MEAP to inform their instruction. As a result, Kindergarten teachers should be rendered exempt from the negative ramifications of a school's low MEAP score. If the Kindergarten years of the Grade 4 students who took the MEAP had a lasting effect on student achievement, then some salient connection would be expected unless it could be determined that fluctuations in the student population dispersed the effect. One of the limitations of this study is the lack of control over student movement within and across schools, districts, or states.

Grade 1 Instruction and the MEAP

Unlike Kindergarten teachers, a significant negative correlation was found between the time reported to be allotted by Grade 1 teachers for phonics/decoding and Grade 4 MEAP scores ($r = -.421$, $p = .006$). Grade 1 teachers reported that the time reportedly allotted for using this practice was "Moderate" to "Considerable" (3.30), and ranked first. Eighty-nine percent of teachers reported allotting "Considerable" amounts of time, and 11% more reported allotting at least "Moderate" amounts of time for phonics/decoding. This activity is clearly given much attention by Grade 1 teachers in their language arts programs.

109

If a connection can be made between Grade 1 teaching and MEAP scores, then the negative correlation for phonics/decoding means that the more time spent on this variable translates into poorer performance on the MEAP. With 89% of Grade 1 teachers reporting "Considerable" amounts of time being allotted to phonics/decoding, these teachers may be spending too much time on basic skill instruction. Whole-language advocates would argue that more time should be spent on immersing students in literacy (Goodman, 1989). However, whole-language approaches ranked second and seventh and had median scores of 4.00, yet, neither of these two practices is associated with MEAP scores.

Even though Grade 1 teachers report giving phonics/decoding much attention, six other variables are given "Moderate" to "Considerable" attention as well. These practices, which are heavily used in Grade 1 classrooms, are not associated with MEAP scores. Unfortunately, no other activity was associated with high MEAP scores and therefore, the practice of using MEAP scores to inform instruction at the Grade 1 level is limited and only suggests to teachers what they should not do.

Grade 2 Instruction and the MEAP

Although comprehension was the most commonly used practice reported by teachers in all grades, a significant positive correlation was found only between the amount of time reportedly allotted to comprehension by Grade 2 teachers and MEAP scores ($r = .518, p = .008$). The variation in comprehension that is related to the variation in MEAP scores represents a moderate relationship with nearly 27% of the variation in MEAP scores related to variation in the time allotted for comprehension. Grade 2

teachers reported comprehension as the most frequently used practice with almost 82% of teachers reporting "Considerable" use and 18% reporting "Moderate" use.

Based on the assumption that the MEAP can inform instruction, this finding suggests that the majority of Grade 2 teachers are spending large amounts of time on one practice, which is associated with high MEAP scores. This finding also suggests that teachers may want to continue to devote considerable amounts of time to this activity as opposed to other activities that are not associated with high MEAP scores. The problem with using the MEAP as a tool to inform instruction, however, is that 18 of the variables showed no significant relationship. With an accountability model based on MEAP scores, the model would suggest that the majority of teachers should be commended for spending appropriate amounts of time on comprehension. Unfortunately, the appropriate amount of time spent on other variables is undetermined and therefore the model gives no information whether teachers report spending too much time or too little time on effective strategies to teach reading. With this type of uncertainty, Grade 2 teachers should not be held accountable for the amount of time they reportedly spend on various components or activities within their language arts programs.

Grade 3 Instruction and the MEAP

The amount of time reportedly allotted for phonological awareness in Grade 3 classrooms was correlated negatively and significantly with MEAP scores ($r = -.733$, $p = .000$). This finding was the strongest relationship found between any of the 19 practices and MEAP scores. Thus, the more time reported to be allotted for phonological awareness, the lower the MEAP scores. Almost 54% of the variation in MEAP scores

was related to time allotted for phonological awareness. With the assumption that instruction can affect MEAP results, it may be good that only 14% of Grade 3 teachers reported allotting "Considerable" amounts of time for this practice. All Grade 3 teachers, however, indicated allotting at least a "Little" amount of time for phonological awareness, 53% indicating "Moderate" use, and 33% reporting "Little" use.

Among the 19 variables, Grade 3 teachers reported allotting the third greatest amount of time for process writing (3.38). A significant positive relationship was found between the time allotted by Grade 3 teachers for process writing and MEAP scores ($r = .452, p = .04$). Although only 53% of Grade 3 teachers reported "Considerable" use, all teachers allotted at least "Little" amounts of time, 33% indicating "Moderate" use, and 14% indicating "Little" use.

While Grade 3 teachers reportedly decreased the overall time allotted for whole-language activities, the practice that was associated with higher MEAP scores was process writing—an activity associated with whole-language. Since phonics instruction provided to Grade 3 students was not related to higher MEAP scores, the argument could be made that schools whose students read within the normal range for their age and grade and record satisfactory scores on MEAP could consider devoting less time for basic skill approaches to reading instruction and instead allot more instructional time for language arts practices that enrich their literacy knowledge, strategies such as process writing.

Grade 3 teachers are only 1 year removed from the students who take the Grade 4 reading MEAP, so it may not be surprising that two relationships were found. However, 17 instructional variables had no significant relationships. The significant relationships,

especially the strong relationship between the teachers' reported use of phonological awareness instruction with MEAP scores, seem to suggest that some connections can be made between reported Grade 3 instruction and MEAP results. Using the MEAP as an accountability tool seemingly sheds a positive light on at least half of the Grade 3 teachers in this county. Fifty-three percent of the teachers reported allotting "Little" or "None" to phonological awareness and 86% allotting at least "Moderate" amounts of time to process writing. The large amounts of time spent would suggest that Grade 3 teachers may be spending appropriate amounts of time on at least two activities which are associated with the percentage of students who achieve a satisfactory score on the reading portion of the MEAP.

Grade 4 Instruction and the MEAP

The amount of time reportedly allotted for phonological awareness, language experiences, handwriting, and spelling lists or other spelling activities in Grade 4 classrooms was correlated negatively and significantly with "satisfactory" scores on MEAP (phonological awareness, $r = -.419$, $p = 009$; language experiences, $r = -.332$, $p = .042$; handwriting, $r = -.521$, $p = .001$, and spelling activities, $r = -.409$, $p = .011$). High amounts of time allotted by Grade 4 teachers for all four reported practices corresponded to low MEAP scores.

After Grade 3 findings showed a significant positive relationship with reported use of process writing, a whole-language approach, Grade 4 teachers showed a significant negative relationship with reported use of language experiences, another whole-language approach. One of the tenets of whole-language is the idea of immersing students in

113

literature throughout their reading development (Goodman, 1989). If whole-language is the best way to increase MEAP scores, then the benefits of literacy immersion in Grade 3 should be enhanced by additional time on these activities in Grade 4. Yet, no support of this was shown.

Using the MEAP as an accountability tool, Grade 4 teachers should be commended as two of the four variables negatively related to MEAP were ranked in the bottom three activities for that grade level. Phonological awareness was ranked 18th whereas handwriting instruction was ranked as 17th. Language experience stories, another negatively related variable, was ranked 14th with an average reported use less than "Moderate." Only time devoted to spelling activities, ranked 7th, could be considered too much in relation to MEAP success.

Nonetheless, with no significant positive relationships, teachers' ability to use the MEAP to aid in decision making is questionable. The findings do affirm their decisions to devote limited time to phonological awareness, language experience stories, and handwriting, but do not suggest which variables should receive more time.

General Findings on Instruction and the MEAP

As is done under most accountability systems, teachers of all grade levels in a school are grouped together when assigned a high or low MEAP score. In Southwestern Michigan, for example, Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 teachers are held accountable by Grade 4 MEAP scores. When combining all grades in this manner, the reported average use for students reading independently correlated only modestly, statistically significantly, and positively with MEAP scores ($r = .247$, .006).

114

Thus, 6% of the variation in MEAP scores is related to the variation in the time reported to be allotted for reading independently by a school's Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers. To overgeneralize this finding would mean that the more students read independently in early elementary schools, the higher their MEAP scores. This finding counters one argument that MEAP, as well as other state-standardized tests, measure only purported reading skills instead of reading. Rather than the MEAP testing only word identification skills, instead it may test the making sense of print. An alternative explanation may reflect the directionality of the relationship. It may be that students who pass the MEAP in Grade 4 can read and comprehend and there is no need for instruction in basic skills.

When combining all grades, four negative correlations were found between the amount of time elementary teachers reported to have allotted for phonological awareness, language experiences, handwriting, and spelling. Using the Grade 4 MEAP scores as the sole criteria to inform instruction would suggest that teachers at any grade level who reported "Moderate" to "Considerable" use were devoting too much time to these activities. Grade level analysis shows that only Grade 4 teachers showed significant correlations with all four variables and MEAP scores. Notwithstanding the low magnitude of relationships found between Grade 4 and MEAP scores, the moderate relationship between MEAP and time devoted to comprehension in Grade 2 goes undetected. These findings suggest that Grade 4 MEAP scores cannot inform elementary instruction as a whole, and therefore its use as a school-based accountability model cannot be supported.

Summary

Except for phonics/decoding instruction in Grade 1, all other variables which were negatively correlated with the MEAP were used to a limited degree. Those variables which were positively correlated with the MEAP were consistently ranked within the top three variables for the grade in which the relationship was found. The minimal amounts of time reportedly allotted by Grade 4 teachers for three practices, language experience (rated 14th), handwriting (rated 17th), and phonological awareness (ranked 18th), correlated negatively and significantly with MEAP scores. The amount of time reported to be allotted for process writing, ranked third by Grade 3 teachers, was correlated positively and significantly with MEAP scores; the time reportedly allotted for phonological awareness, ranked 17th by Grade 3 teachers, correlated negatively and significantly with MEAP scores. Similar results were found for the amount of time reportedly allotted by Grade 2 teachers for comprehension and MEAP scores, the highest rated practice among Grade 2 teachers. The time teachers reportedly allotted to each practice found to be significant was related to higher MEAP scores, although most practices teachers reportedly used frequently were not significantly related to MEAP scores at all.

The significant relationships that were not found may be more meaningful than the relationships that were found. Only eight variables correlated significantly with MEAP scores, and none were correlated with Kindergarten teaching. The amount of time reported to be allotted for only one practice correlated significantly with the MEAP scores of Grade 1 and Grade 2 students. The time reportedly allotted by Grade 3 teachers for two

practices correlated significantly with MEAP scores, and the time reportedly allotted by Grade 4 teachers for four practices correlated significantly with MEAP scores. The further removed that instruction is from the grade level in which the accountability testing of achievement is measured, the fewer relationships between reported instructional strategy and test scores are found. Even though more significant relationships were found with Grade 4 teaching than the lower grade levels, reported time spent using 15 of the 19 variables by Grade 4 teachers showed no significant relationship, even when considering that Grade 4 teachers reportedly devoted at least "Moderate" amounts of time to 13 of the 19 variables.

Although four of the correlations associated with the basic skills approach were found to be negatively correlated, only reported time spent on phonics and decoding in Grade 1 sheds a negative light on the basic skills or traditional approach to teaching reading. The other three negative correlations between reported basic skills practices and Grade 3 and Grade 4 might be expected since the majority of students are reading by this time in their elementary education careers. Despite the fact that no significant positive relationships between the reported time spent on reported basic skills and the MEAP were found, many more basic skill approaches were not associated with MEAP scores than were associated negatively.

Whole-language approaches show a seemingly more positive association. Even though there was extensive reported use of whole-language activities in the participating elementary schools, only process writing showed a significant positive relationship. The findings of this study do not support the use of one approach over another in regard to the

reading debate. At best, only a few grade-level relationships were significant for both sides of the debate, but many more were not significantly related.

Even with only a few reported practices associated with high MEAP scores, students in Southwestern Michigan are learning to read. Since the descriptive portion of this study revealed that the majority of the instructional variables measured by this study are used between a "Moderate" to "Considerable" degree, it can be assumed that these variables are representative of the practices in Southwestern Michigan. With limited connections being made between the time devoted to instructional practices and the MEAP, along with the fact that these practices were shown to be descriptive of current practice, students still learned to read.

Conclusions

Many elementary teachers in this Southwestern Michigan county reported that the teacher education program they completed did not prepare them adequately to teach reading. Despite scant instructional guidance, teachers must make instructional decisions and cope with the effects of their decisions. In teaching all students, teachers of all grades reported using aspects of immersion and taught basic skills by integrating reading and writing activities in their language arts programs. The lack of preparation and minimal knowledge about effective instructional practices do not relieve teachers from the pressures and ramifications of state-mandated achievement tests used in Michigan for school and teacher accountability. This study investigated the use of 19 reported instructional practices of which only 8 correlated significantly with MEAP scores. In

general, teacher use of these practices in terms of time allotment were associated with satisfactory MEAP scores.

Limitations

The first limitation to the findings of this study is the validity of teacher reports. These data are reported only and therefore are only assumed to be true. No classroom observations were made, and there may have been some influence in self-reporting due to the nature of the institution collecting the data.

Although the reported amount of time allotted by elementary teachers for some practices correlated significantly with high MEAP scores, this study could not determine whether spending more time on positively correlated activities actually caused an increase in student achievement or an increase in MEAP scores. The use of correlational research precludes the establishment of cause-effect relationships. Despite the significant relationships found between selected reported practices and MEAP scores, this finding does not provide a valid basis for increasing the amount of time reportedly allotted for a particular practice that correlated positively with higher MEAP scores.

The use of a correlational study could not determine the direction of the relationship between or among the various practices. It could not be determined whether increases in MEAP scores resulted from the reported time allotted for specific instructional practices or whether the reported time allotted for specific instructional practices resulted in higher MEAP scores.

Because MEAP scores were assigned to participating schools and teachers instead of linking individual student scores and their corresponding teachers, the instructional

effectiveness of a particular teacher could not be determined. Not linking the amount of time reportedly allotted by a particular teacher and the achievement of an individual student limited the generalizibility of the findings and confounded the statistical analysis of the data collected. Nevertheless, this study based this connection on the current assumptions found in practice as schools and teachers are held accountable for a school's aggregate MEAP scores.

Implications

The findings of this study have implications for teacher instructional decision making and for the assumptions found in the state of Michigan's accountability tool, the MEAP.

One of the purposes of this study was to describe reading instructional practices as reported by the teachers themselves. By thus describing the language arts programs in this Southwestern Michigan county, school officials have a baseline of information to use in determining the effects of external influences on decision making. Changes in policy, curriculum, or staff development can all be measured by surveying teachers after future changes occur and comparing the findings with the baseline provided by this study.

The baseline of instructional practices reveals that teachers report using a variety of components and activities in their language arts programs. The practices are drawn from both sides of the reading debate's perspective. Language experience, a whole-language approach, and phonics, a traditional approach, were both reportedly used to at least moderate degrees at all grade levels. This balanced approach suggests that teachers in this county see the merit in both approaches and include them in their language arts

programs in hopes of gaining higher achievement levels. The balanced approach, however, may also be indicative of the confusion found in the literature about best practices. As mentioned, the research literature regarding both approaches is inconsistent and is often based more on philosophical and political agendas than on sound research. To be safe, teachers may be drawing from both sides in order to avoid penalizing their students. With these circumstances it could be argued that under the current accountability system, teachers are attempting to avoid punishment rather than to seek rewards.

Given the foregoing description, this study then sought to determine if there is a relationship between the reported components and activities and reading success as defined by the state of Michigan. Since the MEAP is also an accountability measure with behavioristic consequences attached to it, teacher behavior, or time spent on specific activities or components of reading instruction, is rewarded or punished. This study identified the variables which are associated with high MEAP scores for teachers in this county. The findings of this study provide a possible basis for teachers to modify the content of language arts programs by allotting more time for practices associated with higher MEAP scores. Although some questions were answered regarding which instructional practices may lead to higher MEAP scores, there is no indication that these practices actually improve reading achievement. The knowledge of this information could decrease the instructional uncertaintly felt by many teachers for selecting reading practices, especially since the research methods are consistent with the framework of the current accountability system. It should be pointed out, however, that this study cannot be

used to establish any cause-effect relationship between the teaching of any strategy and reading comprehension.

The findings and implications discussed thus far assume a high level of accuracy in the self-reporting of practice by participating teachers. Even though the pitfalls of self-reports have been discussed earlier, it is important to stress that how a teacher defines or implements a particular practice may not agree with how reading experts or even other teachers define or implement the same practice. Even if a universal definition of a practice can be found, teacher self-reporting of time devotion does not necessarily translate into the teacher actually using that strategy or that the teacher even knows how to use that strategy. To correlate self-reported use of given instructional strategies in early grades with a standardized achievement test score in a later grade sets up the very real risk of drawing a conclusion that is simply not true. Thus, the fact that a teacher's reported use of phonemic awareness or phonics instruction is negatively correlated with reaching achievement in the 4th grade may mean only that the teacher is using what that teacher defines as those strategies, not necessarily that the teacher is actually using the practice as it would be defined by the literature on the subject.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study also bring into question the use of the MEAP to inform instruction. Despite the fact that the reported instructional activities were utilized extensively in this county, only eight variables were associated with the MEAP and half of them were related to Grade 4 teaching. In addition, the majority of the relationships were negative. Therefore, the findings can only inform teachers of practices which should

be used less, but not which practices should be devoted more time. With only four variables significantly related among Kindergarten through Grade 3 instruction, approximately 80% of teachers held accountable by Grade 4 MEAP scores are left with virtually no instructional direction or guidance from school MEAP scores.

The fact that only a few significant relationships were found does not condemn the teaching of reading in this county. Students in this county are learning to read. It is surprising, however, that since the majority of the instructional variables measured by this study were regularly reported as being used in the participating schools, more relationships with the MEAP were not found. This finding suggests that the MEAP is not associated with the teaching techniques found in this county's language arts programs and should not be used as a measure to reward or punish teachers.

Using a school-wide MEAP score as an accountability measure or as a measure to inform instruction is not supported based on these findings. The findings of this study support the view that a summative evaluation should not be used as a determination of teacher effectiveness. It is impossible to connect and sum 5 years of instruction into one summative evaluation that assesses the usefulness or effectiveness of schools or teacher decisions or a means for connecting instruction to student performance along the way. There are uses for these kinds of tests, but these findings do not support their use as a decision-making tool or for issuing punishment or rewards for teachers and schools.

Future Research

The first consideration for future research would be to replicate this study with the addition of gathering observational data on teacher instructional behavior. One of the primary limitations of this study was the use of self-reports. In order to gain a more accurate picture of teacher practices, observations should be utilized to corroborate teacher self-reported times and objective observation of times reported on the 19 instructional activities or components.

Further research could expand and compare the instructional practices of teachers in schools whose students score high and low on MEAP to determine whether the amount of time allotted for specific practices differs significantly. Language arts programs of schools with higher MEAP scores could be compared with programs in schools with lower MEAP scores to determine the magnitude of methodological variations.

Future research could also explore the relationship between teacher preparation and student achievement, including whether teacher self-ratings of their professional preparation for teaching reading are related to student performance. Future studies could compare teachers who highly rate their teacher education programs with teachers rating the same programs as inadequate. It may be that teachers who completed a teacher education program a decade ago would rate their teacher education programs lower than more recent graduates of teacher education programs.

An area of interest which should be further investigated is the transitional aspects of language arts programs. The diversity of language arts programs suggests that students are exposed to many different combinations of instructional techniques. From grade to

grade, the emphasis of techniques can change dramatically. Investigating the transition from Kindergarten to Grade 1 may especially prove informative. Do children who transition to similar programs make more progress or is there an appropriate shift of emphasis as is reportedly done in this county? The answer to this question could be investigated by grouping schools with sharp contrasts in language arts programs between grade levels and schools which show more of a transitional shift in focus from grade to grade. The question of whether students who have gradual shifts in focus from grade to grade perform better than students whose shifts in focus are more abrupt can be answered.

Future research could also examine qualitative differences among instructional methodologies and practices instead of determining just the time allotted for teaching a particular subject or skill. This would offer insight into each practice since time spent is only one aspect of presenting instruction and instructional decision making.

Due to the ever-changing teacher population, descriptive surveys should be administered yearly to teachers in this and other counties to determine changes in instructional practices and to identify other relationships with valid measures of reading proficiency.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY MATERIALS

Michigan

FAX Number

May 12, 2000

Dear Colleague:

Within each school district in ⸺ County there are those children who experience various levels of difficulty with the process of learning to read. In recent years that amount of research and resulting articles directed to the subject has been staggering. The Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators released a proposal in February of 1999 focusing attention on prevention services in reading failure to reduce the need for special education services and the ever expanding growth in Michigan's special education population. Within these initiatives lies the question, what are the current instructional practices utilized by elementary teachers in Berrien County for the teaching of reading?

To address this question the following survey has been developed to begin looking at the issue of Elementary Reading Instruction in ⸺ County. It is understood that this may not be the best time of the year to be completing a survey, yet the information you provide will be crucial to decisions made at the county level, as early as the Fall of 2000. Such as, inservice training, grant writing, and future program development. It is estimated that the survey will take between 15 to 30 minutes to complete.

As a means of showing appreciation for the investment of your time, ten (10) $50.00 gift certificates will be awarded to ⸺ in ⸺ Michigan. One 19" color TV/monitor will also be awarded.

This survey is being disseminated by building level administrators and will be collected by the administrators for return to the ⸺ County Intermediate School District. Deadline for completion is May 31, 2000.

At the end of the survey is a brief informal survey of linguistic knowledge that is being used to collect information for future inservice training. Your completion of this survey will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for time in the completion of this survey. Your input will make a difference with our students.

Sincerely,

County Elementary Teacher Reading Survey

Directions: Please respond to the following questions that inquire about elementary reading instruction in your classroom and school.

Education and Professional Development

1. Indicate the **highest education degree** you hold
      (a) Bachelors   (b) Masters   (c) Specialists (d) Doctorate

2. How many **years of experience** do you have teaching elementary school?
      (a) 0-5   (b) 6-10   (c) 11-15   (d) 16-20   (e) 21+

3. What kind of **teacher education program** led to your elementary certification?
      (a) a regular four-year B.A. or B. S certification program
      (b) A five-year B.A. or B.S. program (which might include hours toward a master's degree
      (c) a post-baccalaureate certification program (i.e., you earned a bachelors degree and then got certified)
      (d) a master's degree certification program (i.e., you got certified while earning a master's)
      (e) I am not certified to teach at the elementary level

4. What is your evaluation of the **quality** of your overall elementary teacher **certification program**?
      (a) exceptional   (b) very good   (c) adequate   (d) poor   (e) totally inadequate

With regard to preservice training, how many **courses** did you have that covered the following?

	None	One	Two	Three or more
5. Conceptual foundations of the reading process	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
6. Historical evolution of English	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
7. Knowledge of the English speech sound system and its production	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
8. Knowledge of the structure of English orthography and its relationship to sounds and meaning	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
9. Knowledge of grammatical structure	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
10. Supervised practice in teaching reading (one-to-one & larger group)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
11. Teaching writing	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
12. Children's Literature	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)

13. What is your evaluation of the **quality** of the preparation you received for teaching reading and language arts within your teacher certification program?

      (a) exceptional   (b) very good   (c) adequate   (d) poor   (e) totally inadequate

What activities do you engage in to further your professional knowledge and skill in teaching reading and language arts? (fill in **(a)** for **yes** and **(b)** for **no**: you may offer *multiple* yes responses.)

14. read professional magazines or journals
15. attend workshops, in services, or staff development courses
16. attend local, state, or regional professional conferences
17. attend national conferences
18. present at local, state, regional, or national conferences
19. enroll in college or university courses in education
20. enroll in a graduate degree program in education
21. write articles for professional education newsletters, periodical, or journals
22. membership in professional organizations (please list:_____)
23. serve in a leadership role in a professional organization (e.g., officer, board member, committee chair)
24. conduct research in your own classroom, either alone or in collaboration with others

25. How would you describe **your own reading habits** (i.e., pleasure or leisure reading) outside the school day?

(a) avid reader (I read constantly)
(b) very active (I read every day and widely)
(c) frequent reader (I read most every day)
(d) occasional reader (I read sometimes)
(e) infrequent reader (I hardly ever read)

PHILOSOPHY AND BELIEFS

The following statements represent various **perspectives, philosophies, or beliefs** toward the teaching and learning of reading. Please respond to **ALL** of the following statements by marking **(a)** if the **statement applies to you personally** and **(b)** if the **statement does not apply to you personally**

26. I have an "eclectic" attitude toward reading instruction, which means that I would draw from multiple perspectives and sets of materials when teaching reading
27. I would describe myself as a **whole language** teacher
28. I believe in a **balanced** approach to reading instruction which combines skills development with literature and language-rich activities.
29. I believe that teaching students to **decode** words is one of my most important goals for early reading instruction.
30. I believe that phonics needs to be **taught directly** to beginning readers in order for students to become fluent, skillful readers.
31. I believe in a **literature-based** approach to reading instruction in which trade books (i.e., children's books or "library books") would be used exclusively or heavily.
32. I believe that **basal reading materials** are useful tools for teaching students to read, either as the primary instructional material or along with trade books (i.e., children's books or "library books").
33. I believe students need to be **immersed in literature** and literacy experiences in order to become fluent readers.

Page 2

The following statements represent various **goals** or **objectives** that teachers might have for a reading instructional program. Please respond to **ALL** of the following statements by marking **(a)** if **the statement applies to you personally** and **(b)** if **the statement does not apply to you personally**.

34. It is my goal to develop readers who are **skillful and strategic** in word identification, fluency, and reading comprehension.

35. It is my goal to develop readers who are **critical** and thoughtful in using reading and writing to learn about people.

36. It is my goal to develop readers who are **independent and motivated** to choose, appreciate, and enjoy literature.

37. It is my goal to develop readers who are **knowledgeable** about literary forms or genres and about different text types or structures.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

How much **instructional time** do you devote to the development of the following components or activities within your classroom reading and language arts program? **(a)** for **Considerable** time, **(b)** for **Moderate** time, **(c)** for **Little** time, **(d)** for **No time**. (Indicate your response on the answer sheet next to the numbered item.)

	Considerable	Moderate	Little	None
38. phonological awareness	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
39. reading vocabulary	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
40. comprehension	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
41. critical reading	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
42. oral reading	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
43. silent reading	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
44. study skills	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
45. reading in the content areas	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
46. phonics/decoding	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
47. reading aloud to students	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
48. students reading independently (e.g., DEAR or Reading Workshop time)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
49. oral or written response to literature	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
50. Literature Circles, Book Clubs, literature discussion groups	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
51. reading strategies instruction	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
52. process writing or Writing Workshop	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
53. language experience stories or charts	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
54. spelling lists, activities, or games	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
55. handwriting instruction and practice	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
56. technological applications to literacy (e.g., microcomputers, video, multimedia)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)

Page 3

What reading instructional materials do you use **in your classroom?** Indicate **(a)** if the material is used **Exclusively, (b)** if used **Predominantly, (c)** if used **Moderately, (d)** if used **Infrequently,** and **(e)** if **Never** used.

	Exclusively	Predominantly	Moderately	Infrequently	Never
57. a single basal reading series	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
58. multiple basal reading series	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
59. literature anthologies	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
60. fiction trade books	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
61. nonfiction trade books	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
62. commercial classroom libraries	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
63. phonics workbooks	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
64. general reading skills workbooks	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
65. magazines & newspapers	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
66. big books	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
67. picture trade books	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
68. chapter trade books	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
69. computer hardware and software	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
70. other instructional media (e.g., video/audio tapes and recorders, listening centers, filmstrips, etc.)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)

71. How do you use **basal reading materials** and **trade books** (i.e., children's books or "library books") in your classroom reading program? Choose *one* of the responses below.

(a) I use **basal reading materials** as the **only** reading instructional materials in my classroom; that is, I use no trade books to teach reading.

(b) I use **basal reading materials** as the **foundation** of my reading program; in other words, my reading program is structured around the basal, but I incorporate trade books within the basal program.

(c) I use **trade books** as the **foundation** of my reading program; in other words, my reading program is trade book based, but I use basals some of the time to supplement the trade books.

(d) I use **trade books** as the **only** reading instructional materials in my classroom; that is, I use no basal materials to teach reading.

How, if at all, do you teach reading **skills and strategies** in relation to reading instructional materials? Please respond to **ALL** of the following statements by marking **(a)** if **the statement applies** to you personally and **(b)** if **the statement does not apply** to you.

72. I teach the skills and strategies **as presented** in the basal program.

73. I **select** skills and strategies from the basal program, teaching only those skills that I feel my students need to learn.

74. I use the basal as a **general guide** for teaching skills and strategies, but I adapt or extend instruction from the basal significantly.

75. I **supplement** the basal program by teaching additional skills not covered well or at all in the basal.

76. I use the basal to identify reading skills, but I teach them in the **context** of trade books we are using.

77. I have **constructed** my own skills program, which I teach in conjunction with trade books we are reading.

78. I teach skills and strategies on the basis of ongoing **informal observations and assessments** of my students' learning.

79. I teach reading skills **very little** or not at all--either from the basal or through trade books.

To what degree do you use **trade books** to support your **content area studies** in science, social studies, and mathematics. (For example, using historical fiction and informational books in a social studies unit.)

80. in **science**	a. always	b. often	c. sometimes	d. seldom	e. hardly ever
81. in **social studies**	a. always	b. often	c. sometimes	d. seldom	e. hardly ever
82. in **math**	a. always	b. often	c. sometimes	d. seldom	e. hardly ever

ASSESSING READING DEVELOPMENT

To what degree do you use results from the following types of assessments to make **instructional decisions** in your classroom? **(a)** if they are used to a **Considerable** degree, **(b)** to a **Moderate** degree, **(c)** to a **Little** degree, **(d)** if **not at all**. (Indicate your response on the answer sheet next to the numbered item.)

	Considerable	Moderate	Little	None
83. group standardized reading tests	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
84. individual standardized reading tests	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
85. basal reader program unit/level skills tests	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
86. Informal Reading Inventories	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
87. running records	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
88. reading/writing portfolios	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
89. student interviews and conferences	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
90. reading miscue analysis	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
91. observational checklists/anecdotal records	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
92. emergent literacy surveys/assessments	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
93. informal phonics/decoding assessments	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)

The following statements describe activities or programs some teachers have initiated to involve parents and care givers in their children's literacy learning. Please respond to **ALL** of the following statements by marking **(a)** if the **statement applies** to you personally and **(b)** if the **statement does not apply** to you.

95. I encourage parents/care givers to **read** to their children at home regularly
96. I encourage parents/care givers to **listen to** their children read at home regularly
97. I encourage parents/care givers to provide opportunities for their children to **write** in meaningful ways (e.g., write grocery lists, write down chores, write letter to relatives).
98. I send home **notes** to parents/care givers that explain our classroom reading/literacy program and how they can support it at home
99. I **invite** parents/care givers or other relatives (e.g., grandparents, aunts, uncles) to come to school and help out in the classroom (e.g., listening to children read, reading to children).
100. I regularly send home **books** from my classroom library for my students to practice reading with their parents/care givers
101. I invite parents/care givers to school for special **"workshops"** I conduct on how they can support literacy at home (e.g., reading aloud at home, writing opportunities at home).

FINAL SECTION

102. What is your personal philosophy or perspective about reading programs for young children? Indicate   which statement below best matches your personal philosophy.

(a) I believe in a **reading readiness perspective;** that is, a child's physical, intellectual and emotional maturity are directly related to success in reading and writing. Therefore, it is a teacher's job to provide students appropriate activities (e.g., visual, auditory, motor skill activities) to support or enhance their readiness for reading

(b) I believe in an **emergent literacy perspective;** that is, all children can benefit from early, meaningful reading and writing experiences (e.g., invented spelling, environmental print, being read to). Therefore, it is a teacher's job to provide students appropriate activities that will enable them to understand the functions and forms of literacy and to grow into conventional forms of reading and writing.

What is your opinion about the importance of teaching young children the following word reading strategies? Mark **(a)** if you believe instruction in the strategy is **Essential,** **(b)** if you believe it is **Important,** and **(c)** if you believe it is **Not Important.**

	Essential	Important	Not Important
103. teaching phonic analysis skills/strategies (decoding)	a.	b.	c.
104. teaching structural or morphemic analysis skills/ strategies (meaningful parts of words)	a.	b.	c.
105. teaching contextual analysis skills/strategies (what word makes sense in a selection)	a.	b.	c.
106. teaching words by sight (whole words)	a.	b.	c.
107. teaching meaning vocabulary (word meanings)	a.	b.	c.

If you believe that instruction in **phonic analysis** is "essential or important" (i.e., you answered **(a)** or **(b)** for item 103), please indicate **ALL** (may be more than one) of the statements below that describe how you teach phonics to your students. Mark **(a)** if the statement **describes** how you teach phonics and **(b)** if the statement **does not describe** how you teach phonics to your students.

108. synthetic phonics (systematic instruction in which students are taught letter/sound correspondences first and then are taught how to decode words)
109. analytic phonics (systematic instruction in which students are taught some sight words first and then are taught phonics generalizations from these words)
110. instruction in phonics by way of word families or phonograms (e.g., _all, _ain, _ake words)
111. only as needed (not systematic instruciton; rather, students are taught phonic analysis skills as the need arises
112. in the context of literature (phonics skills are presented and taught through trade books or literature anthologies)
113. in the context of writing and spelling (phonics skills are presented and taught through children's writing)

Which of the following **materials, techniques, or activities** are likely to be found in your classroom regularly (define "regularly" as **three or more** times per week)?Indicate **ALL** of the following statements that apply to you personally. Please respond by marking **(a)** if the **statement applies** to you personally and **(b)** if the **statement does not apply** to you personally

114. big books used instructionally
115. trade books used instructionally
116. basal readers used instructionally
117. children writing and conventional spelling is expected
118. children writing and invented spelling is accepted or encouraged
119. book handling demonstrations or activities
120. phonics and word identification lessons
121. reading aloud to children
122. oral language activities (e.g., songs, chant, poems, rhymes)
123. Reading Workshop time
124. Writing Workshop time
125. Reading response activities (e.g., oral, written, or artistic responses following a reading/listening activity)
126. Free reading periods (e.g. DEAR, or USSR time)
127. Working with word cards (e.g., word banks, sentence strips, word sorts, flash cards, pocket charts)
128. comprehension strategy instruction (e.g., making inferences, drawing conclusions)
129. instruction in comprehension monitoring (e.g., self-questioning, applying "fix-up" strategies such as rereading
130. instruction in literary elements (e.g., characterization, mood, setting, narrative structure)
131. critical reading lessons or activities
132. vocabulary lessons or activities to develop students' knowledge of word meanings
133. literature response activities (e.g., discussion, written responses to literature)
134. literature discussion groups (e.g., Book Clubs)
135. reading nonfiction trade books in order to learn about expository genres
136. teaching reading strategies along with content subjects (e.g., teaching chronological text structure in the context of a social studies textbook lesson

Please answer the following questions on the lines provided below.

Are you currently using a specific **reading model** or **reading program**? If yes, please provide the name and describe.

Name of program or model:_____

How long have you used it? _____ years

Do you use it exclusively? (circle) YES NO

What are the program's strengths: _____

_____

What are the program's weaknesses: _____

_____

On the lines below: Estimate the **total average time** (in minutes) you spend each day for the following reading and language arts activities:

_____ minutes daily specifically for **reading instruction** (e.g., reading "groups," skill or strategy lessons, teacher-guided reading of selections, etc.)

_____ minutes daily for **applying, practicing, and extending reading instruction** (e.g., reading aloud to children, students' independent reading, student-led response groups, cooperative reading activities, etc.)

_____ minutes daily for **language arts instruction and practice** (e.g., writing workshop, response journals, spelling, oral language activities, etc.)

NOTE: These three numbers should reflect an estimate of the **total** amount of time you spend each day for literacy-related instruction and activities.

About how many **total hours** do you and your students spend each year **preparing to take** (e.g., test-taking exercises or lessons) and **actually taking** required standardized and formal assessments (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MEAP, etc.)
  ___ hours spent **preparing** (write total hours per year)
  ___ hours spent actually **taking** (write total hours per year)

Some teachers report that they feel so pressured by the required assessments (mentioned above) that they end up **modifying** their curriculum or instruction to conform to the mandatory assessments. To what degree do you modify your teaching to conform to mandatory assessments (place a check next to the appropriate response.
          _____ very much   _____ somewhat   _____ not at all.

Please take an additional few minutes to complete the following items:

1. **From the list below, find an example of each of the following:**

    scarecrow, nameless, terrible, phonograph, impeached, tables, weakly

inflected verb		bound root	
compound noun		derivational suffix	

2. **For each word on the left, determine the number of syllables, the number of morphemes, and the number of speech sounds:**

	Syllables	Morphemes	Speech Sounds
salamander			
crocodile			
attached			
unbelievable			
finger			
pies			
gardener			

3. **Circle the schwa vowels:**

    about   melody   sofa   effect   difficult   definition

4. **Circle the consonant blends:**

    doubt   known   first   pumpkin   squawk   scratch

5. **Circle the consonant digraphs:**

    wholesale   psychic   doubt   wrap   daughter   think

Please return to your building principal. Thank you for your time.

DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION: MAY 31, 2000.

RETURN ALL COMPLETED SURVEY BOOKLETS AND ANSWER SHEETS VIA INTERSCHOOL MAIL TO:

COUNTY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ATTENTION: JEFF SIEGEL

Intermediate School District

Michigan

Contacts:

Jeff Siegel
Director of Special Education
(jsiege¹

Daniel Applegate
School Psychologist
(dapplega

Eric Hoppstock
School Psychologist
(ehoppstc

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE

Subj:
Re: Request for help
Date: 4/17/00 2:34:55 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: jbaumann@
To: **********
Thank you for your note. I'd be happy to mail you a copy of our survey,
which you may use or adapt. I'll also mail you a copy of the full research
report of the survey project which is in press in Reading Research
Quarterly. Please provide me your mailing address, and I'll get these items
out ASAP.

Jim

===
James F. Baumann, Professor
Department of Reading Education
309 Aderhold Hall - University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602
Voice:. 706-542-3811 Fax: 706-542-3817
E-mail: jbaumann@
===
----- Original Message -----
From: <********>
To: <jbaumann@
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2000 12:00 PM
Subject: Request for help

> Dr. Baumann,

> My name is Dan Applegate and I am a school psychologist in the state of
> Michigan. Our county coordinators have shown an interest in surveying our
> elementary general and special education teachers in regards to reading
> instructional practices. I am also working on my PhD in educational
> leadership and would like to research this topic for my dissertation.
After reading numerous research articles, the survey used in your article
> (published in Reading Teacher, May 98) "Where are teachers' voices in the
> phonics/whole language debate?" appears to have asked many of the
questions we would like answered.
>
> As you know, time constraints and monetary resources are limited and being
> able to adapt or change an existing questionnaire would help immensely.
> Could I use your survey for my research? Could our county use it for their
> research?
>
> If you were to grant permission, can I get a copy of your survey from you
or do I need to contact the journal?

> Thank you for your time. If you have any questions please contact me at
this address (******) or the   Intermediate School
District> 1-616-***-****, ext 180.
>
> Thank you again,
> dan
>

IJD

Y INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 12, 2000

Dear Principals:

The number of articles and voices in the debate over appropriate reading instruction is staggering. The pressure to invest valuable resources in various programs is a reality within in our schools. One of the questions that has developed within this context is, "What are the current instructional practices utilized by elementary teachers in   for the teaching of reading?"
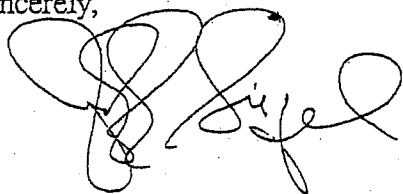
Rather than make assumptions about the practice of reading instruction within our county, a survey has been developed to assess the current practice of teaching reading. The implications for this information are profound and require as much participation as possible to accurately assess the teaching practices within our county. It is hoped that the information collected from this survey will allow for informed decision making as to the allocation of our finances, time, and energy to further reading instruction in our county.

Toward that end, your help in the dissemination of the surveys, collection when completed, and return to   Intermediate School District is **extremely** important. Please distribute the enclosed surveys to ALL ELEMENTARY TEACHERS (including regular education, special education, Title I, etc.). The surveys need to be returned to Jeff Siegel at the Intermediate School District via interschool mail. It is understood that the time of year is not optimal for the completion of a survey, but the need for the survey information during the summer months to analyze and make initial decisions is crucial.

The cover letter will explain the purpose of the survey to participants, as well as, explain incentives to help the completion process.

Once again your diligent attention to this issue is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX C

CORRELATION TABLE

Correlation Table

Values of r Found Between Reported Reading Instructional Practices and Percentage of Students Who Passed the Reading Portion of the Grade 4 MEAP

	Grade					
Variable	K	1	2	3	4	All
Phonological awareness	-.492	.007	-.119	-.713***	-.419***	-.292***
Reading vocabulary	-.406	-.071	-.084	-.247	-.017	-.139
Comprehension	-.332	-.193	.548***	-.112	-.071	-.015
Critical reading	.155	.155	.316	.147	-.268	.084
Oral reading	-.090	.287	-.203	-.057	-.155	-.082
Silent reading	.003	.008	.110	.037	-.032	.021
Study skills	.056	.079	.103	.060	-.024	.083
Content area reading	-.215	.007	-.255	.008	-.063	-.066
Phonics/Decoding	-.247	-.421*	-.006	-.404	-.221	-.250**
Reading aloud		.135	.175	-.103	-.148	-.038
Students reading independently	.350	.293	.402	.284	.117	.247**
Responses to literature	.090	-.224	.373	-.150	-.243	-.010
Literature Circles	.194	-.157	.075	-.207	-.226	-.036
Strategy instruction	-.321	.196	.176	-.101	-.061	-.003
Process writing	-.104	-.407	.200	.452*	-.017	.063
Language experience	-.258	-.166	-.100	-.312	-.332*	-.216*
Spelling lists, activities, etc.	-.111	.040	.045	-.140	-.409**	-.097
Handwriting instruction	-.378	-.245	-.179	-.384	-.521***	-.336***
Technological applications	-.077	.030	-.163	.122	-.243	-.089

*significant at $p < .05$.
**significant at $p < .01$.
***significant at $p < .001$.

141

REFERENCE LIST

REFERENCE LIST

Adams, M. J. (1991). Why not phonics and whole language? In W. Ellis (Ed.), *All language and the creation of literacy*. Baltimore, MD: Orton Dyslexia Society.

Adams, M., & Bruck, M. (1995). Resolving the great debate. *American Educator, 19*(2), 10–19.

Adcock, S. G., & Patton, M. M. (2001). Views of effective early childhood educators regarding systematic constraints that affect their teaching. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 15*, 194-208.

Allington, R. L. (2004). Setting the record straight. *Educational Leadership, 61*(6), 22-25.

Amrein, A. L., & Berliner, D. C. (2002). *The impact of high-stakes tests on student academic performance: An analysis of NAEP results in states with high-stakes tests and ACT, SAT, and AP test results in states with high school examination exams*. Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University, Educational Policy Studies Laboratory.

Anders, P. L., Hoffman, J.V., & Duffy, G. G. (2000). Teaching teachers to teach reading: Paradigm shifts, persistent problems, and challenges. In M.L. Kamil, P.B. Mosenthal, P.D. Peason, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. III, pp. 719-742). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Anderson, R. C., Hiebert, E. H., Scott, J. A., & Wilkinson, I.A. (1985). *Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission of reading*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education.

Airasian, P. W. (1979). A perspective on the uses and misuses of standardized achievement tests. *Measurement in Education, 10*(3). Washington, DC: National Council on Measurement in Education.

Austin, M. C., & Morrison, C. (1963). *The first R: The Harvard report on reading in elementary schools*. New York: Macmillan.

Backman, C. (1984). Moving teacher education toward the twenty-first century: Reflections of a new dean. *Journal of Teacher Education, 35*(2), 2-5.

Barr, R. & Sadow, M. W. (1989). Influence on basal programs on fourth-grade reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 24*(1), 44-71.

Barry, M., Moskow, S., Peck, M. P., & Randolph, L.C. (1992, April 21). *A survey of reading approaches.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

Barton, P. E. (1999). Tests, tests, tests. *American Educator, 22*(2), 18-23.

Baumann, J. F., & Heubach, K. M. (1996). Do basal readers deskill teachers? A national survey of educators' use and opinions of basals. *The Elementary School Journal, 96*(5), 511-526.

Baumann, J. F., Hoffman, J. V., Moon, J., & Duffy-Hester, A. M. (1998). Where are teachers' voices in the phonics/whole language debate? Results from a survey of U.S. elementary classroom teachers. *The Reading Teacher, 51*(8), 636-650.

Baumann, J. F., Hoffman, J. V., Duffy-Hester, A. M., & Moon-Ro, J. (2000). The first R yesterday and today: U.S. elementary reading instruction practices reported by teachers and administrators. *Reading Research Quarterly, 35*(3), 338-377.

Bawden, R., Burke, S., & Duffy, G. (1979). *Teacher conceptions of reading and the impact on instructional behavior* (Research Series No. 47). East Lansing: Michigan State University, Institute for Research on Teaching.

Berliner, D. C., & Calfee, R. C. (1996). *Handbook of educational psychology.* New York: Simon & Schuster MacMillan.

Biehler, R. F., & Snowman, J. (1993). *Psychology applied to teaching* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Blumenfield, S. (1993). *Practical homeschooling* (No. 3). New York: Home Life.

Bond, G. R., & Dykstra, R. (1967). The cooperative research program in first-grade reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 2*, 5-142.

Bond, G., & Dykstra, R. (1997). The cooperative research program in first-grade reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 32*(4), 348-427.

Booth, D. (1998). *Guiding the reading process: Techniques and strategies for successful instruction in K-8 classrooms.* New York: Stenhouse Publishers.

Borman, S., & Levine, J. (1997). *Elementary instruction: From plan to delivery.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Bower, D. (1983). *Performance of rural Morenci, Michigan fourth grade children from low-income families on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Test from 1980-1984 compared to school and state wide averages.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 252817)

Bracey, G. W. (2000). Value added, value lost? *Rethinking Schools Online, 15*(1). Retrieved April 4, 2000, from http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/15_01/Val151.shtml.

Bracey, G. W. (2002). The 12th Bracey Report of the condition of public education. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(2), 135-150.

Burhans, C. S. (1985). English teachers and professional reading. *English Education 17*(2), 91-95.

Burns, M. (1998). *Interpreting the reliability and validity of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program. Fact finding on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program*: Report of the Standing Committee for the Michigan Association of School Psychologist. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 418138)

Burns, P. C., Roe, B. D., & Ross, E. P. (1984). *Teaching reading in today's elementary schools: Reading instruction* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Bush, G.W. (2000). Governor George W. Bush's plans for education in America. In D. P. Doyle (Ed.), The presidential sweepstakes 2000. *Phi Delta Kappan, 82*(2), 122, 126.

Callaway, B. A., & Jarvis, O. T. (1972). Program and materials used in reading instruction: A survey. *Elementary English, 49*(4), 578-81.

Camilli, G., & Wolfe, P. (2004). Research on reading: A cautionary tale. *Educational Leadership, 6*(6), 26-29.

Carbo, M. (1998). Debunking the great phonics myth. *Phi Delta Kappan, 70*(3), 226-240.

Chall, J. (1967). *Learning to read: The great debate*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Chall, J. (1983). *Stages of reading development*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Chall, J. (1996). *Stages of reading development*. Ft. Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

Chall, J. (1989). Learning to read: The great debate 20 years later -- a response to "Debunking the great phonics myth." *Phi Delta Kappan, 70*(7), 521-538.

Cheek, M. C. (1982). Preservice education in reading: What do the teachers say? *Reading Psychology, 3*(1), 25-35.

Christie, K. (2002). States address achievement gaps. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(2), 102-103.

Cizek, G. J. (2001). Cheating to the test. *Education Next*. Hoover Institution. Retrieved April 20, 2004, from http://www.educationnext.org/2001sp/40.html

Clark, C. M. (1988). Asking the right questions about teacher preparation: Contributions of research on teacher thinking. *Educational Researcher, 17*(2) 5-12.

Cloud-Silva, C., & Sadonski, M. (1987). Reading teachers' attitudes toward basal reader use and state adoption policies. *Journal of Educational Research, 81*(1), 5-16.

Coles, G. (1998a). *Reading lessons: The debate over literacy*. New York: Hill & Wang.

Coles, G. (1998b). No end to the reading wars. *Education Week, 18*(14), 52-54.

Coles, G. (2000). *Misreading reading: The bad science that hurts children.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Collins, J. (1997). How Johnny should read. *Time, 150*(17), 78-81.

Connelly, V., Johnston, R. S., & Thompson, G. B. (1999). The influence of instructional approaches on reading procedures. In G. B. Thompson & T. Nicholson (Eds.), *Learning to read: Beyond phonics and whole language* (pp. 103-123). New York: Teachers College Press.

Cooley, W. W., & Bernauer, J. A. (1991). School comparisons in statewide testing programs. In R. Stake (Ed.), *Advances in program evaluation* (pp. 103-124). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Cooper, J. D. (1997). *Literacy: Helping children construct meaning* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Corbett, H. D., & Wilson, B. (1991). *Testing, reform, and rebellion*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Cunningham, J. W. (1999). How we can achieve best practices in literacy instruction. In L. B. Gambrell, L. M. Morrow, S. B. Neuman, & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction* (pp. 34-45). New York: Guilford Press.

Dahl, K. L., & Scharer, P. L. (2000). Phonics teaching and learning in whole language classrooms: New evidence from research. *The Reading Teacher, 53*(7), 584-594.

Darling-Hammond (2003). Keeping good teachers. *Educational Leadership, 60*(8), 6-14.

Davis, O. L., Jr. (1999). When will the phonics police come knocking? *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 14*(3), 187-191.

Drecktrah, M. E., & Chiang, B. (1997). Instructional strategies used by general educators and teachers of students with learning disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education, 18*(3), 174-181.

Dembo, M. (1994). *Applying educational psychology* (5th ed.). New York: Longman.

Devine, T. G. (1981). *Teaching study skills: A guide for teachers*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Dick, W. & Carey, L. (1996). *The systematic design of instruction* (4th ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

Dorn, S. (1998). The political legacy of school accountability systems [Electronic version]. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 6*(1). Retrieved April 5, 2000, from http:/olam.ed.asu.edu/epaa/v6n1.html

Doll, R. C. (1989). *Curriculum improvement: Decision making and process* (7th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Durbin, D. A. (2000, May 31). MEAP results for 4th, 7th grades released. *South Bend Tribune*, p. D1.

Education Trust (1998). Good teaching matters: How well-qualified teachers can close the gap. Washington, D.C.

Ekwall, E. E., & Shanker, J. L. (1985). *Teaching reading in the elementary school*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

Evers, W. M., & Walberg, H. J. (2002). *School accountability*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.

Feng, J. (1990, April 16th). *Match or mismatch: Relationship between first-grade teachers theoretical orientation to reading and their reading instructional practices*. A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association in Atlanta, GA, Memphis State University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 341966)

Firestone, W., Mayrowetz, D., & Fairman, J. (1998). Performance-based assessment and instructional change: The effects of testing in Maine and Maryland. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 20*(2), 95-113.

Foorman, B. R., Fletcher, J. M., Francis, D. J., & Schatschneider, C. (2000). Response to Taylor et al.: Misrepresentation of research by other researchers. *Educational Researcher, 29*(6), 27-37.

Foorman, B. R., Fletcher, J. M., Francis, D. J., Schatschneider, C., & Mehta, P. (1998). The role of instruction in learning to read: Preventing reading failure in at-risk children. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 90*(1), 37-55.

Freeman, R. H., & Freeman, G. G. (1987). Reading acquisition: A comparison of four approaches to reading instruction. *Reading Psychology, 8*(4), 257-272.

Gagne, R. M., & Briggs, L. J., (1974). *Principles of instructional design*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Gambrell, L. B., & Mazzoni, S. A. (1999). Principles of best practice: Finding the common ground. In L. B. Gambrell, L. M. Morrow, S. B. Neuman, & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction* (pp. 11-21). New York: Guilford Press.

Gambrell, L.B., Morrow, L. M., Neuman, S. B., & Pressley, M. (1999). *Best practices in literacy instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.

Gersten, R. & Dimino, J. (1993). Visions & revisions: A special education perspective on the whole language controversy. *Remedial & Special Education, 14*(4), 5-13.

Goertz, M.E., Floden, R. E., & O'Day, J. (1996). *Studies of education reform: Systemic reform: Vol. 1. Findings and conclusions*. New Brunswick, NJ: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Goodman, K. (1998). *Defense of good teaching: What teachers need to know about the reading wars*. York, ME: Stenhouse.

Goodman, Y. (1989). Whole-language research: Foundation and development. *Elementary School Journal, 90*(2), 207-221.

Gore, A. (2000). Vice President Al Gore plans for education in America. In D. P. Doyle, (Ed.), The presidential sweepstakes 2000. *Phi Delta Kappan, 82*(2), 123, 127.

Gove, M. K. (1983). Clarifying teachers' beliefs about reading. *Reading Teacher, 37*(3), 261-266.

Grace, M. (1991, May 6-10). *A survey of instructional reading practices of new teachers in three states.* Paper presented at the 36ᵗʰ Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association, Las Vegas, NV.

Grant, S. G. (2000). Teachers and tests: Exploring teachers' perceptions of changes in the New York state testing program. [Electronic version]. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 8*(14). Retrieved February 15, 2003, from http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa

Grossen, B. (1997). *30 years of research: What we now know about how children learn to read.* Santa Cruz, CA: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 415492)

Grundin, H.U. (1985). A commission of selective readers: A critique of "Becoming a nation of readers." *Reading Teacher, 39*(3), 262-266.

Guskey, T. R. (2003). What makes professional development effective? *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(10), 748-50.

Haladyna, T. M. (1992). The effectiveness of several multiple-choice formats. *Applied Measurement in Education, 5,* 73-88.

Hall, J. L., & Kleine, P. F. (1992). Educator's perceptions of NRT misuse. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, 11*(2), 18-22.

Hall, M. A. & Ramig, C. J. (1980). Reading strategies of first grade children taught by a language experience approach and a basal approach. *Reading World, 19*(3), 280-89.

Hamachek, D. (1969). Characteristics of good teachers and implications for teacher education. *Phi Delta Kappan, 50*(6), 361-345.

Hanushek, E., & Raymond, M. E. (2001). The confusing world of educational accountability. *National Tax Journal, 54*(2), 365-84.

Harper, M. (2000, June 4). MEAP scores rise and fall. *Herald-Palladium*. Retrieved March 8, 2001, from http://www.heraldpalladium.com/articles/2000/06/04/news/export13208.txt

Harris, A. J., & Sipay, E. R. (1984). *Readings on reading instruction*. New York: Longman.

Haycock, K. (1998). Good teaching matters: How well-qualified teachers can close the gap. *Thinking K-16, 3*(2). Washington, DC: Education Trust, National Science Foundation. (ERIC Reproduction Document No. 457260)

Hiebert, J., & Stigler, J. W. (1999). *The teaching gap: Best ideas from the world's teachers for improving education in the classroom city?* New York: The Free Press.

Hill, M. H., & Beers, G. K. (1993, December 1). *Teachers as readers: Survey of teacher personal reading habits and literacy activities in the classroom.* Paper presented at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference, Charleston, NC.

Hinkle, D. E., Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S.G. (1994). *Applied statistics for the behavioral sciences.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Hoffman, J. V. , McCarthey, S. J., Bayles, D., Price, D., Elliot, B., Dressman, M., & Abbott, J. (1995). *Reading instruction in first-grade classrooms: Do basals control teachers?* (Reading Research Rep. No. 43). Athens, GA: National Reading Research Center, University of Georgia. (ERIC Reproduction Document No. ED387792)

Hough, J.B., & Duncan, J.K . (1970). *Teaching: Description and analysis.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Howell, D. C. (1997). *Statistical methods for psychology* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Duxbury.

Huling-Austin, L. (1986). Factors to consider in alternative certification programs: What can be learned from teacher induction research? *Action in Teacher Education, 8*(2), 51-58.

Innis, R. G. (2002). There's more than mythology to California's reading decline. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(2), 155-159.

Irvin, J. L., & Conner, N. A. (1986). Reading instruction in middle level schools: Results of a U.S. survey. *Journal of Reading, 32*(4), 306-311.

Izumi, L. T. & Evers, W. M. (2002). State accountability systems. In W. M. Evers & H. J. Walberg (Eds.), *School accountability* (pp. 105-153). Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.

Jacob, B. A. & Levitt, S. D. (2004). To catch a cheat. *Education Next, 4*(1), 68-75.

Jamar, D., & Pauls, L. W. (1986). Reading teachers are asked: What is relevant in the classroom? *Reading Horizons, 27*(1), 19-25.

Kagan, D. (1992). Professional growth among preservice and beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research, 62(2)*, 129-170.

Kelleher, J. (2003). A model for assessment-driven professional development. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(10), 751-757.

Kemp, J. E., Morrison, G. R., & Ross, S. M. (1996). *Designing effective instruction* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kohn, A. (1993). *Punished by rewards: The trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise, and other bribes.* New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Kohn, A. (1999). *The schools our children deserve: Moving beyond traditional classrooms and tougher standards.* New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Kohn, A. (2001). Beware of the standards, not just the tests: Learning is threatened by specific, measurable, uniform mandates. *Education Week, 21*(4), p.52-

Kohn, A. (2002). The 500 pound gorilla. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(2), 113-119.

Krashen, S. (2002). Speculation and conjecture. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(2), 157-159.

Leahy, T. H. (1987). *A history of psychology: Main currents in psychological thought* (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Levine, A. (1994, December). The great debate revisited. *The Atlantic Monthly, 274*(6). Retrieved August 23, 2000, from http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/educatio/levine.htm

Lexicon Publications (1987). The new lexicon Webster's dictionary of the English language. New York: Author.

Lyon, G., Vassen, M., & Toomey, F. (1989). Teachers' perception of their undergraduate and graduate preparation. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 12*(4), 164-169.

MacPherson, R.J.S. (1996). *Educative accountability: Theory, practice, policy, and research in educational administration*. Tarrytown, NY: Pergamon.

Madaus, G. (1988). The distortion of teaching and testing: High-stakes testing and instruction. *Peabody Journal of Education, 65*(3), 29-46

McGee, L. M., & Lomax, R. G. (1990). On combining apples and oranges: A response to Stahl and Miller. *Review of Educational Research, 60*(1), 133-140.

McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

McNeil, J. (1985). *Curriculum: A comprehensive introduction* (3rd ed.). Toronto, Canada: Little, Brown & Company.

McNergney, R. F., & Herbert, J. M. (1998). *Foundations of education: The challenge of professional practice* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

McPike, E. (1995). Learning to read: Schoolings first mission. *American Educator, 19*(2), 3-6.

McPike, E. (1998). The unique power of reading and how to unleash it. *American Educator, 22*(1), 4-5.

Meier, D. (2002). Standardization versus standards. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(3), 190-207.

Mendez, T. (2004, January 29). Reading choices narrow for schools with federal aid. *The Christian Science Monitor, 96*(44). Retrieved March 29, 2004, from www.csmonitor.com/2004/0129/p12s02-legen.html

Metcalf, S. (2002). Reading between the lines. *Nation, 274*(3), 18-22.

Michigan Department of Education. (2003). *Michigan consolidated state application accountability workbook: For state grants under Title IX, part C, section 9302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (PL 107-110)*. Lansing: Author.

Michigan Education Assessment Program. (2000). *Michigan merit and MEAP information: Design validity of the MEAP test*. Lansing: Author. Retrieved November 11, 2000, from http://www.meritaward.state.mi.us/mma/design.htm

Michigan Reading Association. (1999). *Michigan Definition of Reading*. Grand Rapids: Author. Retrieved July 11, 2000, from http://www.michiganreading.org/DEFINITION%20OF%20READING.html

Miller, J. A. (1987). *Attitudes and image of reading teachers*. Highland Heights, KY: Northern Kentucky University. (Eric Reproduction Document No. ED 286169)

Millman, J. (1997). *Grading teachers, grading schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Minitab. (2000). *Minitab statistical software: Release 13 for Windows*. State College, PA: Minitab.

Moats, L. C . (1995). The missing foundation in teacher education. *American Educator, 19*(2), 43-51.

Moore, B., & Harris, B. (1986, November 13-14). *An assessment of preservice teachers' knowledge of instructional strategies for teaching phonics*. Paper presented at the 65th Annual Meeting of the California Educational Research Association, Los Angeles. (ERIC Reproduction Document No. 298445)

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

Morrow, L.M., & Asbury, E. (1999). Best practices for a balanced early literacy program. In L. Gambrell, L.M. Morrow, S. Neuman, & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction* (pp. 49-67). New York: Guilford.

Murphy, J.T., & Cohen, D.K. (1974). Accountability in education--the Michigan experience. *Public Interest, 36*, 53-82.

Nairne, J. S. (2000). *Psychology: The adaptive mind* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. New York: Author.

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

National Institute of Health and Human Development. (2000). *National Reading Panel: Teaching children to read.* Washington, DC: National Institute of Health.

The new Lexicon Webster's dictionary of the English language. (1987). New York: Lexicon Publications.

Nicholson, T. (1999). Literacy in the family and society. In G. B. Thompson & T. Nicholson (Eds.). *Learning to read: Beyond phonics and whole language* (pp. 127-149) New York: Teachers College Press.

No Child Left Behind Act. (2001). PL 107-110, 115 Stat. '425 (2002).

Nolen, P., McCutchen, D., & Berninger, V. (1990). Ensuring tomorrow's literacy: A shared responsibility. *Journal of Teacher Education, 41*(3), 63-72.

O'Neil, J. (1998). *Transforming classroom practice.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

Owens, R. G. (1998). *Organizational behavior in education.* Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon.

Paez, M. (2003). Gimme that school where everything is scripted. *Phi Delta Kappan, 84*(10), 757-763.

Palardy, J. M. (1975). *Teaching today: Tasks and challenges.* New York: MacMillan.

Parkay, F. W., & Hardcastle-Stanford, B. (1998). *Becoming a teacher* (4th ed.). Needham, Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Pearson, D. (2004). The reading wars. *Educational Policy, 18*(1), 216-37.

Pearson, P. D., & Raphael, T. E. (1999). Toward an ecologically balanced literacy curriculum. In L. Gambrell, L.M. Morrow, S. Neuman, & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction* (pp. 22-33). New York: Guilford.

Peterson, D. P. (1997). The first-grade studies: A personal reflection. *Reading Research Quarterly, 32*(4), 428-432

Popham, W. J. (1974). *Evaluation in education: Current applications.* Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Popham, W. J. (1993). *Educational evaluation* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Popham, W. J. (2001). *The truth about testing: An educator's call to action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Prawat, R. S. (1992). Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning: A constructivist perspective. *American Journal of Education, 100*(3), 354-95.

Pressley, M. (1998). *Reading instruction that works*. New York: Guilford Press.

Pressley, M., & Rankin, J. (1994). More about whole language methods of reading instruction for students at risk for early reading failure. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 9*(3), 157-168.

Pressley, M., Rankin, J. & Yokoi, L. (1996). A survey of instructional practices of primary teachers nominated as effective in promoting literacy. *Elementary School Journal, 96*(4), 363-384.

Putnam, J. (2002, August 19). Phonics finds favor in Michigan schools. *Booth Newspapers*. Lansing Bureau: The National Right to Read Foundation. Retrieved April 23, 2004, from http://www.nrrf.org/article_putnam-8-19-02.htm

Quatroche, D. J. (1999). *Helping the underachiever in reading*. Bloomington, IN: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. (ERIC Reproduction Document No. 434331)

Rafferty, P. T. (1975). *Reading certification: The elementary teacher, English teacher, and reading specialist*. Master's thesis, Southern Illinois University, 1974. ERIC Reproduction Document No. 103837)

Rasinski, T. V. (2003). *The fluent reader: Oral reading strategies for building word recognition, fluency, and comprehension*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.

Raywid, M. A. (2002). What's worth measuring? *Phi Delta Kappan, 83*(6), 433-436.

Reutzel, D. R., & Cooter, R. B. (1990). Whole language: Comparative effects on first-grade reading achievement. *Journal of Educational Research, 83*(5), 252-257.

Reutzel, D. R., Hollingsworth, P.M., & Vigas-Cox, S. A. (1996). U.S. state legislators' perceptions and knowledge. *Reading Research and Instruction, 35*(4), 343-364.

Roe, B. D., Stoodt, B. D., & Burns, P.C. (1998). *Secondary school literacy instruction: The content areas* (6th ed.). New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Roeder, H. H., Dalls, K. B., & Eller, W. (1971). What Johnny knows that teacher educators don't. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 7*(1), 3-10.

Rosenfield, S. A. (1987). *Instructional consultation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Sack, J. L. (2002). Experts debate effects of whole: School reform. *Education Week, 21*(20), 6.

Sacks, P. (1999). *Standardized minds*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing.

Sanders, W. L., & Horn, S. P. (1998). Research findings from the Tennessee Value Added Assessment System (TVAAS) Database: Implications for educational evaluation and research. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 12*(3), 247-256.

Schickendaz, J. A. (1990). The jury is still out on the effects of whole language and language experience approaches for beginning reading: A critique of Stahl and Miller's study. *Review of Educational Research, 60*(1), 127-131.

Scriven, M. (1988). Evaluating teachers as professionals: The duties-based approach. In S. J. Stanley & W. J. Popham (Eds.), *Teacher evaluation: Six prescriptions for success* (pp. 110-142). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Seymor, L. (2001, July 17). SOL tests create new dropouts. *The Washington Post*, pp. A1, A8.

Shannon, P. (1982). Some subjective reasons for teachers' reliance on commercial reading materials. *Reading Teacher, 35*(8), 884-889.

Shannon, P. (1990). *The struggle to continue: Progressive reading instruction in the United States*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Shepard, L. A. (2000). The role of assessment in a learning culture. *Educational Researcher, 29*(7), 4-14.

Slavin, R. (1989). Pet and the pendulum: Faddism in education and how to stop it. *Phi Delta Kappan, 70*(7), 752-758.

Smith, F. (1997). *Reading without nonsense* (3rd ed.). New York: Teachers Press.

Smith, F. (1999). Why systematic phonics and phonemic awareness instruction constitute an educational hazard. *Language Arts, 77*(2), 150-155.

Smith, F. (2001). Just a matter of time. *Language Arts, 80*(4), 256-258.

Smith, M. L. (1991). Meanings of test preparation. *American Educational Research Journal, 28*(3), 521-542.

Smithson, J. L. & Porter, A. C. (1994). *Measuring classroom practice: Lessons learned from efforts to describe the enacted curriculum -- The reform up close study* (Research Report Series Report #31). Madison, WI: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

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

Sosniak, L. A., & Stodolsky, S. S. (1993). Teachers and textbooks: Materials used in four fourth-grade classrooms. *The Elementary School Journal, 93*(3), 249-275.

Stahl, S. A., & Miller, P. D. (1989). Whole language and language experience approaches for beginning reading: A quantitative research synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 59*(1), 87-115.

Stanovich, K E. (1994). Romance and reality. *Reading Teacher, 47*(4), 280-91.

Stein, M., & Osborn, J. (1993). Second invited response: Revising the revisions. *Remedial and Special Education, 14*(4), 17-18, 25.

Stoodt, B. D. (1981). *Reading instruction.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Stubbs, M. (1982). Conversaion II: Issues in the application of research results. In T. M. Amabile & M. L. Stubbs (Eds.), *Psychological research in the classroom* (pp. 21-35). New York: Pergamon Press.

Stufflebeam, D. L., Madaus, G. F., & Kellaghan, T. (2000). *Evaluation models: Viewpoints on educational and human services evaluation* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Kluwer.

Swanson, H.L. (1999). Reading research for students with LD: A meta-analysis of intervention outcomes. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 32*(6), 504-532.

Taylor, D. (1998). *Beginning to read and the spin doctors of science: The political campaign to change America's mind about how children learn to read.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Taylor, N., Pickert, S., & Chase, M. (1978, March 27-31). *Views on reading and language: A comparison of the opinions of university reading faculty, classroom teachers, and parents.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC: (ERIC Reproduction Document No.154347)

Thomson, B., & Miller, L. D. (1991). *Pilot study of the effectiveness of a direct instructional model as a supplement to a literature-based delivery model: Traditional teaching to whole language; A focus on instructional routines.* Sanibel, FL: Florida Educational Research Council Research Bulletin. (ERIC Reproduction Document No. 352602)

Thompson, G.B., & Nicholson, T. (1999). *Learning to read: Beyond phonics and whole language.* New York: Teachers College Press.

To close the gap, quality counts. (2003). *Education Week, 22*(17), 7.

Tunmer, W. E., & Chapman, J. W. (1999). Teaching strategies for word identification. In G. B. Thompson & T. Nicholson (Eds.), *Learning to read: Beyond phonics and whole language* (pp. 74-102). New York: Teachers College Press.

Turner, R. L. (1989). The "Great Debate" - can both Carbo and Chall be right? *Phi Delta Kappan, 71*(4), 276-283.

Walker, B.J. (2000). *Diagnostic teaching of reading: Techniques for instruction* (4th ed.). New York: Longman.

Weinstein, C.S. (1989). Teacher education students' preconceptions of teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 40*(2), 53-60.

Winkeljohann, R., Sr. (1976). State certification of reading teachers. *Reading Teacher, 29*(5), 524-525.

Wise, A.E., Darling-Hammond, L., McLaughlin, M.W., & Bernstein, H.T. (1984). *Teacher evaluation: A study of effective practices.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Wittich, W. A., & Schuller, C. F. (1979). *Instructional technology: Its nature and use* (6th ed.). New York: Harper & Row.

Wood, K. E. (1978). *Reading attitudes of prospective teachers*. Old Westbury, NY: State University of New York College, Education Department. (ERIC Reproduction Document No. 223539)

Zimmerman, J. (2003, February 10). One way to end the math and reading wars. *Christian Science Monitor, 95*(52). Retrieved February 25, 2004, from http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=9061996&db=afh

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

Zucker, C. (1993). Using whole language with students who have language and learning disabilities. *The Reading Teacher, 46*(8), 660-670.

VITA

VITA

Name: Daniel J. Applegate

Place of Birth: South Bend, IN

Undergraduate and Graduate Schools Attended:

> Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN
> Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI

Degrees Awarded:

> BA in Psychology, Wabash College, 1991
>
> MA in Educational and Developmental Psychology, Andrews University, 1996
>
> EdS in School Psychology, Andrews University, 1999

Professional Experience:

May 1995:	Director, Westside Basketball League, South Bend, IN
August 1997:	School Psychologist, South Bend Community School Corp.
August 1998:	School Psychologist, Berrien Count Intermediate School District
January 1999:	Adjunct Professor, Lake Michigan College, Benton Harbor, MI
January 2001:	Adjunct Professor, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN
August 2001:	Assistant Girls Varsity Basketball Coach, Saint Joseph High School, South Bend, IN.