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The Effect of Repeated Reading on Content Learning in a Preschool Classroom

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The Effect of Repeated Reading on Content Learning in a Preschool
Classroom

by

Nicole M. DeMarco

August, 2011

A thesis or project submitted to the Department of Education and Human
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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education.

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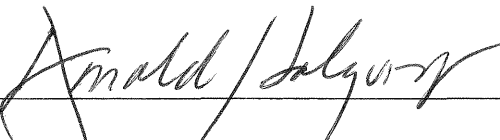
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Chapter 1- Introduction

Every day in my preschool classroom I read aloud to my students. Read aloud selections were both fiction and non-fiction that parallel the theme or topic for that week. Students were read to several times a day, during which engaging students, and observing what they were learning from the books read was important. Knowing what they were gaining and understanding from the books helped the teacher use this information to know which books were appropriate for the students based on the content contained in the selection. Also, topics presented to the students in the books may have still needed more clarification because the books contained information presented in a way the students could not easily grasp. I undertook this project because I was curious to see if reading a story more than one time to a group of preschool students might enhance their learning and understanding of a topic.

Problem Statement

Read alouds are used in various ways in a classroom curriculum. Although a lot of research has been conducted on the importance of read-alouds on younger students, as well as younger students' literacy and vocabulary development, there has not been much research done on how this affects a student's understanding of content. Studies have been conducted and have shown the impact of read alouds on middle and high school students, such as in a Social Studies classroom (Albright, 2002), but there is a void in research for students at the preschool level.

Significance of the Problem

Reading to children has been highly researched and many articles have been published for teachers and parents. The read aloud technique is often seen at the preschool and early elementary ages. Reading aloud to these children not only helps them hear new vocabulary (Leung, 2008) but also helps them learn early literacy behaviors, such as print awareness and fluency, at their most formative literacy ages (Justice and Sofka, 2010). It has also been shown that reading to students a story repeatedly helps them understand new vocabulary (Leung, 2008). Investigating how read alouds affect a preschooler's knowledge of a particular subject or content is also important but has not been seen in research. When teaching preschool and early elementary students, early reading behaviors are taught through curriculum in the content areas. When developing lessons, the understanding of different content is expected. It is important to investigate whether incorporating repeated read alouds into these lessons has an impact on the students' understanding of the content that is taught.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of repeated read alouds on students' understanding of content. The following research questions were addressed: To what extent do read alouds enhance learning and understanding at the preschool level? To what extent do read alouds engage the students in learning the content at the preschool level? Observations of specific students in my classroom as well as observations of all students in my class were conducted to investigate the

second research question: To what extent do read alouds engage the students in learning the content at the preschool level? Read aloud selections were on topics covered previously but were not currently being studied. Read aloud selections were familiar to the majority of students. The selection was read to the students once per day for three days. Three individual students were given pre and post assessments in order to investigate the first research question: To what extent do read alouds enhance student learning and understanding at the preschool level? Throughout this study I hoped to discover how effective repeated read alouds were in teaching students new information as well as in engaging them in their learning. I hope to share my findings with teachers, parents, and colleagues.

Rationale

Read alouds were a very important part of the curriculum in my preschool classroom. My own classroom was made up of fourteen students. Read alouds were used daily in my classroom for a variety of reasons, including introducing new content and engaging individual student interests. I had realized the students viewed these read alouds as important to their learning of new topics and ideas; they looked forward to this part of their curriculum every day. The students looked to read alouds as another tool that was used to talk about the content being taught, but I am curious to find out to what extent the read alouds themselves effect the students' understanding of the content.

Definitions

Read alouds- When talking about read alouds I will be referring to the definition given by ESIP (The Elementary Science Integration Projects, 2011):

“A read aloud is a planned oral reading of a book or print excerpt, usually related to a theme or topic of study. The read aloud can be used to engage the student listener while developing background knowledge, increasing comprehension skills, and fostering critical thinking. A read aloud can be used to model the use of reading strategies that aid in comprehension.”

Summary

Read alouds are an essential part of a preschool curriculum. Although this is true, much research has investigated how read alouds help students increase their vocabulary and learn to read independently. There is not much research on how repeated read alouds have an effect on a student’s understanding of content in the younger grade levels. My study was conducted to learn how repeated read alouds affect students’ learning and understanding of content presented in a book.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

Reading aloud to students in a classroom is often a part of a teacher's lesson or unit plan. For example, a classroom teacher can use a read aloud to help strengthen the students' vocabulary in a science unit (Leung, 2008) or to help students increase their knowledge of specific content areas (Heisey & Kucan, 2010). Effective read alouds help students increase their knowledge of content and increase vocabulary through the use of interactive or repeated read alouds (McGee and Schickedanz, 2007).

While researching the effect that read alouds have on a student's understanding of content knowledge, I recognized multiple areas of read alouds in which research has already been done. Much research has been conducted in the areas of vocabulary development, enhancing the understanding of content knowledge, repeated read alouds, and the effects of read alouds on preschool students. Therefore, this literature review will discuss previous research in four subsections: Teaching vocabulary through read alouds, learning concepts in content areas, repeated read alouds, engagement during read alouds and read alouds in a preschool classroom.

Teaching vocabulary through read alouds

Leung (2008) conducted a study analyzing how students learn science vocabulary when using repeated read alouds. Leung's research has shown that shared readings in a classroom give opportunities for students to come in contact with new words in context rather than in isolation. The students then use this new word and construct knowledge and meaning through its use in the story. Students use

illustrations from the books that support the text and their own responses to help construct meaning and understanding of new vocabulary words. Partial knowledge of the word may only be acquired but by using repeated read alouds the word may take on more meaning (Leung, 2008). When reading the same text repeatedly to the students, the students begin to think about new ways it is used and then create new meanings based on information heard from the text.

Leung's (2008) study was conducted in a YWCA child development center in a preschool classroom of three and four year olds. All the children were in small group interactive repeated read alouds using science information books. Target words from the books related to specialized vocabulary that the children would most likely not hear in oral language alone. Hands-on experiences with these words were used as well.

Thirty- seven preschool children in an urban YWCA child development center in the southeastern United States participated in this study. Thirty- two students completed all phases of the study. The students ranged in economic backgrounds, from students whose parents were university students and faculty to students who were housed in homeless shelters. They also ranged in ethnic backgrounds, but over 50% of the students were of European American descent. One three-class and one four-class was involved in the project.

The students were given a word recall test to analyze their understanding of the new vocabulary words. They were given this same test three times, after each retelling of the story. The students were asked the meaning of the word and then

asked to elaborate on what they were saying. The students could use both verbal words and gestures to help explain the meaning of the word. A picture recall test was also given to the students to test their knowledge of the new vocabulary words after the retelling of the stories. The students were shown pictures and asked to point to the picture that showed the meaning of the vocabulary word. Three different leveled books were chosen for the study and 32 target words were selected to use from these books.

The results of Leung's (2008) study showed that the children who participated increased their scores significantly on a standardized test that measured vocabulary understanding. These results are given based on both the read alouds that were done and the hands-on activities used. At the end of the study, pre and post assessments showed that these students were also better at book retellings and could more easily explain the words related to the science concepts.

Kindle (2009) completed a study in which she showed how vocabulary develops during read alouds. Reading aloud to children provides a powerful context to learning words. Books that are chosen for read alouds are usually used to engage students and provide a good platform to motivate students to attend to new words (Kindle. 2009).

Kindle's study was conducted at a small private school in the south central United States. It is an ethnically diverse, middle class neighborhood in a suburb of a large metropolitan area. One kindergarten teacher, one first-grade teacher, and two second-grade teachers participated in the study with their classes. Each teacher was

observed four times over a six week period. The teachers would carry out a read aloud lesson as normally conducted in their classrooms.

The results of Kindle's (2009) study showed that teachers employed a variety of instructional strategies. This included questioning, providing a definition, providing a synonym, and providing examples, clarifying or correcting students' responses, extending a student generated definition, labeling, imagery, and morphemic analysis. More than one strategy was often used during instruction. These findings showed that teachers focused much attention to teaching vocabulary to their students when reading aloud. Attitudes and enthusiasm for the read alouds also had an effect on the vocabulary the students learned as well.

Silverman and Crandell (2010) conducted a study showing how promoting vocabulary learning in read aloud time as well as during normal classroom instruction in pre kindergarten classrooms and kindergarten classrooms helped in vocabulary learning. Picture books provided rich contexts for vocabulary instruction (Silverman & Crandell). Silverman and Crandell showed how vocabulary instruction during read aloud times, as well as the vocabulary instruction that is done outside of read aloud times, has an effect on students' learning new vocabulary.

The study was conducted in sixteen pre-kindergarten or kindergarten classrooms in an urban school district in the northeastern United States. Two-hundred forty-four students who were four, five, or six years old participated from these classrooms. Fifty- five percent of the students were males. The sample included

thirty-eight percent African- American, thirty-two percent Caucasian, seventeen percent Asian, and fourteen percent Hispanic.

The teachers in each classroom participated in professional development about how to incorporate learning new vocabulary during read alouds. The teachers obtained specific books to read to their students in the classroom and vocabulary word lists to focus on with each book. The teachers were observed three times a week in their normal language arts blocks. The observers noted when the teachers made reference to the vocabulary words as well as assessments that were given to the students in the beginning and end of the year.

The results showed that when certain vocabulary instruction patterns were implemented by teachers, vocabulary outcomes improved for children (Silverman & Crandell, 2010). The language arts block in these classrooms consisted of a differentiation of instruction rather than just read alouds which help with learning new vocabulary with the read alouds that were given.

Learning concepts in content areas with read alouds

Read alouds can be used to help students learn background information about different content areas (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006). The researchers suggest using several picture books as a way to enhance learning of a subject area as well as helping the student have a “curriculum bridge” (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006) to use in helping to understand a specific concept. This bridge helps the students to link what they already know about a particular topic and help to enhance this

understanding with more information as well as illustrations that help the students make connections and have a better understanding of that topic.

Heisey & Kucan (2010) used read alouds to introduce science concepts to elementary students. Research has shown that integrating science and literacy has a positive impact on student achievement. Heisey and Kucan wanted to investigate how the students' interactions with the read alouds and using various texts would affect the students' learning of the science topics.

The participants of Heisey and Kucan's (2010) study were first- and second-graders in a university lab school in the northeastern region of the United States. One class was randomly assigned to be the "after reading" group. The "during reading" group included nine students, four of whom were first-graders and five who were second-graders. The students who did not have parental permission slips or students who had an absence during the study were taken out of the results and the data for those students were not used.

Three books with specific biographical information about three specific scientists were chosen for the study. While reading the texts, the teacher sectioned the books into portions in which questions would be asked and discussions would take place. The questions that were asked were designed to draw attention to the scientists' work, address content specific information in the text, assist the students in making connections with previously read texts, and to help students have a better understanding of science-related vocabulary. A script was developed which the teacher read during the story. These scripts were developed by Heisey and Kucan to

answer their study's research questions, but were also based on procedures seen in the book *Questioning the Author* by Beck, McKeown, Hamilton, & Kucan (2007). These authors were employed to show the teachers different techniques to use in the study focusing on concepts of read alouds such as how to chunk parts of the book together to help the students gain more information from the read aloud. This helps the students not to be overwhelmed with the information presented but gives the students enough information to discuss and learn from (Heisey & Kucan, 2010). The questions for the after reading group were the same as the "during reading" group but were asked after the entire book was read. Pre and post tests were also given to assess the students' understanding and attention during the text.

The results of the study showed that first- and second-graders can be engaged in a concept when using more than one text and this can help them develop understanding of the themes that are presented. The discussions helped the students to not only see the smaller concepts that were present in the stories but also notice bigger pictures that can be connected to science. Students in the "during reading" group scored better on their post tests about the concepts than the "after reading" groups. This caused Heisey and Kucan to conclude that using multiple texts to show specific concepts is important for students' understanding and that multiple exposures to a topic help the students gain mental illustrations of the information presented.

Repeated read alouds

McGee and Schickedanz (2007) describe interactive repeated read alouds as a way to help students in preschool and kindergarten with comprehension and

vocabulary development. Through book introductions and introduction of new vocabulary while reading, as well as repeated readings of the books, they are more likely to be able to retell what happened in the story and remember the new vocabulary that was presented. The researchers point out that the way in which books are shared with the students and the frequency of the readings matter in the students' understanding of the material. Allowing the children to actively answer and ask questions throughout the read aloud as well as making predictions allows the children to gain more understanding from the story. Other techniques such as allowing students to use the story in dramatic play, inserting definitions of certain words while reading, and explaining the illustrations in the story while reading are also useful techniques in student understanding of the content of the story. McGee and Schickedanz suggest using a frequency of reading the story repeatedly three times, treating each time differently and using different techniques and introducing new topics each time the book is read.

Leung (2008) also uses her study to show the effects that using repeated read alouds has on preschoolers' understanding of science vocabulary. In the study, the results showed that there was a significant change in the amount of detail the students recalled after the first, second, and third time the student had heard the story. When assessed on the vocabulary words that were presented in the story, the students had better understanding of what these words meant each time the story was retold, especially when used with an interactive reading of the story.

Reading aloud in preschool classrooms

Reading aloud to students in a preschool classroom can help them understand the way print works. Justice and Sofka (2010) relate that several ideas about how print works can be pointed out while reading aloud to these young students. Showing that a sentence is read from left to right, seeing words that are similar across different stories and making predictions based on the illustrations are all important skills for students to develop. Mastering these skills help students become better at understanding how print works.

Leung (2008) researched the idea that vocabulary of a preschool student can also be affected by read alouds. In her study, the students who listened to and took part in interactive repeated read alouds about different science concepts gained a better understanding of the vocabulary that was used in the story. With each read aloud, the students gained a better understanding of the vocabulary and concepts that were presented to them in the book.

Silverman and Crandell (2010) also discussed the idea that read alouds in preschool classrooms help teach students new vocabulary. The results showed that through using read alouds along with the other methods in the classroom, the preschool students had a better understanding of the new vocabulary and could start using the new words on their own as well.

Read alouds and engagement

When reading aloud to students in a classroom, it is important to keep the students engaged in the material. Moschovaki, Meadows, and Pellegrini (2007) conducted a study to show the different ways to read aloud to students and the effect this had on the engagement of students. In their study, there were students between the ages of three and a half and five and a half years old. The students were from a school in Chios and Lesvos in Greece. Each class studied had between ten and twenty students in each classroom. All four teachers read the same four books that spanned different genres. The teachers read the books based on different categories. These included performance oriented and interactive style of reading the book which were coded while the reading was taking place and the responses from the students as the reading was taking place. The teacher chose which style to use when reading the book.

The results of the Moschovaki, et al., 2007, study showed that the teacher more often used the performance oriented category to read aloud to the students when reading fiction texts and conversely used the interactive style of reading when reading non-fiction texts. The students showed greater engagement when teachers read from the fiction texts. The findings also showed the more successful the teacher was in presenting the book to the children in the classroom, the more engaged the students were in the story read. The way the teacher read the story was directly related to how involved the students wanted to be in the story itself, therefore having a direct effect on the students' engagement.

When reading aloud in a classroom, students have different ways in which they show how engaged they are. Sipe (2002) discusses the expressive clues shown by students during a read aloud which show the engagement level they had when listening. Sipe shows the idea that dramatizing the actions being read, talking back to the characters or story, inserting themselves or others in the classroom into the story, critiquing and/or controlling a certain part of the story, and talking over the idea in the story and making it their own shows the engagement the students have while it is being read. Students showing active engagement while the story is read demonstrate how involved the student is with the story and the engagement they have with what is read.

Summary

The references used in this chapter have helped to guide the research for this study. Supporting studies and results on how read alouds effect a student's understanding of specific content and vocabulary, as well as what effects read alouds have on a preschoolers' knowledge and understanding were organized into four different categories: teaching vocabulary through read alouds, learning concepts in content areas, repeated read alouds, engagement during read alouds and read alouds in a preschool classroom.

Chapter 3- Methods and Procedures

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of repeated read alouds on preschool aged children. However, these studies have focused on increasing print awareness and vocabulary in these students. The purpose of this study is to discover the effect repeated read alouds have on my preschool students' content learning. I used the constant comparative method (Glaser & Straus, 1967) to analyze the knowledge the students have of the topic before the read aloud takes place as well as after to see how much change has occurred. I undertook this project because I was curious to see how much these read alouds affected the students' knowledge and understandings as well as their daily play.

Research Questions:

- To what extent do read alouds enhance the students' learning and understanding?
- To what extent do read alouds engage the students in learning content in a preschool classroom?

Participants

The participants of this study were fourteen students who were three years old and attended my preschool classroom. This preschool classroom was in a daycare center in a suburban setting in western New York State. In total, eight boys and six girls attended. All the participants were from low to middle income households.

Three participants from the total of fourteen were chosen at random to be the main focus group of this study. The first participant, Ella, had been in my classroom

for ten months at the time of this study. She was three years and ten months at the start of this study. She played well with the other students, was often engaged and answered questions in the classroom during read alouds and other whole group and small group activities. She was new to the daycare center when she started in my classroom.

Bailey, the second participant in this study, had been a student in my classroom for eight months at the time of the study. He was three and eight months old when the study started. He was often quiet and reserved during whole group activities but when in a small group would participate in the activities. He would answer questions when asked and stayed on task when talking about a specific topic in the classroom. He has attended the daycare center since he was two years old.

Lia, the third participant in this study, was a student in my classroom for six months at the time of the study. She was three and six months when the study started. She had a very outgoing personality, always talking and making comments during different teaching and reading done during whole group activities. She was often seen having something in her hands or fiddling with something around her when in these situations. She was always seen playing with other students during small group activities and would always participate. She was also new to the daycare center when she started in my classroom when she was three years old.

Procedures of the Study

1. The three students chosen at the start of the study completed a pre-assessment before each new topic to find out the prior knowledge the student had. The questions were unique to the book being read.
2. The whole class of students was read aloud to in the afternoon. The students were read to from the same book three times in three days, once each day.
3. The three individual students completed post assessments after the three days to see the change that occurred in their knowledge, if any. The pre and post assessments had the same questions.
4. Observations also took place during the read alouds in order to assess student engagement.

Data Collection and Analysis

Several data collection techniques were used in order to explore the impact that read alouds have on students' content knowledge. I used different assessment techniques such as pre and post assessments, observations, and discussions to show how the students responded to the read alouds and how much new information was gained from the repeated readings. I reviewed the student responses before and after each read aloud. I then analyzed each assessment using the constant comparative method. I charted the responses I received from the students in the data collection and looked for commonalities across the data. I used these results and commonalities that were seen to make conclusions about the effect read alouds have on the content

learning and understanding of the students as well as the impact engagement has on the content learning of students.

Pre and Post Assessments

Pre and post assessments were given to the three children who were the main subjects of the study. The students were assessed on specific concepts in the books that were read during the afternoon circle time. These assessments were compared based on what information the students gained from hearing the stories. The questions used specific information that was discussed in the stories. The assessments were given to the students after all three days of reading the story.

Observations

All the students in the classroom were observed to see the effect the read alouds had on their everyday activities. As the students went through their day playing outside, playing at centers, or doing projects, observations were noted if the students were incorporating what they heard or saw in a read aloud to their everyday play. Each student's engagement and actions during the read aloud were also noted in an observation notebook. Specific actions the students did during the read alouds, how often they responded to what they saw in the story, and the attentiveness of the students were noted in this notebook.

Data Analysis

I used the data that was retrieved from the assessments to observe what the students learned during the read alouds. I also used observational data to measure how engaged the students were during the repeated read alouds. I took note of

specific actions of the students during the read alouds themselves as well as during the assessments. I used this together with the data from the assessments for my findings.

Positionality of the Researcher

I am currently in the final semester of graduate studies for a Master's Degree in Childhood Literacy. I hold a New York State initial teaching certificate in childhood education, grades 1-6. I have spent the previous seven years studying and practicing various elements of effective teaching in elementary school settings. My most recent studies have focused on effective instruction and practices specifically related to the area of literacy.

I have a professional relationship with all the participants of this study. The participants are a part of my own classroom. Some students have been a part of my class longer than others. I read aloud to these students several times a day in the classroom even when there is not a study taking place.

Trustworthiness

My goal for this research was to present my observations and assessment results in an honest and professional manner. I used accepted methods of data collection and analysis, including prolonged engagement and constant comparison method. With prolonged engagement I have spent a reasonable amount of time with the students collecting data, between five and six weeks. With the constant comparison method, the subjects and the data collected from subjects were repeatedly compared to each other to produce the results.

Limitations

There were some limitations that can be seen embedded in this study. The students' ability to express their own ideas or answers to assessment questions verbally can be difficult for a three-year-old to do. When going through the questions with the student, they may not have the ability or know-how to thoroughly give all the details that they may know about a question. They may also have a hard time staying focused on the task at hand. Therefore, assessment questions were short and discussion length was limited. The number of participants used in this study may cause a flaw in the data because of the limited number of responses and similarities between the participants. Also, due to the small sample size, participants had similar socio-economic backgrounds. In contrast to this, another limitation may be in the prior knowledge of the students. Some students may have had more exposure to different topic areas than others.

Summary

Through this study I hoped to gain more knowledge about the effect read alouds have on students' understanding of content learning. I did this through different forms of data collection and analysis including observations and assessments. I conducted this study in my own preschool classroom, especially focused on the responses of a random sample of three of my students. Through these observations and analysis of the data collected, I hoped to see to what extent read alouds affect students' understanding of content.

Chapter 4- Results

Once I completed collecting data for the study, I organized and analyzed the information and created an individual case study for each of the students. I then conducted a cross case analysis to find similarities and differences between and among the three students' responses to determine the effect read alouds have on their knowledge of content learning.

Case 1: Ella

Ella has been in my classroom for eleven months. She always completed group activities and often participated in answering questions when asked in whole group situations. When examining the assessments given to Ella, her knowledge showed changes between the pre and post assessments. In the test for the story *A Grand Old Tree*, Ella changed her answers or kept all of her answers the same for most of the questions asked in the pre and post assessments. For example, for the question "what types of things grow in trees" she changed her response from "I don't know" to "apples," which is stated in the book. She also kept her answer to "what type of animals live in trees?" as "birds" which is a correct response found in the content of the story.

	Where do the roots of a tree grow?	What types of animals live in trees?	What types of things grow on trees?	What happens to the tree in the fall/winter time?
Pre Assessment	In the grass -	Birds +	I don't know -	It doesn't grow +
Post Assessment	Outside -	Birds +	Apples +	It dies +

Figure 1. *A Grand Old Tree* assessment questions and answers from Ella (in all assessment figures, + means the student's was counted as a correct response and – means the student's answer was not counted as a correct response).

In the assessment for *The Tiny Seed*, Ella also showed growth in her knowledge of the content presented. For the questions “What types of animals eat seeds?” and “How are seeds moved from place to place?” Ella responded in the pre test by answering “I don't know.” After the repeated readings of the story, Ella answered both questions correctly with the answers “a bird” and “with the wind” respectively. In the same assessment she also kept her answers to the questions “what can a seed turn into?” and “what does a seed need to help it grow?” the same in the pre and post assessment, both correct answers to the questions.

	What can a seed turn into?	What types of animals eat seeds?	How are seeds moved from place to place?	What does a seed need to help it grow?
Pre Assessment	A flower +	I don't know -	I don't know -	Water +
Post Assessment	A flower +	A bird +	With the wind +	Water +

Figure 2. *The Tiny Seed* assessment questions and answers from Ella

The assessment for the story *From Tadpole to Frog*, showed Ella did not show any change in her responses. For all four questions, Ella gave the same response in both the pre and post assessments. For the assessment she answered only one of the

questions correctly and answered “I don’t know” for one question. For the questions “How does a frog eat?” and “What types of animals might try to eat a tadpole?” she answered “his hands” and “a tiger” respectively. These answers do not reflect information from the read aloud, so they were counted as incorrect and were repeated between the pre and post assessment. She answered “in the water” for the question “Where do frogs live?” which is a correct response. Both times these questions were asked she responded the same way. This was due to her prior knowledge of the topic of frogs as well as the confirmation of frogs living in the water shown in the story’s text and pictures.

	What are baby frogs called?	How does a frog eat?	Where do frogs live?	What types of animals might try to eat a tadpole?
Pre assessment	I don’t know -	His hands -	In the water +	A tiger -
Post assessment	I don’t know -	His hands -	In the water +	A tiger -

Figure 3. *From Tadpole to Frog* assessment questions and answers from Ella

While reading the stories, Ella continued to show much engagement with the stories by interacting with the words and pictures that were shown. She would make comments about the pictures such as pointing out the different characters that were in the story or commenting on what the picture was showing, such as the boy giving the girl a flower in the story *The Tiny Seed*. She would also laugh if something funny was said. When listening to the story, she did not seem distracted by other disturbances that were happening around her, such as classmates talking out of turn or moving all around the carpet while the story was read. She stayed very quiet when listening to all

the stories and kept this demeanor throughout the course of the study. When answering the questions about the stories, Ella was often distracted. Most of the assessments were conducted during play centers and she seemed anxious to go back to play. She would run off after the questions were over and when the questions were asked she would look off into the play center she was originally playing at before being asked to answer the questions. She seemed more concerned about what she was missing in the center rather than the questions themselves. Her lack of interest in the questions may have affected her scores on the assessments (Figure 4).

	<u><i>Butterfly Spring</i></u>	<u><i>From Tadpole to Frog</i></u>	<u><i>The Tiny Seed</i></u>	<u><i>Oceans</i></u>	<u><i>Follow the Polar Bears</i></u>	<u><i>A Grand Old Tree</i></u>
Pre Assessment Score (%)	25%	25%	25%	50%	50%	50%
Post Assessment Score (%)	50%	25%	100%	50%	50%	75%

Figure 4. Pre and Post test assessment percent correct for each book for Ella

Case 2: Bailey

Bailey has been in my classroom for nine months. He was a very quiet child when with adults and during group activities, but when questions were asked, he often participated by raising his hand during group time activities. He was also very active when playing or interacting with peers in a small group setting by showing enthusiasm and much verbal language when interacting with friends. When examining the pre and post assessments, I found Bailey often changed his answers to the questions. Some changes were to correct answers and some changed correct

answers to the wrong answers. In the story *Follow the Polar Bears*, Bailey changed his answer to the question “Where do polar bears live?” from his pre test response “in the snow” to the post test response “in the pond.” He also made a similar change with the question “What helps the polar bear to not slip on the slippery ice?” In the pre test Bailey answered saying “his claws” and in the post test answered “the water.” On the other hand, Bailey corrected the response to the question “What does a polar bear eat.” On the pre-test, Bailey responded “snow.” On the post test he responded, “fish.” In addition Bailey kept his response the same to the question, “What is a baby polar bear called?” On both assessments Bailey responded, “a big one,” which are not correct answers. Bailey used answers from the assessments for *From Tadpole to Frog* on the assessment for *The Tiny Seed*. For example in the question “What can a seed turn into?” in the post test he answered, “a frog.” Also, in the questions “What types of animals eat seeds?” and “How are seeds moved from place to place?” Bailey responded, saying in the pre tests for both “a frog” and “the pond” to each question respectively.

	Where do polar bears live?	What is a baby polar bear called?	What helps the polar bear to not slip on the slippery ice?	What does a polar bear eat?
Pre assessment	In the snow +	A big one -	His claws +	Snow -
Post assessment	In the pond -	A big one -	The water -	Fish +

Figure 5. *Follow the Polar Bear* assessment questions and answers for Bailey

	What are baby frogs called?	How does a frog eat?	Where do frogs live?	What types of animals might try to eat a tadpole?
Pre assessment	A big frog -	His hands -	In the pond +	A frog -
Post assessment	Daddies -	His hands -	In the pond +	A deer -

Figure 6. *From Tadpole to Frog* assessment questions and answers for Bailey

	What can a seed turn into?	What types of animals eat seeds?	How are seeds moved from place to place?	What does a seed need to help it grow?
Pre assessment	A snake -	Frog -	The pond -	I don't know -
Post assessment	A frog -	A fish -	The dirt -	A big flower -

Figure 7. *The Tiny Seed* assessment questions and answers for Bailey

Bailey also showed repeated answers to different questions in the assessments. In the pre and post test for the story *Butterfly Spring*, he often used the answer “a caterpillar” to different questions. He used the answer “a caterpillar” for the question “what is a butterfly called when it is a baby?” for both the pre and post assessment which is the correct answer to the story. He also used this answer in the pre test for the questions “What kinds of animals might try to eat a butterfly?” and “What does a butterfly look like?” When he changed his answer to “a caterpillar” for these questions in the post test, he answered one of the questions correctly and one of the questions incorrectly.

	What is a butterfly called when it is a baby?	What does a butterfly eat?	What kinds of animals might try to eat a butterfly?	What does a butterfly look like?
Pre assessment	A caterpillar +	A raccoon -	A caterpillar -	A caterpillar -
Post assessment	A caterpillar +	A cat -	A cat +	They are orange +

Figure 8. *Butterfly Spring* assessment questions and answers for Bailey

Bailey was also very engaged when listening to the stories that were read aloud. He stayed focused on the reading and always looked at the different pages of the book while read. He seemed to pay attention to the story as it was being read to him and was not distracted during the reading of the stories. He did not seem distracted when answering his questions during center play time. He would listen to the questions asked and did not look around the room at the other children playing but paid close attention to what I was asking him.

	<i>Butterfly Spring</i>	<i>From Tadpole to Frog</i>	<i>The Tiny Seed</i>	<i>Oceans</i>	<i>Follow the Polar Bears</i>	<i>A Grand Old Tree</i>
Pre Assessment	25%	25%	0%	0%	50%	0%
Post Assessment	75%	25%	0%	0%	25%	25%

Figure 9. Pre and post test assessment percent correct for each book for Bailey

Case 3: Lia

Lia was a student in my classroom for six months. She was a hyper and outgoing student who often needed to be reminded of what she should be doing. She often distracted others around her by trying to talk to them or touching them and often had things in her hands such as her shoe laces, hair ties, or hair clips during whole

group circle times. In the pre assessment for *Butterfly Spring*, Lia often had answers that were not at all correct; in the post assessment her answers were on topic but often still were not correct. For the question “What is a butterfly called when it is a baby?” Lia responded on the pre assessment, “flies” and on the post assessment “in a cocoon.” She did this also with the fourth question “What does a butterfly look like?” In the pre assessment she answered, “who flies in the sun.” In the post assessment Lia answered “with wings.” The answers to both of these questions were not correct but they were on the topic of butterflies and closer to the correct answers.

	What is a butterfly called when it is a baby	What does a butterfly eat?	What kinds of animals might try to eat a butterfly?	What does a butterfly look like?
Pre assessment	Flies -	Flowers -	Deers -	Who flies in the sun -
Post assessment	In a cocoon -	Leaves -	A cat +	With wings -

Figure 10. *Butterfly Spring* assessment questions and answers for Lia

In the assessment for the story *A Grand Old Tree*, Lia changed her answers for most of the questions between the pre and post assessments. For the question, “Where do the roots of a tree grow?” Lia changed her answer from the pre test answer “from flowers” to “outside” on the post test. This was not the correct answer but was still on the topic. She also did this for the questions “What types of things grow on trees?” and “What happens to the tree in the fall/winter time?” For the first of these questions, Lia changed her answer from “plants” to “apples,” a correct answer. For the second question she changed her answer from “the snow comes down” to “it dies,” a response closer to the correct response. For another question on this

assessment, “What types of animals live in trees?” Lia kept her answer the same. She responded saying “monkeys” which was a correct answer based on her background knowledge, but not a correct answer based on the story.

	Where do the roots of a tree grow?	What types of animals live in trees?	What types of things grow on trees?	What happens to the tree in the fall/winter time?
Pre assessment	From flowers -	Monkeys +	Plants -	The snow comes down -
Post assessment	Outside -	Monkeys +	Apples +	It dies +

Figure 11. *A Grand Old Tree* assessment questions and answers for Lia

Lia was often distracted during the reading of the different stories. She paid attention at points and seemed to follow the ideas of the story but was always moving around and doing something else while the story was being read. She often played with her hair ties or shoe laces while listening to the story and was often moving around to different places on the carpet while the read alouds occurred. When answering the questions during center play time, Lia was very interested in playing. When asked if she wanted to participate, she would want to answer the questions that were asked but would show excitement when going back to her play center. She would look around to the other centers when asked questions but would always give a response when asked.

	<u><i>Butterfly Spring</i></u>	<u><i>From Tadpole to Frog</i></u>	<u><i>The Tiny Seed</i></u>	<u><i>Oceans</i></u>	<u><i>Follow the Polar Bear</i></u>	<u><i>A Grand Old Tree</i></u>
Pre assessment	0%	25%	25%	50%	25%	25%
Post Assessment	25%	25%	25%	50%	75%	75%

Figure 12. Pre and post test assessment percent correct for each book for Lia

Cross Case Analysis

Students' changing answers between pre and post assessments

Each of the students changed their answers between the pre and post assessments. Oftentimes, when this was done the students' answers would change to a correct answer or an answer that was closer to a correct response (23% across the students). This was seen due to the new content that was shown to the students. For example, in the assessment for *A Grand Old Tree*, Lia's answer to the question "What happens to the tree in the fall/ winter time?" changed from "the snow comes down" to "it dies" in the post assessment. This was shown through the new information that was read in the story and the illustrations seen. However, this was not always the case. On occasion the answer that was given would be right the first time, and when the student was asked again, an incorrect answer was given (66% across students). Mostly, this was seen with Bailey, happening 50% of the time in his case. For example, when asked the question "Where do polar bears live?" Bailey changed his answer from "in the snow" in the pre assessment to "in the pond" in the post assessment. Perhaps Bailey remembered other assessments that were given for this same case study. He was asked before this assessment about the frog life cycle when

reading the story *From Tadpole to Frog*, which he may have thought about when answering this question. This trait was also seen approximately five percent of the time with Lia, Ella, and Bailey together. When questions were changed in this way by the students, the same characteristic of using information from other read alouds done in this case study were seen in the answers given by the students.

Students' correct answers between pre and post assessments

There were similarities in the data of all the students in that they showed growth in answering questions correctly. Some students answered the questions right on the first try and others answered them right on the post assessment. This was different for each student and between books. For example, Ella answered the question, "What types of things grow in trees" correctly in the post assessment ("apples"), Bailey answered the question "Where do polar bears live?" correctly in the pre assessment ("in the snow"), and Lia also answered the question "What types of things grow on trees" correctly with the response of "apples" in the post assessment.

The students all had some content knowledge before the pre and post assessments were given. This helped them with having prior knowledge and understanding with the topics to have correct responses in the pre assessments. After hearing the stories read to them repeatedly during the read alouds, the students had the chance to hear new words and see different illustrations that helped them gain knowledge for the post assessment.

Students' ability to answer based on the specific book

Certain books caused the students to be more accurate with their responses than in other books. All of the students had more correct responses for the stories *A Grand Old Tree*, *Follow the Polar Bear*, *The Tiny Seed*, and *Butterfly Spring*. For example, for the story *Follow the Polar Bear*, each student answered at least half or more of the questions correctly between the pre and post assessments as a whole. These stories had simple language and dealt with topics more familiar to the students. These books also had illustrations that made more of an impression on the students who made comments showing their interest and pointing out items they saw. The stories *From Tadpole to Frog* and *Oceans* seemed to cause the most difficulty for the students. These books both had more advanced vocabulary and topics in which the students did not have much prior knowledge. Having a more advanced story, the students gave a higher rate of incorrect responses. For example, when looking at the pre and post assessments of the students, Bailey answered incorrectly three out of the four questions on the assessment for *Oceans*, Ella answered half incorrectly, and Lia answered half incorrectly as well.

Students' engagement during the read aloud/ answering of assessment questions

During each read aloud, engagement for all students was high. Although one student seemed to be more distracted than others, all of them still paid attention to the story when it was read. Having the books read repeatedly with student interaction as well as the book choices caused the students to stay engaged during the readings. The students were also mostly engaged in the questions as they were asked. There were

distractions around the classroom with the other students participating in center time activities, but each participant answered all of the questions that were asked of them in both assessments for all story related books. They seemed eager to participate and enjoyed when asked about the different topics. They seemed happy to help me as the teacher in this matter and would answer the questions quickly. They seemed to want to help me but often were eager to go back and play with their friends. For example, there were many times when asking Lia to answer questions about the story that she would want to answer the questions that were asked but was excited to join her friends again at the center time activity taking place when she was called over. She seemed engaged while with me answering the questions but also was excited and wanted to be a part of the small group activities taking place in the classroom at the same time.

Summary

All the students in the study showed engagement and willingness to answer questions on the pre and post assessments. Although the students all answered the same questions with a variety of answers and responses, the case study students showed differences in their growth in learning of the content. They showed different abilities and content knowledge when answering the questions both in the pre and post assessments.

Chapter 5- Summaries, Conclusions and Recommendations

Read alouds are used in many ways in a classroom and effect students' learning. While researching I found studies have shown the influence read alouds have on content learning of students who are in grade school through high school as well as the effect read alouds have on literacy learning of preschool students (Leung, 2008, Kindle, 2009, Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006). Since read alouds are a large part of preschool curriculum and there is a void in the research of the effect repeated read alouds have on the content learning of preschool students, I wanted to see how the repeated read alouds affected preschool students in my classroom. Specifically, I researched the questions: To what extent do read alouds enhance learning and understanding at the preschool level? To what extent do read alouds engage students in content learning at the preschool level?

Classroom teachers use read alouds in many different areas (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006). While each of these studies found focused on different outcomes and benefits of read alouds, they concluded that read alouds are beneficial to student learning (Heisey & Kucan, 2010, McGee & Schickedanz, Justice & Sofka). Reading aloud to students increases students' understanding on content learning (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006). In this study, read alouds might have contributed to the students' content learning when certain conditions were present. This included the idea of repeated read alouds to the students to help content learning and growth in content knowledge and understanding.

Conclusions

Different conclusions and findings are shown through this study showing the importance of read alouds on the learning and understanding of content. Read alouds that contributed most to student learning had simple language, dealt with topics more familiar to the students, had illustrations that made more of an impact on the students, and engagement during the read aloud corresponding with student understanding. The stories that seemed to cause the most difficulty for students had more advanced vocabulary and topics in which the students did not have much prior knowledge.

Read alouds dealing with topics familiar to students

Using literacy to introduce concepts in a unit has a positive impact on student achievement (Heisey & Kucan, 2010). Read alouds are used to help students learn and understand different content areas. Background information can be introduced in these read alouds (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006) as well as the introduction of topics to students (Heisey & Kucan, 2010). By using literacy when teaching content, the students have a chance to gain knowledge through illustrations and new vocabulary words that are introduced to them through the use of the read aloud. The students can then use the new knowledge gained from the story and make connections to prior knowledge or new information learned throughout the unit. In this study, the students answered assessments based on books related to science concepts read from different books. While listening to the books, the students were immersed in pictures and context that were related to the specific science concept. The students showed, through the pre and post assessments, a growth in their own knowledge and

understanding of the particular science topic covered in the story. Specifically the students as a whole showed a growth in knowledge in the story *Butterfly Spring* and what types of animals may try to eat a butterfly. They all changed their answers in their post assessment to “cat” which was represented in the story. They also learned from that story other parts of the butterfly lifecycle including what a baby butterfly is called. All of the students showed growth in understanding between the pre and post assessment in this story due the prior knowledge they had.

Each student in this study was a student in my classroom for a different amount of time based on his/her age. They moved into the classroom when they turned three years old, which caused the students to be a part of the classroom for different amounts of time. Also, the students were not all a part of the daycare center itself for a long period of time. This has caused some of the students to have less exposure to some of the topics that others may have had more exposure to, even just being a part of my classroom. For example, Ella has spent the most time as part of my classroom. In the story, *A Grand Old Tree*, she did very well on both her pre and post assessments. A lot of the material that was covered in this story included things that we have talked about as a class before. This topic that was covered before Bailey and Lia were part of the classroom. This caused Ella to have more prior knowledge about this topic which helped her in the assessments that were given.

Dealing with some content that is unfamiliar to the students and giving them a lot of new information all at once may have caused the students to become confused when answering questions about the stories. For example, when asking questions

about the story *The Tiny Seed*, Bailey often used answers and topics that were presented in the story *From Frog to Tadpole*. Having these new topics presented to him all at once without other explanation may have caused him confusion. Also, as preschool students, they may have had difficulty expressing their ideas and information. They have not had much exposure to answering assessment questions and their prior knowledge and understanding of this skill may have caused some of the data to show the results that it did.

Illustrations that made a greater impression on the students

The students can use pictures clues and new words that are learned from the text to make connections pertaining to the new topic. The students in this study showed a great use of the picture clues used in the story to learn the new content. In this study, Lia learned about new words and information about the science topics read and showed this through her answers on the post assessments. She answered using information she saw in the pictures and words from the story. In the assessment for

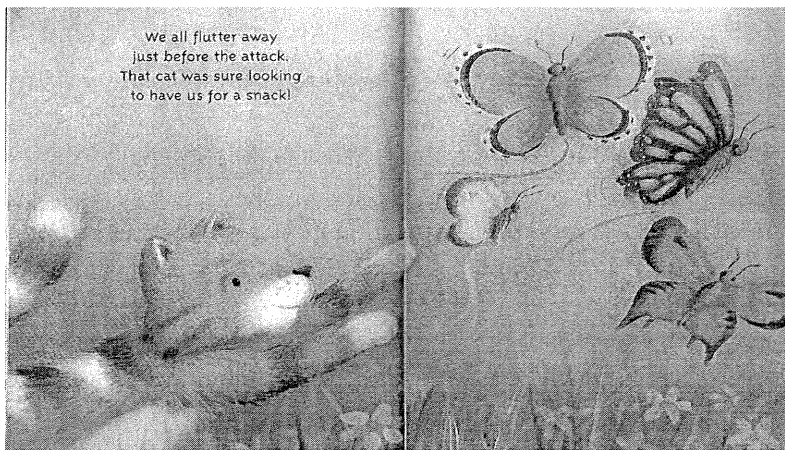


Figure 13. Illustration from *Butterfly Spring* (Koontz, 2009; illustrated by Elliot).

the story *Butterfly Spring*, Lia changed her response to the question “What kinds of animals might try to eat a butterfly?” from “deers” to “a cat,” which went along with the picture presented in the story. Bailey showed the same skill. When asked this question, he changed his response from “a caterpillar” to “a cat” between the pre and post assessments. All three participants changed their answers to “a cat” in this post assessment. This showed the importance of the pictures in the stories read and the connections the students made while listening based on what they saw in the illustrations.

Read aloud structure and student learning

The read alouds that were used in this study were repeatedly read. As in the study conducted by Leung (2008), read alouds were conducted a total of three times. The students were read the story and asked questions before the first readings of the books and then again after the third time, just as in Leung’s study. Due to prior knowledge and book choice, some concepts were shown to have a larger percentage of correct answers compared to others. For example, for the story *Butterfly Spring*, there was a greater understanding of the story shown in both the pre and post assessments that were given. Ella’s understanding was verified by a score of twenty-five percent on the pre assessment and fifty percent on the post assessment. Bailey also showed understanding with a score of twenty-five percent on the pre assessment and seventy-five percent on the post assessment. Lia’s understanding was verified with a zero percent score on the pre assessment and twenty-five percent on the post assessment. When looking at the structure of this story, the words on each page had

simple vocabulary and each sentence was written simply. The vocabulary words that were used in this story were age appropriate for preschool and were more familiar to the students in the class.

The frog lifecycle, which was discussed in the story *From Tadpole to Frog*, is a topic that was less familiar to the students and contained vocabulary words and sentence structures that were more complicated to the students. This caused the students to have fewer correct responses in both the pre and post assessments that were given to the students. All three students in this study showed no growth or change in their responses between the pre and post assessments, their scores between the two remained the same. The lack of prior knowledge was shown by scores of twenty-five percent by all three students in the pre and post assessments. This story contained vocabulary words that were more difficult for student understanding as well as having sentences that were more complex than that of other stories that were read during this study. The complex language caused the students to have less understanding of the content within the book and more need for explanation while reading it to gain full knowledge and understanding of the topic.

Engagement during the read aloud corresponding with understanding

Engagement during a read aloud is important to the students' learning and understanding of what is read (Sipe, 2002). In this study the students showed some engagement in the stories, but some students showed more engagement than others which had an effect on the results shown. While reading the story, Bailey did have engagement in the stories but did not overly make an effort to participate in the story

itself. He would listen contently to each story that was read. Although this is true, he may not have been engaged in what the story was saying. He did not make much movement or say very much while the stories were read but would be focused on the story. Without the use of interaction with the text, it is not certain that Bailey was engaged in the material that was read but was just listening to the story instead. This may have caused no impact in the learning and understanding of the topics that were presented. He would also do this when answering the questions for each story. He was not hesitant in giving an answer in the assessment and would not be distracted by anything that was happening around him. This was true for all the stories that were read. This contributed to Bailey having the scores that he did on his assessments (75%, 25%, 0%, 0%, 25%, 25%). His scores when compared with the other students were the lowest and this could be seen due to his lack of participation, showing less engagement than his peers during the readings of the stories.

During the readings of the stories Ella acted very similarly to that of Bailey. She would focus on the stories that were read and would not be distracted by disturbances from other students around her. She would often make comments about the pictures seen in the story which showed how engaged she was. For example, for the story, *The Tiny Seed*, Ella made a comment about the illustration showing a boy giving a flower to a girl. Every time this page was shown she said, "Look they are friends!" She would also make a comment in the same story in the page showing a cat trying to eat the butterfly. She would say, "Watch out a cat!" when seeing this page. This shows her engagement in the story and would contribute to her changing of

answers between the pre and post assessments, especially for these stories (25% on the pre assessment and 50% on the post assessment for *Butterfly Spring* and 25% on the pre assessment 100% on the post assessment for *The Tiny Seed*)

Lia also showed engagement with the stories read but was often distracted by different disturbances and materials around her. She often needed to be reminded to hold still and to listen to the story. Although this is true, there were times in which Lia was seen to have interactions with the story read showing her engagement with the text. For example, Lia would make the same comments to the story *Butterfly Spring* as Ella did. She would make the comment “Oh no a cat!” when seeing the illustration of the picture of the cat trying to eat the butterfly. This showed her engagement with this story as well as her growth in knowledge in the pre and post assessments that were given (0% for the pre assessment and 25% on the post assessment).

Implications

Implications of these findings indicate that preschool teachers need to recognize that appropriate illustrations that go along with a story are important to the students’ learning and understanding, the importance of repeated read alouds of non-fiction texts on content learning, and allowing for student engagement and interactions during the read alouds to support student learning.

Illustrations

While reading aloud to students in a preschool classroom, illustrations play an important role in the understanding of the content. When the students are read to,

their main focus is on the pictures that correspond with the text that is read. The students will relate the illustrations they see and the words they hear to make sense of the content they are learning. As seen in this study, the students used the visual information that was presented to help them understand different parts of the content presented. The students used the specific picture clues that were given to them as a basis to answer the given questions about the content. It is important for preschool teachers to remember the importance that illustrations have on the understanding of content by their students. Choosing books that have appropriate illustrations are important for students to gain more knowledge and understanding from the read alouds presented as well as cause students to have different discussions than they would have if illustrations were not present (Evans, 1998).

Repeated Read Alouds

Using repeated read alouds in a preschool classroom is beneficial, especially with the use of non fiction texts. As shown through this study, allowing the students to hear the books read to them more than once, the students had the chance to understand and comprehend more information that is presented in the contents of the book. It is important for preschool teachers to remember the impact that read alouds have on the content learning of preschool students. When discussing a new topic the teacher should remember that the more exposure the students have to a specific text, the more knowledge and understanding the students will gain from it (McGee & Schickedanz, 2007, Leung, 2008).

Student Engagement

Allowing students to interact with a text shows the students are engaged and helps the students gain knowledge and understanding of the topic presented (Sipe, 2002, McGee & Schickedanz, 2007). When discussing a new topic the teacher should allow students to make comments on what they are seeing read in a text as well as ask questions if they have any. Teachers should also ask questions of the students about what is seen in the text to check for student engagement of the material presented (McGee & Schickedanz). Having the students involved in the text as it is read is an important part of student learning (McGee & Schickedanz). There should be different activities available for the students to show their engagement in the story as well as different opportunities during the read aloud to check for student engagement as well as student understanding (Sipe, 2002). It is important that the students understand what is read in the story in order for the student to engage in the content and gain more knowledge and understanding of the material (Sipe, 2002).

Recommendations for Future Research

Reading aloud to students has many benefits to student learning. Teachers and schools continue to see benefits of read alouds in the classroom. Based on the research of this study, following are suggestions for future research to help support the influence read alouds have on content learning.

Prior Knowledge

If I were to do this study again I would like to choose a sample based on the students' prior knowledge of the content. This would ensure that the participant pool

included participants with similar amounts of background knowledge. The students in the case study attended my classroom for a different amount of time based on their age. This has caused the students to have different exposure to the topics that were discussed. The students had different amounts of prior knowledge based on what was taught to them the year before or if they had heard the stories previously. Leung (2008) conducted a similar study investigating the influence of repeated read alouds on the vocabulary learning in a preschool classroom. Although a diverse sample was used, there was not a pretest administered to see the background knowledge and understanding of the students. In this study, if all the students had the same amount of prior knowledge or exposure to the subject, results would vary.

Characteristics of participants

I would also like to try increasing the number of participants used in this study. This study only sampled students from a specific background, economic status, and geographical location. This caused the results to have many similarities based on the similar experiences and background knowledge of the students. Kindle (2009) conducted a similar study in a small private school. Although more participants were used, the sample consisted of students from the same economic background. Extending the research to other locations and among other races, economic status and background could provide a wider range of results.

Content Area

This study shows results of learning content through repeated read alouds in the area of science. The stories that were used in this study were based on science-

specific concepts shown in the books. Heisey & Kucan (2010) also used science as the content area of focus for their study on learning new vocabulary with elementary students. Using other content areas such as math and social studies could yield different results. Students are exposed to different content areas in a variety of ways and retain some information better than others. Using other content area books in a study could cause a difference in the data based on what the students already know and how well they understand the different subject matter.

Final Thoughts

Based on the results of this study as well as others, repeated read alouds have an effect on the learning and understanding of content (Heisey & Kucan, 2010). The pictures and words seen in the story have a lasting effect on the students which help them remember while continuing to learn the topic. (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006). Continuing to use read alouds at all ages and grade levels is beneficial and something I will continue to use in my own classroom.

However, even though new information is learned through the read alouds, additional support is often needed. The students in this study often showed an increase in knowledge of the content, but did not always come up with the correct response in the post assessments. Using materials such as projects, worksheets, learning through play centers and interactive read alouds are also great component to use along with the read alouds. Together they all have influences in the learning of content in a classroom. As a teacher, I find it becomes my responsibility to be sure that the students have all of the different methods necessary to be successful in

learning the content presented. Despite the information presented in books I cannot expect that a student, especially in preschool as seen in this study, would have knowledge and tools they need to fully understand a new topic from repeated read alouds alone.

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