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Creating a Lifeline Back to Books For Adolescent Boys Through Multimedia Enhanced Read-alouds

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CREATING A LIFELINE BACK TO BOOKS FOR ADOLESCENT BOYS THROUGH

MULTIMEDIA ENHANCED READ-ALOUDS

BY

JANA WILKENING MCNALLY

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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READING & LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Due to a growing concern regarding the reading motivation levels of adolescent males, educators have been encouraged to broaden their definition of literacy beyond the traditional fiction novel. This study sought to target the reading motivation levels of unmotivated adolescent boys through the use of a multimedia-enhanced read aloud (MERA). Research questions included: (a) How does the implementation of the MERA impact the reading motivation of adolescent male students? (b) How does the implementation of the MERA impact the reading motivation of *unmotivated* adolescent male students? (c) How does the implementation of the MERA impact the reading motivation of adolescent male students compared to adolescent females? (d) How does the implementation of the MERA impact the reading motivation of *unmotivated* adolescent male students compared to *motivated* male students?

To address these questions, a 6-week study that included the implementation of the MERA was conducted in a seventh-grade classroom. Following the MERA, students participated in either a writing prompt or a small group discussion. Data collection included both quantitative and qualitative measures consisting of a Motivation to Read Profile (MRP), interviews, writing prompts, and transcribed discussions with specific emphasis on the data from 6 adolescent male focal students.

From these analyses several important findings about adolescent males' motivation emerged. First, the multimedia-enhanced text improved motivation for all males, especially those identified as unmotivated. In addition, the audio introduction of the MERA was found to be an essential component of engaging and bringing unmotivated male readers quickly into the

text. Further, the visual elements of the MERA assisted the male students' comprehension,

improved the quality of their inferences, and encouraged visual literacy critique. Finally, the

MERA prompted normally unmotivated male students to independently seek out other texts with

multimedia elements.

Findings from this work indicate that teachers must continue to expand their definition of

literacy and include texts, such as a multimedia-enhanced text, to improve male reading

motivation. These texts can serve as a "lifeline" to bring boys back to reading.

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Finally, I owe a thank you beyond words to my husband and best friend, Tim. His hard work and sacrifice for our family allowed me to achieve my dream. Now it's your turn. Love you.

DEDICATION

To my mom who read to me.

To my dad who roots for me.

To my son, Wilk, who entertains me.

To my future baby who kept me company while I finished writing this.

And to my husband, Tim, whose love, support, and hard work for our family allowed me to do

this.

I love you all.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since I was a little girl, I eagerly looked forward to listening to stories read aloud to me. I have vivid memories of my mom reading picture books to me, of my father reading *Charlotte's Web* aloud to my older brother and me, and of my fifth-grade teacher reading aloud *Number the Stars* after lunch. My favorite memories of reading in school always remind me of the teachers who read aloud to me. I am certain that these "read-alouds" played an essential role in creating the love of books that I carry with me today.

Now that I have a seventh-grade classroom of my own, my primary goal is creating an environment that fosters intrinsic reading motivation in my students. Using read-alouds has become one of the many strategies that I have implemented to help my students develop a love of reading. As my time in the classroom has worn on, a secondary goal has begun to emerge. Based on my experience as a middle-school reading teacher, I am concerned about adolescent males' reading motivation. Most of my male students appear far more interested in playing video games, downloading the latest YouTube videos, or playing on their smart phones than reading a book. In my search to discover what motivates boys to read, I began by interviewing my father, who I consider to be a "reader."

In my interview about lifelong reading habits with my father, he remembered, "One of my greatest memories of reading in high school was in freshman year. [The teacher] would every – maybe three times a year – he would read us a book, like a short story or 'To Build a Fire'…He read that to us…And I should go back to grade school…my fifth-grade teacher, read us some Rod Serling books. I remember a story about a man who invents a robot who's a great pitcher. I mean, just to tell you how old I

am now and remember this story. He was a great pitcher and somebody luckily got a hit

– he was throwing no-hitter after no-hitter – somebody got a hit off of him, hit the head

of the pitcher and they discovered that this pitcher was a robot, so they had a lawsuit over

it and they had to give the robot a heart, and so once they gave him a heart, he wouldn't

get anybody out because he felt sorry for them."

He continued, realizing,

"But this story had an incredible effect on me because I still remember it to this day.

There were those books, 'Read Aloud to Your Children,' which this is to me, the early

stages for me where I saw how that effect had. My mom read to me, some teachers read

to me, and the teachers that I remember are the ones that read aloud to me" (Mark

Wilkening, Interview, January 17, 2013).

This interview served as an "aha" moment in my teaching. Was there a way I could use

read-alouds to improve the reading motivation of the boys in my classroom? Further, with so

many new literacies flooding the adolescent reading market, could I find a read-aloud that could

"hook" the "screenagers" in my classroom? In searching through these new literacies, I

discovered, *3:15: Things that go bump in the night* (Carman, 2011). This text is a series of 11

short stories with three parts. First, students listen online to a spooky audio introduction. Next,

the story is read aloud from the text. Finally, a creepy video must be viewed online to see how

the story ends. With so many new types of literacies and technology being implemented in the

classroom, I wondered how using multimedia-enhanced texts, such as the *3:15* series, as read-

alouds could serve as a tool to engage middle school boys and improve their reading motivation.

Statement of the Problem

The adolescent males' reading struggles and low motivation that I have witnessed in my classroom is common in classrooms across the country (e.g., Baker & Wigfield 1999; Wigfield & Guthrie 1995). In today's school systems, the implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI) has placed an emphasis on improving struggling readers' standardized reading test scores so that they "meet expectations." This emphasis has required the implementation of pull-out reading intervention classes, tutoring, extra literacy classes, weekly fluency measures, data collection meetings, and standardized test preparation courses focused on isolated skill instruction. This barrage of activities meant to improve struggling readers has done little more than frustrate and disenchant already unmotivated readers. Of the multiple reasons for our school system's struggling reader dilemma, I believe one of the most compelling issues is our adolescent males' lack of reading motivation. If these students are not motivated to read, and we do not make reading an engaging activity in our schools, then our struggling readers are not going to develop into lifelong, literate readers.

Unfortunately, our schools are doing little to address the problem of reading motivation. Behaviorism, the dominant theory from 1900-1950s, is characterized by a belief that behavior is the result of one's response to stimuli, and external stimuli can be "manipulated to strengthen or reduce one's behavior" (Tracey & Morrow, 2012, p.41). Practices stemming from this theoretical stance focus on measurable outcomes such as scores on a fluency measure or a standardized multiple-choice test, which are the same outcomes our current school systems use to determine whether a struggling reader has become "literate." While these measures provide some information about a reader, these measures alone do not focus on reader engagement or motivation, which is necessary to provide a fuller picture of a student's literacy.

This current high-stakes testing environment in schools has forced many teachers and administrators to reevaluate their use of time in the classroom. One aspect of literacy instruction that numerous classrooms have eliminated is the focus on motivating students to read for pleasure. Instead, in my experience, the focus is on increasing standardized test scores.

In 2008, the National Center for Education Statistics released the Nation's Reading Report Card, which showed the average reading ability of 13-year olds increased by 3 points. Despite improved reading scores on standardized tests, the more concerning statistic is the overall lack of reading done by adolescent students. The National Endowment for the Arts (2007) revealed that less than one-third of 13-year olds are daily readers. This lack of reading motivation among students, specifically adolescent boys, will decrease their reading ability over time (National Reading Panel, 2000). Thus, it is essential that we motivate our students to read because "today, more than ever, strong literacy skills are a critical survival asset in a fast-paced, technological world" (Layne, 2009, p.5).

Based on my history as a middle-school reading teacher, as well as national achievement data, I am extremely concerned about the achievement levels for boys in reading. Research continues to demonstrate that girls outperform boys in the area of reading achievement and reading motivation (e.g., Durik, Vida, & Eccles, 2006; Lietz, 2006; The National Education Alliance, 2007). Like Wigfield and Guthrie (1995), I believe that one of the major obstacles to creating literate members of society is adolescent boys' lack of reading motivation. By moving away from a Behaviorist Theory in classrooms, and instead toward a Constructivist framework, schools can target adolescent boys' motivation to read and create an environment that motivates them to become literate members of our contemporary classrooms. The purpose of this study is

to determine the impact of the implementation of new literacies, specifically multimedia-enhanced texts, as a way to improve adolescent males' reading motivation.

Defining Terms

In the context of this study, a "read-aloud" is understood as the routine process of a teacher reading a text aloud to students in the classroom with no expectation for an evaluation to follow the reading of the text. For this study, a "multimedia-enhanced texts" was used during the read-alouds. These are texts that include written word enhanced with technology such as audio, video, or even an interactive app for computers, tablets, or cellular phones. A multimedia-enhanced text is considered one of the "new literacies," which Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, and Cammack (2004) define as "the skills, strategies, and dispositions necessary to successfully use and adapt to the rapidly changing information and communication technologies and contexts that continuously emerge in our world and influence all areas of our personal and professional lives" (p. 1572).

Another key term in this study refers to motivation. I concur with Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985) who define reading motivation as being "hooked on books" (p. 15). I am interested in exploring intrinsic motivation as applied to adolescent male readers. Intrinsic motivation involves engagement in an activity based on personal interest in the activity itself, such as reading for pleasure and enjoyment, rather than for a physical reward (Wang & Guthrie, 2004).

Although the focus of this study is on reading motivation rather than achievement, it is my underlying belief that this motivation is key to improving reading achievement. Reading achievement is defined as the use of "strategies in reading to learn new concepts, get deeply

involved in what [students] are reading, critically evaluate what they read, and apply their new knowledge to solve practical as well as intellectual problems (RAND, 2002, p.6)."

Supporting Theories

This study is framed from a sociocultural theoretical perspective as developed by Vygotsky (1986). This perspective views learning in a social and cultural context, and emphasizes the importance of collaboration and guidance from a "more knowledgeable other" to develop learning. The multimedia-enhanced texts are a product of the digital culture in which students participate and socialize on a daily basis. Further, Vygotsky's (1986) view of cognition, with his emphasis on its social nature, relates to the importance of the read-aloud as a social event.

In addition, Rosenblatt's Reader Response Theory (1938) forms the basis for how I view students' interactions with text during the read-aloud. This theory focuses on the reader's transaction with the text and encourages expression and attention to differences in his/her individual responses and reactions to text (Rosenblatt, 1978). In order to encourage differences in students' individual responses and reactions to text, one must provide them with different forms of texts, such as multimedia-enhanced texts. In addition, the read-aloud serves as a means to allow students to react and engage with the focal text individually and uniquely without expectation for evaluation.

Guthrie's Engagement Theory (2004) is essential for framing reading motivation as it explains the difference between the "engaged" and "unengaged" reader and offers direction relative to helping readers become more engaged (Guthrie, 2004). Guthrie found that engaged readers read frequently, use metacognitive strategies while reading, and participate in social

discourse about reading. This theory defines the lens used in this study for students' reading motivation.

Finally, multimedia-enhanced texts are viewed within a New Literacies perspective, which dictates that the Internet and other information and communication technologies are "central to literacy in both our personal and professional lives" (Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004). Further, it is "essential to begin to integrate these new literacies into classrooms if we hope to prepare all students for the literacy futures they deserve" (Leu et al., 2004, p.1600).

Guiding Questions for the Study

This study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to examine how multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERA) can be used to improve adolescent male students' reading motivation. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact the reading motivation of adolescent male students?

2. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact the reading motivation of *unmotivated* adolescent male students?

3. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact the reading motivation of adolescent male students compared to adolescent females?

4. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact the reading motivation of *unmotivated* adolescent male students compared to *motivated* male students?

Significance

I believe that student attitudes towards reading have a profound effect on reading achievement. Increasing students' motivation to read should be a goal for every classroom teacher. Children who read more will continue to read, while children who read less are not likely to increase their reading (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). Compared to their female counterparts, many adolescent males see less value in reading as they progress in schools (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996). The discrepancy in reading motivation between boys and girls makes it essential to find strategies that motivate adolescent boys to read. Researchers note that the implementation of read-alouds is a critical strategy to improve all students' motivation to read (e.g. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson 1985; Ivey and Broaddus, 2001). However, it is important that practitioners examine these read-aloud practices to ensure that schools are finding ways to target the motivation of male students.

It is also essential that educators broaden the definition of literacy to meet male students' needs (Taylor, 2005). One way to expand this definition is by introducing the multimedia-enhanced text as a read-aloud in this classroom. Although this specific method has received little attention, much has been written about the effects of digital technology on boys' reading motivation (e.g. Hebert & Pagnani, 2010; Unlusoy, de Haan, Leseman, & van Kruistum, 2010). Therefore, it is important to continue to study and expand the knowledge base in this area to determine how the implementation of these multimedia-enhanced texts can increase boys' reading motivation.

Author Patrick Carman, innovator of these multimedia-enhanced texts, began creating multimedia-enhanced stories to reach today's "very wired teen" (Abrams & Carman, 2011). He

describes these texts not as novels, audio books, or movies, but rather all three at once (Abrams

& Carman, 2011). His goal was,

> For some teen readers-the ones publishing has lost in a rising tide of video games,
>
> movies, TV shows, the Internet, and cell phones — this is the kind of experience that will
>
> help them enjoy reading again. It's a lifeline back to books, if you will (Abrams &
>
> Carman, 2011, paragraph 7).

Finding a way to "whet the appetites for reading" of male students and to bring them a "lifeline

back to books" was the essential purpose of this study (Abrams & Carman, 2011; Anderson,

Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985).

Potential Implications

This research was practitioner-focused and directed specifically toward teachers and

administrators. Teachers are the critical factor in improving their male students' motivation to

read. It is equally important for principals to be aware of research trends for improving boys'

motivation to read so that they can support their teachers in this effort. Therefore, this study will

potentially influence classroom pedagogy by encouraging more teachers to implement new

literacies in their classrooms. In addition, it could potentially influence future curriculum,

materials, and technology purchased for classroom use. If these multimedia-enhanced texts

show a positive influence on improving the motivation of adolescent males, than the use of these

new technologies and training in these new technologies could become an essential tool to

implement in schools serving the needs of adolescent males.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of multimedia enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) on adolescent males reading motivation. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the goal of this study was to find a practical application of this form of new literacies to improve adolescent males' reading motivation in classrooms. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the theoretical framework for the study, as well as a review of the relevant research. First, I provide three theoretical lenses and one conceptual lens that informed my research design and helped answer my research questions. I then explore research on gender discrepancies in reading achievement. Next, I examine research on gender discrepancies in reading motivation. Further, I explore specific strategies that have been found to improve boys' reading motivation. Because the focus of my study was on the use of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds as a strategy to improve boys' reading motivation, I also explore research on read-alouds and motivation, as well as research on technology and motivation.

Theoretical Framework

Social Constructivism

This research is grounded in Vygotsky's Social Constructivism theory of learning which views learning in a social and cultural context (Vygotsky, 1986). The guiding belief of Vygotsky's theory is that children learn based on their social interactions with others. Learning occurs through discourse, so it is essential that students talk about what they are learning. This theory suggests that a child's development depends on interactions with people in their world, such as parents, classmates and teachers. These people that aid a child's development are

referred to as a "more knowledgeable other." Their job is to consider the "lowest threshold at which instruction…may begin" and the "upper threshold as well" (Vygotsky, 1986, p.188-189). Using these thresholds as a guide to determine the developmental process behind the learning process, the "more knowledgeable other" guides students to learn in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978, p.90). The Zone of Proximal Development is the range of elements that are within a child's developmental level of competence. According to Vygotsky (1978), in this zone, "learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers" (p. 90). Given that this theory serves as a lens for the current study means that the role of collaboration and classroom discourse among students are essential to learn and develop an understanding of multimedia-enhanced texts.

Further, the role of the teacher is also incredibly important. According to Vygotsky, "children can imitate a variety of actions that go well beyond the limits of their own capabilities. Using imitation, children are capable of doing much more in collective activity or under the guidance of adults" (p.88). Therefore, it is essential for the "more knowledgeable other" to guide children through more difficult tasks by modeling and allowing for collaborative imitation of the task. When using a new literacy, such as multimedia-enhanced texts, it is essential for the teacher to model the use of the text and allow opportunities for students to collectively engage with it under the guidance of the teacher.

Vygotsky (1986) also asserts that development depends on the tools provided by the culture to support a student's learning and thinking (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). According to his Activity Theory, when human interact with their environment, they produce tools such as language. These tools become learned and are communicated to others for future activities and

social interactions (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). However, "human activity exhibits constant transformations and is inherently unstable" (p.220). Our digital world is constantly changing and transforming the language and tools students use to become "literate" in a 21st Century classroom. For example, the introduction of Twitter has required people to understand the language of "re-tweets" and "hash tags," to know how to summarize in 140 characters or less, and understand what the "at sign" (@) means. The "more knowledgeable other" is essential to guide students through these constant transformations and model the new and changing tools necessary for success in our society.

Vygotsky's (1986) view of cognition, emphasizing its social nature, relates to the importance of using these multimedia-enhanced texts as a social event within the classroom during a read-aloud between a teacher and their students. The use of multimedia-enhanced texts within a classroom is a product of the digital culture in which students participate and socialize on a daily basis. The interaction with this new form of text is a social interaction as students can converse with the author and peers across the country through these multimedia texts' websites, Facebook pages, twitter pages, or apps. Such social interactions enable students to collaborate and receive guidance from a "more knowledgeable other," who in some cases, is across the globe. These types of texts open up a world of increased collaborations and opportunities to learn from "more knowledgeable others" around the world.

Vygotsky also argued that cultural sign systems, such as oral language use, writing, and using mathematical equations, develop higher order thinking (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1986). The wave of new literacies permeating our classrooms has created new sign systems that influence culture, which, according to Vygotsky, can support or inhibit one's learning (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). The use of multimedia texts requires new forms of language

and writing. For example, students must understand the necessary language to access the

internet, find websites, download multimedia players, type instead of hand write, and connect the

audio and visual elements with the written text. In discussing these texts with classmates,

students' discourse must now include understanding of elements such as sound, lighting, volume,

acting, voiceover work, image quality, and music. Therefore, to support learning, children must

collaborate with others and receive guidance from teachers to use and manipulate this new

language. Vygotsky's (1986) theory asserts that language develops thought. As students

manipulate and collaborate to learn the language of new literacies, their thinking will also

develop so that they can master, understand, and respond to the new world of literacies.

Reader Response Theory

This study is also grounded in Louise Rosenblatt's Reader Response Theory (1938)

which rejected the New Criticism of the 1930s-1950s. The New Critics "focused on the texts

and ignored the reader" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p.63). For New Critics, texts were central to learning

and all meaning resided in the text. Therefore, it was the job of the reader to identify this

meaning. Here, the teacher's role was to discourage attention to differences in students' own

individual responses, and instead teach the skills of close analysis so that students could pull the

one correct meaning from the text. In contrast to the New Criticism, Louise Rosenblatt's (1938)

Transactional/ Reader Response Theory viewed the individual reader as an essential component

in bringing meaning to the text. Her premise was that "a text, once it leaves its author's hands, is

simply paper and ink until a reader evokes from it a literary work" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. ix). The

relationship between the reader, the text, and the context is an ongoing transactional process

whereby the reader interprets the text using their personal context as a guide, and the text

produces a response in the reader (p. 16). When a reader meets the text, they will bring their

own "capacities…sensibilities, preoccupations and memories" to the transaction (p. 132).

Therefore, each interpretation will be unique, and Rosenblatt encourages expression and

attention to differences in students' individual responses and reactions to text (Rosenblatt, 1938;

1978).

Rosenblatt's Reader Response Theory forms the basis for students' interactions with text

during the read-aloud in this study. The read-aloud is viewed as a method that allows students to

react and engage with the text individually and uniquely without expectation for evaluation

based on "whatever can be systematically taught and tested" (Rosenblatt, 1983, p.65).   Instead,

the teacher must create a secure environment that gives students the courage to approach text

personally and allow students to feel that their personal reaction to books is worth expressing

(Rosenblatt, 1983, p.66).

Although this theory comes from the perspective of print, this interaction with text can

also be applied to digital texts. Rosenblatt (1983) writes,

What, then, happens in the reading of a literary work? Through the medium of words,

the text brings into the reader's consciousness certain concepts, certain sensuous

experiences, certain images of things, people, actions, scenes. The special meanings and,

more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the

individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to *him*. The reader

brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and

preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition.

These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his

response to the peculiar contribution of the text. For the adolescent reader, the

experience of the work is further specialized by the fact that he has probably not yet

arrived at a consistent view of life or achieved a fully integrated personality. (p.30-31)

Because each student brings different moods, personality traits, and preoccupations to their

experiences with digital texts, it is important to give attention to the different responses each

student shares based on their transactions with multimedia-enhanced text. For example, some

students who regularly experienced multimedia-enhanced texts will bring their own memories

and understanding of this new literacy to their transaction with the multimedia enhanced text.

This will allow them to compare and contrast their past experiences with digital texts with their

current experience. In contrast, students without such experiences may instead be preoccupied

with the new textual form resulting in a different interpretation and reading experience. Students

who enjoy visuals and graphics may focus on the visual portion of the multimedia-enhanced text,

which will provide a different transactional experience and interpretation than students who

instead prefer the auditory or print portions of the text. Each student's interaction with the text

will be unique and individual, especially when his or her various levels of familiarity with

multimedia-enhanced texts are considered. Further, context is an essential component in the

Reader Response Theory. Elements of context in school such as the time of year, time of day,

day of the week, or current unit of study all contribute to a student's individual experience.

Rosenblatt's (1938) transactional theory also suggests two reading stances: efferent and

aesthetic reading. In efferent reading, "the primary concern of the reader is with what he will

carry away from the reading" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p.24). For example, when one reads a cooking

recipe, the front page of the newspaper, an algebraic equation, or a chapter in a history textbook,

the reader is most likely reading to understand a concept or perform some sort of action, such as

baking a cake or gathering information for a history test, after the reading (p.24).   In contrast,

aesthetic reading is concerned with what happens during the reading and seeking an enjoyable

experience while reading (p.24). According to Rosenblatt, "the same text may even be recreated

variously as an efferent utterance or a poetic experience" (p.36). Readers may move back and

forth between these reading stances throughout a text. Although students will use both efferent

and aesthetic reading stances while engaging with the multimedia-enhanced text, the focus in this

study is that of the aesthetic reading stance, specifically for adolescent males, so as to enhance

reading engagement for adolescent males in our 21st Century classrooms.

Engagement Theory

Guthrie's Engagement Theory is essential for framing reading motivation and adolescent

male engagement in this research. This theory helps guide thinking about the difference between

the "engaged" and "unengaged" reader and offers direction on assisting readers to become more

engaged (Guthrie, 2004). According to Guthrie (2004), engaged readers are active and energized

in reading, and show "frequent, focused reading" (p.4). They are strategic, meaning they use

"higher-order understandings to gain new knowledge or new experiences from a range of texts"

(p.4). Further, they are socially interactive and discuss or share books with friends (p.4). An

engaged reader shows observable behaviors, such as being so absorbed in a book that they are

not distracted by talking classmates or a loud pencil sharpener. However, beyond this observable

behavior, engaged reading also involves cognitive, motivational, and social attributes (p.4). In

contrast, the disengaged reader avoids reading unless it is to comply with a teacher's directive.

The disengaged reader does not read at home or make trips, by choice, to the library. Although

not reading impaired, the disengaged reader does not recall much beyond a few facts, which may

not even be central to the plotline (p.3).

Guthrie has provided extensive research on specific instructional practices that help to engage readers, and found several specific strategies to be effective, including "making reading relevant, affording choices, assuring success, arranging for collaborations, emphasizing the importance of reading, organizing thematic units, and integrating multiple motivation supports during instruction" (2011, p.183). Guthrie's (2004) Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction program (CORI) uses these strategies to effectively engage readers. For example, during CORI, students study a theme for 12 weeks, such as the Holocaust, and attempt to meet content goals such as an understanding of how apathy and indifference enabled the Holocaust. In an attempt to meet this content goal, students have a purpose for reading and use strategies like questioning. Throughout the unit, reading strategies are modeled and scaffolded by the teacher to ensure student success with independent use of the strategy. Reading to meet content goals makes reading relevant and emphasizes its importance. Students may also be given a choice about which Holocaust texts they want to read providing them with an investment in learning. Throughout the unit, the teacher also includes a variety of high interest trade books with colorful pictures, bold captions, and interesting subsections to support instructional learning. Students have opportunities to collaborate and discuss learning in peer partners or small groups throughout the unit. This opportunity to share new learning, questions, or opinions increases student motivation. Teachers can use several or all of the strategies in conjunction with one another to foster engagement (Guthrie, 2004, p.11-14).

This theory provides an additional lens with which to view students' reading motivation. Several of Guthrie's effective engagement instructional practices, such as making reading relevant, arranging for collaborations, and emphasizing the importance of reading, are essential components of using multimedia-enhanced texts in the classroom. For example, using the new

literacies that adolescents frequently encounter outside of the classroom is certainly a way to

make reading relevant for 21st Century learners. Further, employing these texts as a read-aloud

for the entire class ensures collaboration. Finally, instructing students how to "read" a

multimedia-enhanced text emphasizes the importance of reading traditional print, as well as new

literacies.

New Literacies

To understand how theories of constructivism, reader-response, and engagement frame

the use of a multimedia enhanced text in the classroom, it is first important to understand the

conceptual lens of New Literacies, which embodies the multimedia-enhanced text. The

definition of literacy and literacy instruction is rapidly and regularly changing while

simultaneously impacting classrooms across the U.S. For example, under the new Common

Core State Standards, several new shifts are impacting the way literacy is defined in U.S.

classrooms to ensure literate students. First, literacy must now include a 50/50 split of

informational text and literary text in elementary, middle, and secondary classrooms. In

addition, text complexity and text dependent questions are now essential to define literacy.

Further, the use of argument writing, rather than narrative is a primary focus. Finally, academic

vocabulary, rather than domain-specific literary terminology has become the core focus of

vocabulary study in classrooms (Coleman, 2012).

As the demands regarding the nature of being a literate individual in society grow and

change, so too must the definition of literacy (Leu et al., 2004). In one school day, a student may

communicate with classmates over text messages, watch an interactive social studies video on a

SmartBoard, use an iPad to solve a group math problem, update their Facebook status during

lunch, determine the accuracy of a website when researching a science project, and read a novel

on a Kindle during a language arts class. Leu et al.'s (2004) assertion that traditional definitions

of literacy will not prepare our students for the future is still relevant today.

Leu et al. (2004) describes the following 10 principles of a New Literacies Perspective:

1. The Internet and other ICTs are central technologies for literacy within a global

    community in an information age.

2. The Internet and other ICTs require new literacies to fully access their potential.

3. New literacies are deictic.

4. The relationship between literacy and technology is transactional.

5. New literacies are multiple in nature.

6. Critical literacies are central to the new literacies.

7. New forms of strategic knowledge are central to the new literacies.

8. Speed counts in important ways within the new literacies.

9. Learning often is socially constructed within new literacies.

10. Teachers become more important, though their role changes, within new literacy

    classrooms. (p. 57-58)

The new definitions of literacy explored in this research were framed within a New Literacies

Perspective (Leu et al., 2004). Principles 2, 5, 9, and 10 are critical for framing the use of

multimedia-enhanced texts within the classroom because each of their ideas work in conjunction

with one another for successful use of these new texts. Principle two, understanding that the

Internet requires new literacies to fully access its potential, is a critical part of using and fully

accessing the multimedia-enhanced text. Reading a multimedia-enhanced text is much more

complex than just opening a book. For example, to view the video clip that directly matches the

story students are reading, one must understand how to (a) find the website, (b) enter the

password for the video, (c) adjust the volume appropriately, (d) maximize the screen size, and (e)

play the video clip using an online video player. Therefore, to successfully "read" a multimedia-

enhanced text, one must master several new literacies.

Another important principle for the use of multimedia-enhanced texts is the

understanding that new literacies are multiple in nature (Principle 5). Leu et al. (2004) describe

levels of multiplicity that characterize the new literacies with the first level involving an

understanding that text meaning is represented with multiple media forms. For example, rather

than printed text with a two-dimensional picture or illustration, this new multimedia-enhanced

text also includes audio, video, and website icons. Such understanding is essential to grasp the

changing nature of text in the classroom. The second level is the realization that the Internet

"offers multiple tools for constructing multiple forms of communication" (p.19). This is evident

when an individual seeks specific information or attempts to communicate specific information,

and must know the most appropriate form of searching or communicating available online. Will

tweeting yield the fastest or most accurate results? Should a Google search be employed? Or

should a post to a private Facebook group page occur? The third level of multiplicity "consists

of the new skills demanded by our students as they more frequently encounter information from

individuals in different social contexts" (p.19). For example, in discussing the role of women in

society, students will most likely not be surprised by their classmate's opinions. However, the

opinions on women's rights shared on the Internet by students in other countries may surprise

them. Therefore, they will need guidance to interpret the meaning behind the text and images

they find online.

Research investigating the role of "new literacies" through a social constructivist lens is

essential because students and teachers are contributing a wide range of digital skills and abilities

to 21st Century classrooms. It is impossible to master all of the skills needed to be an expert at all of the new literacies. Thus, principle nine, that "learning often is socially constructed within new literacies" is essential as students and teachers can combine their expertise around various aspects of the new literacies to learn from one another. For example, when creating an online book trailer, one student may be an expert at digital photography, another student an expert at using a software program such as iMovie, while others are skilled at digital editing and finding free (and legal) music to download for their trailer, all of whom work in conjunction with the teacher who is knowledgeable with ways to upload and share their book trailer to the school's website. Working together allows students and teachers to enhance their literacy skills to most effectively use New Literacies for communication and information (Leu et al., 2004).

Finally, principle ten's focus on the important and changing role of the teacher in a new literacies classroom is an essential part of framing the teacher's role within this research. Teachers, as the more knowledgeable other, must create a richer and more complex environment of new literacies as opposed to relying solely on traditional text (Leu et al., 2004). Use of a multimedia-enhanced read-aloud in addition to a traditional read-aloud provides a richer and more complex learning opportunity for students. For example, in using a multimedia enhanced read-aloud, students are not only responding to text, but also to audio and visual elements. Camera angles, music, lighting, sound, acting, and camera focus all add to an analysis that text alone does not require. It is then essential for the teacher to provide students with an opportunity to collaboratively and individually react and respond to this new text. For example, after watching the film portion of the multimedia-enhanced text on mute, small groups of students could select their own background music that they feel would add to the tone and mood of the story. This would allow a rich and in depth discussion of literary elements such as author's

purpose, tone, and mood, while also allowing for comparing and contrasting among the small

groups.

In addition, after reading the text portion of the multimedia-enhanced text, students could

individually write scripts for the film portion showing how they imagine the story should end.

The class could then select their favorite student version of the ending and create a short film

based on the student script. Each of these activities requires students to comprehend, apply,

analyze, synthesize, and evaluate (Bloom, 1956). These higher-level thinking skills are essential

for students to be successful in 21st Century classrooms. Certainly, this will also provide

challenges for teachers. Students with access to multimedia in their homes will have a much

higher level of skills and abilities than students with no access to multimedia in their homes.

This is why the role of the teacher in new literacies classrooms in so critical. They must bring

together students of various levels to create a collaborative environment that uses the differing

levels of student skills and abilities to help all students grow in their knowledge of new literacies.

Gender Discrepancies in Reading Achievement

In a 2001 study, Guthrie, Schafer, and Huang analyzed Maryland's fourth-grade National

Assessment of Educational Progress. Using reading achievement results and an engaged reading

questionnaire, the authors found that the amount of engaged reading done by students

significantly predicted reading achievement on the NAEP.   Engaged reading was defined as "the

joint functioning of motivation, strategy use, and conceptual knowledge during reading" (p.146).

Students who read for their own pleasure independently, read for substantial amounts of time,

and independently checked out books from the library were "relatively higher in achievement"

(p.159). The authors assert that their findings suggested that, "if a student becomes a highly

engaged reader, they can overcome a major obstacle to reading achievement" (p.159). Therefore,

approaches to make adolescent boys highly engaged readers must be developed, permitting them to overcome this obstacle.

The research on gender differences in reading achievement reveals alarming discrepancies. In 2011, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study compared reading achievement scores in 53 educational systems worldwide.   The achievement test given to fourth-grade students measured reading ability, and reading for both efferent and aesthetic purposes. In the United States, the girls significantly outscored their male peers. Further, in an analysis of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) from 1992-2003, the National Center for Educational Progress study revealed that "females in grades four, eight, and twelve consistently performed better than their male counterparts" (The Education Alliance, 2007, p. 3). These results continued in 2005 as female fourth and eighth-graders both outscored males on the NAEP (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). In the most current 2012 report, (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013), fourth-grade female students continued to outscore their male peers, even though these boys did make significant gains, helping to close the gender gap. Unfortunately, adolescent males in eight and twelfth grade continue to lag behind their female counterparts without making gains (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013).

In a paper for the White House Conference on Helping America's Youth, Judith Kleinfeld urged the nation to find ways to help boys better achieve in schools. She notes that in the areas of reading and writing, "the typical boy lags a year and a half behind the typical girl" (2006, p.2). She demonstrated that 23% of white males of college educated parents are reading below basic levels, as opposed to only 7% of their female counterparts (p.2). For minority students, the results were more concerning: 43% of African-American males of college educated parents are reading below basic levels, as opposed to 33% of their female counterparts, and 34%

of Hispanic males of college educated parents are reading below basic levels, as opposed to 19%

of their female counterparts (p.3). Kleinfeld explains the "below basic" level as unable to "read

a newspaper with understanding" (p.2). For writing scores, "boys of every ethnic and

socioeconomic group are falling far behind girls of similar backgrounds" (p.3).

Gender discrepancy in reading achievement has only grown more problematic over time.

In a meta-analysis of gender differences in reading achievement at the secondary level from

studies performed between 1970-2002, Lietz (2006) also found a pronounced discrepancy,

favoring girls over boys in assessment programs conducted by the National Assessment of

Educational Programs in the United States (NAEP), the more recent assessment programs in

Australia, and for the Programme for the International Student Assessment (PISA). Of the

studies she reviewed, 147 reported girls outperforming boys, which was not due to chance (p.14).

This gender gap was far more prominent for the assessments administered after 1992 (p.14).

These findings point to a gender disparity that is becoming more pronounced over time.

Much of the research on gender discrepancies in reading achievement uses standardized

test scores to measure achievement. Therefore, it is important to note the importance of how

interest affects students' scores on reading achievement tests. Bray and Barron (2004)

investigated the role of interest on standardized assessments passages. They analyzed whether

interest in a passage is associated with higher performance on standardized test questions that

assess reading comprehension. Additionally, as a secondary focus, they analyzed predictors of

interest, which included variables such as gender, verbal ability, and text characteristics like

genre and content-focus. After reading each passage, students used a five-point scale to rate the

text anywhere from "*really boring* (1)" to "*really interesting* (5)." This method captured the

student's text-specific situational interest in each particular passage. The researchers found a

small but significant relationship between interest and test performance, which was stronger for

girls than for boys. The standardized test used in Bray and Barron's study provided passages

that favored girls' interests over boys'. The implications of their study was to urge test creators

to include passages on different topics to fairly represent the varied interests of the readers.

Frequent use of "girl-specific text" in classrooms could also be a reason why boys continue to

show less motivation to read in school.

   These statistics on gender discrepancy in reading achievement are concerning. The next

section will highlight gender discrepancies in reading motivation. This is especially critical

because one of the most powerful tools to improve reading achievement for our struggling male

readers is through improved motivation and engagement with texts.

<div align="center">**Gender Discrepancies in Reading Motivation**</div>

   Since the introduction of No Child Left Behind, there has been an increase in preparation

for high-stakes testing and teacher-centered pedagogy (Au, 2007). The current focus on high-

stakes testing has "altered instruction such that in many classrooms more time is spent on test

preparation at the expense of engaging and varied learning activities"(Mora, 2011, p.1). Thus,

this current high-stakes testing culture is damaging classroom engagement. Engagement in

reading is highly correlated with reading comprehension achievement (Guthrie, et al., 2001).

Therefore, if schools can develop strategies to motivate and engage male readers, these

achievement gaps can narrow. Unfortunately, like gender discrepancies in reading achievement,

gender discrepancies in reading motivation have also been frequently cited and continue to grow.

   In 2009, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) completed its fourth

cycle studying literacy patterns of 15-year-olds across the world (Brozo et al., 2014). Brozo et

al. focused on three aspects of reading engagement including (a) enjoyment, (b) time reading for

pleasure, and (c) diversity of texts read. For the five target countries studied (U.S., Korea,

Finland, Ireland, and Germany), girls had significantly higher scores in all three areas of reading

engagement and were clearly more engaged in reading than boys. Their study also found

significant gender differences favoring girls in all 65 countries studied. Further, the authors

noted that these increases in gender differences have continued to increase since its first

assessment cycle in 2000. Unfortunately, despite the clear gender discrepancy, the authors note

that the United States has not provided any federal response to specifically target this gender gap.

Instead, there appears to be a belief that the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Common

Core State Standards (CCSS) will address this issue by closing all achievement gaps. Brozo et

al. offer the following five guidelines to increase boys' reading engagement: (a) using a variety

of texts aimed at boys' interests, (b) using digital texts and alternative media, (c) involving male

role models, (d) focusing on practices that support male reading engagements, and (e) making

boys' literacy needs a priority.

     Wigfield and Guthrie (1995) worked within the engagement theory framework to develop

an 82-item questionnaire to identify various dimensions of reading motivations. The authors

discovered that girls scored significantly higher on reading motivation scales in the areas of

reading efficacy, social goals, and importance. Further, girls showed more positive motivations

for reading and read more than the boys in their school's reading program. The authors assert

that girls are more likely to continue to be engaged in reading in schools, and that the boys'

lower reading motivations should be viewed with concern (p.18).

     Baker and Wigfield (1999) used the same constructs as Wigfield and Guthrie's (1995)

study to analyze student motivation for reading. In their study, girls showed significant

correlation between motivation and achievement, while boys did not show any significant

correlation. Compliance, recognition, grades, and intrinsic goals were all statistically significant for girls. Further, girls showed more extrinsic motivation and were influenced by adult feedback. In addition, girls showed more positive views than boys on all dimensions of reading motivation except work avoidance and competition. Overall, the authors found that girls value reading more, have higher self-efficacy about reading, and more positive reading attitudes than their male peers (p.473).

Using Wigfield and Guthrie's (1995) Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ), Mucherah and Yoder (2008) examined reading motivation for almost 400 middle school students in Indiana. They too found differences in male and female reading motivation with girls reading more for social reasons, compliance, and to improve their grades. Further, they read for curiosity and aesthetic reasons more than boys, had a higher self-efficacy, and read more challenging materials than boys (p.227).

Due to the concern over girls outperforming boys in reading, Logan and Medford (2010) were interested in researching gender differences in how students' reading skills correlate with their motivation and competency beliefs. They were specifically interested in examining whether boys' motivation was more closely linked with their attainment than girls' motivation. After completing a comprehension assessment and a questionnaire focused on reading motivation and competency, the authors found that boys' competency in reading and their intrinsic reading motivation were more closely associated with their reading ability compared to the girls. The authors assert that boys' confidence in their reading ability and motivation may play a larger role in their reading success than it does for girls. This would give credence to the importance of finding ways to motivate our male readers so they find greater reading success.

To further investigate the numerous research studies on gender differences in reading, Marinak and Gambrell (2010) focused their study on third-grade, average achieving readers. They examined students' self-concept as a reader and the value they placed on reading. Their results showed that although both boys and girls were equally self-confident in their reading, boys valued reading less than girls. This research is significant in showing that despite having similar reading abilities and similar confidence in their reading abilities, boys do not see the same value in reading as their female classmates. Applegate and Applegate (2010) similarly found that there are significantly more boys than girls who, despite their view of themselves as a "good reader," exhibit a strong dislike for reading and the role of reading in their lives.

In 1996, Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, and Mazzoni developed a Motivation to Read Profile (MRP). This instrument consists of a 20-item survey designed to explore students' self-concept as a reader and value of reading. In addition, the MRP includes a conversational interview, probing students about motivational factors relating to reading narrative text and informational text, as well as general factors related to reading motivation. In 2013, Malloy et al. revised the MRP for elementary students to reflect the cultural and linguistic changes since its 1996 creation. Minor revisions included questions about digital literacies and the ability to complete the interview portion with a laptop or tablet.

In 2007, Pitcher et al. revised the MRP for adolescents in Grades 6-12. Their results demonstrated that girls scored significantly higher on self-concept as a reader and value of reading. Further, boys' value of reading decreased over time, while girls' value of reading increased; specifically as the boys' ages increased, their scores decreased. Their results also demonstrated that both boys and girls use multiple literacies, including print and electronic text. Although some students of both genders appear to read frequently, many of these students do not

see themselves as a reader (Pitcher et al., 2007). According to Jones and Fiorelli (2003), "Few boys entering school call themselves 'non-readers' but by high school, over half do" (p.9). The findings from these studies indicate that if our adolescent males are reading frequently in schools, yet do not see themselves as readers and their value of reading continues to decrease over time, then schools must implement changes in classrooms to reverse this trend.

Kelley and Decker (2009) also used an adapted version of the MRP with over 1000 middle school students. They too found that females placed much higher value on reading than males and read more frequently at home than males. Further, females reportedly shared good books with friends at times, while males reportedly did this almost never. Females also claimed that reading well was "very" important to them, while males claimed it was only "sort of" important (p.478).

Durik, Vida, and Eccles (2006) study of longitudinal data of students' values and beliefs about reading in Grades 4 and 10 measured demographics, task beliefs, school performance, reading for leisure, school courses and career aspirations. Their study found that girls placed a higher importance on reading and had a higher intrinsic value toward reading than boys at both grades. Similarly, McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) studied over 18,000 U.S. students' attitudes toward reading in Grades 1-6. They also found that, at all grade levels, girls had a more positive attitude toward both recreational and academic reading than boys. Further, over time, the gap between boys' and girls' attitudes toward recreational reading widens as boys' attitudes become significantly more negative. However, unlike Logan and Medford's (2010) findings, these gender differences did not appear to be related to reading ability. Thus, the theory that girls' stronger reading abilities could explain their more positive attitude toward reading was not supported with these results. Instead, McKenna et al. (1995) suggest that, "cultural expectations

may cause girls to harbor more positive attitudes toward reading than boys" (p.952). Based on

this assertion, classrooms must implement a variety of texts that demonstrate that reading is not a

gendered activity, but an enjoyable and necessary activity for all genders to become literate in

the 21st Century.

There are several explanations for the reasons boy are less motivated to read than girls.

Many males may associate reading as a "feminine" behavior, especially when their elementary

classroom teachers who first taught them to read were predominantly females. This view of

reading as "feminine" can cause boys to be uninterested in participating in such an activity that

could challenge their masculinity (Millard, 1997). Further, a student's identity can have a strong

influence on their motivation (Oyserman & Destin, 2010). For example, when boys identify as

"male," they may not see other adult males engaged in reading. Therefore, their identity is

shaped by the concept that they are not readers.

Harrison's (2012) study of secondary boys' reading habits showed that the most

frequently cited reason for low literacy engagement among the boys studied was lack of time for

reading. Instead, boys cited academic homework, participation in sports, and time for socializing

to take precedence over reading for pleasure. Another explanation for boys' lack of reading

motivation can be attributed to the types of texts used in schools. For many males, the genres

and topics of texts that they prefer to read are not privileged in schools (Alvermann, 2002). For

example, many adolescent males may be drawn to online articles, how-to manuals, or

skateboarding magazines. However, when traditional fictional novels are the only type of text

utilized in the classroom, and their reading preferences are not given a place in the classroom,

many boys may become discouraged and turned-off by reading.

Alvermann (2002) argues that educators must keep adolescents' interests at the forefront of literacy instruction, and that effective adolescent literacy instruction must address issues of self-efficacy and engagement with a variety of texts, including new literacies. Further, she argues that educators must keep up with the multimodal texts used by adolescents (2011). She also expresses concern at the lack of interest by educators in exploring these new literacies. With the changing nature of texts, Alvermann asserts that it is critical for educators to consider these changes when making textual choices for their instruction.

New literacies can serve as an essential tool to neutralize reading for both genders, while also showing the importance of understanding the new literacies to become a literate student in today's classrooms. Based on the data showing girls' stronger attitudes toward reading, higher value placed on reading, and motivation to read, it is urgent that educators begin implementing strategies to motivate boys to read.

Strategies to Motivate Boys to Read

Smith and Wilhelm's (2002) powerful study, *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys*, explored the literate lives, both in and out of school, of a diverse group of 49 adolescent boys. Their study found that participants' decisions about what they chose to do in and out of school stemmed from five different characteristics. First, a sense of competence and control is an essential motivator for boys. As a result, they enjoy reading genres that would add to their personal interests and areas of expertise. Boys need to feel competent and rewarded by what they are reading immediately, or they will lose all motivation to continue reading. They are also motivated by books that contain an appropriate challenge. If the book is too complex and they cannot understand what is happening, they will gain a negative attitude and shut down. Another characteristic that leads to motivation to read is having clear goals and feedback. Boys need to

see a clear link between what they are reading and the real world. They also are motivated by a

focus on the immediate. Rather than reading something that may help them become college-

ready "someday," they prefer books that relate to their lives "right now." Finally, boys are

motivated for social reasons, so if a book is recommended by a peer, or they can read the same

book as a friend and talk about it, they are much more motivated to read. Wilhelm and Smith

(2014) find that allowing males to freely choose their own texts, providing engaging and relevant

books, and providing an inquiry-based structure to learning which includes activating prior

knowledge and seeking to solve a problem through essential questions, are all important

practices that teachers can implement to create a context that supports boys' motivation.

Baker (2002) explored strategies for overcoming reading resistance in middle school.

Baker is also troubled by the widening gap between students who read and those who do not.

Based on the research previously cited which shows girls reading more than boys, her research is

especially relevant for strategies to help boys become more engaged in reading. One strategy

promoted by Baker is choice. She believes it is essential for students to be able to choose their

reading material so that they may pursue their passions. To aid this strategy, she recommends

that teachers have a diverse selection of reading materials in their classroom. Most importantly,

boys will need books that speak to their interest as readers.

Baker also promotes the importance of time. Teachers must give their students time to

read and discuss their books. Finally, she believes the classroom atmosphere is essential for

improving student engagement with books. Teachers must create a classroom community that

promotes respect for students of all cultures and allows students the opportunity to make

personal connections with what they read. In a female-dominated profession, it is particularly

important for teachers to ensure that their classrooms include texts with which males can connect

and engage. Baker's strategies promote reading engagement for both boys and girls. However,

to truly promote boys' engagement, the teacher must emphasize reaching boys through the

implementation of these strategies.

Like Baker (2002), Jenkins (2009) also explored strategies to promote school reading

success. However, Jenkins' focus was based on the work of the Maryland State Department of

Education (2006), which noted that "there's been a fundamental failure on behalf of African-

American male students and a persistent bias against them" (p.10). Jenkins' article sought to

provide teachers with recommendations to increase the achievement of male readers. These

recommendations came from Jenkins' experience working with a sixth-grade, African-American,

struggling reader. Jenkins' first recommendation was to create a team to work together to ensure

the success of the male reader. He believed it was critical for parents, teachers, tutors, and other

school staff to work together for the success of the child. This ensures that the help the students

receive is not disjointed. These team members should discuss the child's reading successes or

failures at least once a month.

Jenkins also felt it was essential for teachers to build on the past success of the child.

Unfortunately, teachers do not always effectively communicate with one another. If a struggling

reader finds success with one teacher, then that teacher must pass along their strategies to the

next teacher to ensure continued success. Jenkins also recommended that teachers connect

reading to the students' worlds. This is especially critical for male students. With a female

dominated profession, the books chosen by female reading teachers will often connect more with

their female students. Teachers must emphasize identifying and selecting reading materials with

which boys can connect with, and thus be able to analyze these texts using critical thinking in

relation to their own life. Like Baker (2002), Jenkins also suggested that students must be able to choose what they read. This will give boys a sense of ownership over their literacy learning.

Finally, Jenkins (2009) recommended that teachers of all subject areas provide their students with a variety of texts on a single topic. This will ensure that boys have access to magazine articles, song lyrics, photographs, blogs, and other texts to reinforce what they are learning. The variety of texts used will expose boys to the in-depth understanding required to deeply understand their topic of study. It is critical to remember that these strategies are not just helpful for boys, but will help all students become more engaged in reading.

Although Ivey and Johnston's (2013) study focused on engagement for both males and females with young adult literature, it provides important insight into engagement in classrooms today. In their study, 71 eighth-grade students were given a choice to read from 150-200 high interest young adult narrative texts. Students were given time every day to read from their selected text without any assignments, tests, quizzes, or projects attached to the book. Students reported high engagement with these texts, including reading in other classes, reading outside of school, and actually considering reading as an enjoyable hobby. One student noted,

> Before this year, we kind of had to read books they assigned to us, so I'd pretend to read it, and I just wouldn't care about books at all. But now they give us a choice if we want to read it, where we get to pick the book that we read. I actually read it instead of pretending to read it. (p.261)

Their research provides important insight into the power of choice, as well as high interest texts to motivate adolescent readers.

Boltz (2007) showed concern over most school-age boys scoring lower than girls at every level on standardized tests of reading comprehension. Based on her own research, she believes

that one reason boys read less is because the texts they receive in school do not connect to their

interests. Like the previous researchers discussed, Boltz stresses the importance of providing

choices in reading, giving students time to read, and having a wide variety of reading material,

including nonfiction, available in different forms. In addition, she also notes the importance of

observing role models reading and valuing reading. This is an essential piece in promoting boys'

reading engagement. Boys must see their male teachers, principals, fathers, brothers, and other

male role models value reading. Reading must be depicted as "masculine" so that boys can

proudly read and schools can begin to create a male culture of that values reading.

One way to view reading as "masculine" is to introduce boys to positive images of

masculinity through archetypes of manhood. Brozo (2002) provided examples of young adult

literature that contains these archetypes, such as a healer, king, warrior, or trickster, to help boys

understand what it means to be a man. Using such stories in the classroom will connect to the

lives and interests of the boys, therefore further motivating them to read.

Popular children's book author Jon Scieszka has devoted much of his professional career

to finding ways to help boys become readers. In his article "Guys and Reading" (2003), he

writes, "Researching the problems boys have with reading, I've come to the conclusion that

much of the cause of boys' reluctance to read can be reduced to a single, crucial element –

motivation" (p. 18). He opines that, to motivate boys, we need positive male reading role

models, must value non-fiction, magazines, newspapers, comics, and other forms of text, and we

must identify books that boys like to read using their own recommendations.

In 2005, Taylor summarized current research on the issues that boys face with literacy,

and offered several strategies to help bridge this literacy gap. Taylor believed that it was essential

for teachers to expand their teaching styles. Teachers must start including hands-on activities

such as drama, or challenges that improve the confidence of male readers. Taylor also offered

several innovative strategies such as inviting males to provide book talks, or creating a "Guy's

Rack" collection of boys' favorite reads. Further, Taylor urged educators to be sensitive to the

individual learning pace of each boy. In addition to strategies offered by the previous research

reviewed, Taylor discussed the importance of broadening a school's definition of literacy.

Rather than only viewing fictional novels as literacy, schools must start recognizing texts such as

magazines, science books, multimedia-enhanced texts, and blogs, which boys tend to prefer over

novels. Gee (2003) even makes a case for the positive use of video games as a new literacy that

teaches problem solving and innovation. Boys' preference for these other forms of texts, such as

a multimedia-enhanced text, is a driving force for my study.

Weih (2008) uses his own struggle with reading engagement in school, as well as his

son's struggle to engage with school text, to explore ways to promote male engagement with

classroom texts. He cites Sullivan's 2004 article, "Why Johnny Won't Read," which argues that

because the profession is female-dominated, most teachers do not respect boys' reading

preferences. Sullivan is concerned that female teachers value female literature, and boys'

preferences for "yucky stuff and real things" is not valued, but dismissed for lack of literary

quality (p. 37). Weih (2008) asserts that "boys need to have their reading interests validate in

school, if we expect to see improvement in boys' reading scores on tests" (p.20). Based on his

concern, Weih organized a book club for middle school boys to learn about their reading,

including their interests, preferences, purposes, recommendations, and discourse about text.

Based on his work with the boys' book club, Weih discovered several implications to improve

middle school boys' reading experiences including using male role models, choosing books with

characteristics that appeal to boys, and allowing boys to actively research and discuss topics

related to the book on their own, instead of assigning tasks. Weih believes that, "assignments

related to the book could suppress the joy from the reading and sharing experience" (p.25). For

this reason, the current study defines a read-aloud as including "no expectation for an evaluation

following the reading of the text." This will ensure that arbitrary assignments do not suppress

the joy that can come from the use of multimedia-enhanced texts in the classroom.

      Like Weih, Welldon (2005) also created a boys' book club at her school to help close the

gender gap in reading. She found that creating reading competitions, using male role models,

and selecting books that engage boys were key to the program's success. She specifically noted

that texts do not have to be of high literary quality, but instead should appeal to reluctant readers

and target boys' interests. Carman's (2011) multimedia-enhanced *3:15* book series fits Weih's

description. It is not necessarily "of high literary quality," but it includes mystery, suspense,

humor, and even "yucky stuff," i.e., perfect for engaging our male readers.

      In "Boys Are People Too: Boys and Reading, Truth and Misconceptions," Horton (2005)

summarizes current research on boys and reading conducted in Australia. Of the numerous

studies reported, there are two key pieces of research that were essential to my study. First,

Horton cites Woolcott Research Pty. Ltd.'s 2001 report that found 65% of boys felt reading was

irrelevant. Second, Horton (2005) cites Alloway et al.'s (2002) finding that boys have a strong

interest in electronic forms of literacy. Thus, the use of a multimedia-enhanced may help target

this male interest in electronic literacy. Further, using this new literacy in the classroom made

reading current and relevant for all students, as these new literacies are essential for becoming

literate in a 21st century classroom.

      In addition to becoming 21st century literate, the fictional, multimedia-enhanced text used

also targeted boys' interest in reading simply for pleasure. Wilhelm and Smith (2014) argue that

boys must embrace reading, not just for the sake of improving reading ability, but also to

"experience the manifold pleasures and the potential for growth that reading offers" (p. 273).

They further assert that experiencing the pleasure and power of reading is essential for creating

lifelong readers who are "civically engaged democratic citizen" (p.273). Helping boys find

pleasure in reading is about more than improving their test scores. It can also help their social

and emotional learning. One of the boys interviewed by Wilhelm and Smith shared, "I learn

about myself through books when I imagine myself in the different situations…it's learning

about what you could be" (p.275).

Read-Alouds as a Strategy for Boys' Motivation

In an article about "hooking" boys on reading, Braxton (2003) cites read-alouds as a

critical strategy to engage male readers. She encourages teachers to "read aloud often" so that

the students can hear sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structure, hear expressions from an

experienced reader, and also notice the potential errors a teacher may make as they read aloud

(p.43). Further, Braxton advises that educators should have fun with the book, choose read-

aloud selections carefully, "bring the characters alive" through the reading, and leave "cliff-

hanging endings" to fully engage students in the text (p.43-44). Of the many strategies noted to

motivate boys to read, this suggestion of the implementation of read-alouds is one of the most

critical strategies for improving boys' reading motivation.

The benefits of reading aloud to all children have been widely cited. In the famous

"Becoming a Nation of Readers" report, the National Commission on Reading declared, "The

single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in

reading is reading aloud to children" (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985, p.23).

Although this appears to be a common practice in primary grades, it does not always continue in

middle school (Allen 2000). Yet, the National Commission on Reading (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985) encouraged teachers to continue reading aloud throughout all grades. The Commission states, "There is no substitute for a teacher who reads children good stories. It whets the appetite of children for reading" (p.51). In addition, students themselves cite read-alouds as one of the most valued classroom activities. In a survey of over 1700 students in 23 schools, Ivey and Broaddus (2001) found that 62% of the sixth graders cited the teacher reading aloud as a valued classroom practice. Only one other practice, free reading time, was also valued by the majority of the students. In addition, Albright (2002) found the use of read-alouds as a supplement to seventh-grade social studies instruction to be an important strategy for engaging adolescents, enriching content knowledge, and stimulating higher order thinking (p.418).

In "Where the Boys Are At," Haupt (2003) discusses research on biological differences in brain development between males and females, and its implications for reading acquisition. Based on this research, Haupt encourages a,

Reborn belief in the power of oral storytelling, and a renewed and passionate plea for parents, librarians and teachers to read aloud to children of all ages as often as possible and a more liberal attitude towards expression, movement and participation. (p. 20-21)

Like the interview with my father in the previous chapter showed, Haupt also asserts that most people who are readers, "had a parent or teacher or librarian who read aloud to them" (p. 22).

Although there is not specific hard data to confirm that read-alouds increase independent reading ability, it is clear that both classroom teachers and researchers find read-alouds to be an essential classroom practice that can motivate students in middle school. Therefore, it is important that we examine these read-aloud practices to ensure we are utilizing strategies to

target the motivation of our male students. Combining the read-aloud strategy with research on

boys' engagement with technology was the aim of this study.

Technology and Boys' Motivation

With the new generation of digital literacies, it is essential to analyze ways that

technology can influence reading motivation and achievement, specifically in adolescent males.

The growing importance of technology has certainly prompted this study's exploration of the

limited research in the area of technology use in classrooms and its connection to gender and

reading.

Hebert and Pagnani (2010) explored methods to engage gifted boys with the new

literacies. They asserted that teachers must "explore the new literacies, practices mediated by

digital technologies that are such an important part of the contemporary adolescent literacy

experiences" (p.43). They suggest using literature that is based around nonfiction, fiction with a

male protagonist, action, humor, fantasy, science fiction, and biography. Rather than just read

from these genres, the authors also suggest incorporating new literacies to respond to these texts.

For examples, students can create nonfiction "how-to" podcasts, or create a comical YouTube

video in response to a collection of humorous short stories. Rather than write a short story,

males can write fan fiction. Rather than complete a worksheet on characterization, students can

create Facebook or MySpace pages about a character. The authors assert that using these

strategies ensures that teachers are designing literacy instruction that will engage and challenge

males.

Kay (2010) researched gender differences in the impact of the relationship between

computer use and standardized test scores. This dissertation study examined differences in

computer use between boys and girls. Although there were only small relationships between

technology use and achievement, these relationships were always stronger for boys than for girls.

Sokal and Katz (2008) researched the effects of technology and male teachers on boys' reading.

This study analyzed the effort to hire more male teachers and implement more "boy-friendly"

pedagogies in response to the gender discrepancies in reading. The study found that using

computer-based books did help boys change their view of reading as "feminine." However,

there were no significant effects on boys' reading achievement or their self-perceptions as a

reader between boys taught by males or females. The same was true for classrooms that used

technology and those that did not. Although there were no significant effects, using computer-

based books to help boys view reading as masculine provides strong insight into the power that

these new literacies can have to transform boys' reading motivations.

     Unlusoy, de Haan, Leseman, and van Kruistum (2010) studied the literacy activities that

took place outside of school for seventy seventh grade students in the Netherlands. They were

especially interested in noticing how literacy engagement may be different between boys and

girls. Using self-reports from an Internet questionnaire, girls outscored boys in all aspects of

literacy including computer and Internet based literacy practices. However, in further analyzing

the results, the girls' high scores on the new literacy practices were very similar to their high

scores in all aspects of literacy. In addition, their use of new literacy activities was more often

used for educational purposes than for their own pleasure. Therefore, one could conclude that

the girls did not view new literacies as preferable to any of the other types of literacy. Instead,

they had a balanced view of all literacies and their use of new literacies was for educational

endeavors. In contrast, the boys reported a high preference for the new digital media over other

forms of literacy. In addition, the boys used the new digital media less for educational purposes

than the girls. These findings support the use of digital media texts in the classroom to engage male readers.

Finally, in the article "Bait the Boys and Hook Them into Reading," Braxton (2003) shares strategies to engage adolescent males in reading. She encourages educators to "look for opportunities to combine digital and print" (p. 44). In looking for strategies to incorporate digital and print, the area investigated for this study was finding interactive texts. (See Appendix A for a bibliography of interactive texts explored for this study.)

In studying the relationship between technology and motivation, it is essential to understand that with the introduction of these new literacies into the classroom, the role of the "more knowledgeable other" is changing. In many cases, rather than the adult teaching the adolescents, the "more knowledgeable other" can often be an adolescent teaching the adult and their peers. This changing role of the "more knowledgeable other" will certainly impact motivation.

Summary

As evidenced in the research reviewed in this chapter, the gender achievement gap in reading must be addressed, especially among adolescent males who continue to lag behind their female counterparts without making gains (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Guthrie, Schafer, and Huang's (2001) assertion that students who become highly engaged readers can overcome reading achievement issues makes it clear that targeting adolescent males' reading motivation is an essential first step to improving their reading achievement. Research on strategies to motivate boys to read has provided educators with several strategies such as providing choice and including a wide variety of texts (Baker, 2002; Boltz, 2007). Other critical strategies to motivate adolescent males include the use of read-alouds and the implementation of

new literacies (Braxton, 2003; Hebert & Pagnani, 2010). In addition, Taylor (2005) discusses

the importance of broadening a school's definition of literacy to meet males' reading

motivational needs. One way to expand this definition of literacy, as well combine the critically

important strategies of read-alouds and the implementation of new literacies, is by introducing

the multimedia-enhanced text as a classroom read-aloud (MERA). Although this specific

method has received little attention, much has been written about the positive effects of both

read-alouds and digital technology on boys' reading motivation (e.g. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, &

Wilkinson, 1985; Hebert & Pagnani, 2010). This study combined the multimedia-enhanced text

with the read aloud to find specific strategies to reach the adolescent males in our 21st century

classrooms.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the use of multimedia enhanced read-alouds (MERA) and their impact on the reading motivation of adolescent males. It was my hypothesis that after the implementation of the MERAs, the posttest mean MRP score for adolescent males would be significantly higher that the pretest mean score. Further, I predicted females' posttest mean MRP score would be the same or higher than their pretest mean score. In addition, I predicted that unmotivated males would have a more significant gain in motivation than motivated males. Before the study began, I developed the following criteria to determine if there would be a positive change in reading motivation: (a) a statistically significant improvement for adolescent males overall score on the MRP, (b) focal students' on-task writing responses lengthened by at least 20% of their original written amount, (c) focal students willingly participated at least 20% more frequently in discussions, (d) an improvement in quality of focal students' writing prompts and discussion participation, and (e) focal students verbalized a positive improvement in their reading motivation during the post- interview and/or the follow-up interview. Through my research, I sought to answer the following questions:

1. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact the reading motivation of adolescent male students?

2. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) influence the reading motivation of *unmotivated* adolescent male students?

3. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact the reading motivation of adolescent male students compared to adolescent females?

4. How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact

the reading motivation of *unmotivated* adolescent male students compared to *motivated*

male students?

This chapter outlines the methodology and research design used to investigate whether the

use of MERAs can impact adolescent male reading motivation. The chapter begins with the

design of the research, followed by a description of the participants and setting. Further, the

specific data sets and data collection procedures are shared. Finally, an explanation of data

analysis is shared.

Research Design

For this exploratory study, a concurrent embedded strategy of a mixed-methods approach

was used.   The concurrent embedded strategy is defined by Creswell (2009) as one in which

"both quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously" (p.214). In addition, this

approach "has a primary method that guides the project and a secondary database that provides a

supporting role in the procedures" (p.214). The secondary method is embedded within the

predominant method. For my study, I collected both quantitative and qualitative data

simultaneously using quantitative data as the predominant method and qualitative data as the

secondary method. This method was selected because the concurrent embedded strategy

provided the advantage of both forms of data. Further, this study included data from multiple

perspectives to address the problem of adolescent male reading motivation. Using quantitative

methods as my primary method provided a clear indicator of whether the use of a MERA

impacted adolescent boys' reading motivation as determined by their score on a motivation to

read survey. However, due to the brief (6 week) time period and low number of students (n=36)

studied, it was difficult to obtain a statistically significant change in motivation to read data.

Therefore, the use of qualitative methods embedded within the study provided comparisons and

further illustrated the potential impact of the MERA on unmotivated adolescent male readers.

This mixed-methods approach used the qualitative data as *complementary* in order to elaborate,

enhance, and illustrate the results from the quantitative data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Quantitative data collection included a pre- and post- motivation survey, as well as discussions

and writing samples. Qualitative data collection included recorded and transcribed discussions,

writing samples, and student interviews. Table 3.1 represents the timeline of implementation.

Table 3.1

Timeline of Implementation

Time	Task
Part 1 Week 1	MRP given to all 36 seventh-grade students, and all 36 students participated in a discussion and completed a writing sample after a traditional read-aloud. With assistance from classroom teacher, focal students were selected and interviewed (Four unmotivated males and two motivated males for a total of six students).
Part 2 Weeks 2-5	Implement multimedia-enhanced read-aloud (MERA) with all 36 students 2-3 days per week, with either a writing sample or a discussion taking place after the MERA.
Part 3 Week 6	MRP given to all 36 students again, and re-interviewed six focal students.
Part 4 Week 9	Attempted follow-up interviews of focal students to gather information on change over time in reading motivation. However, only one follow-up student was available to be interviewed over the summer.

Multimedia Enhanced Read-Aloud (MERA)

The two classrooms studied share the same teacher. In these classrooms studied, the read-aloud was already part of the teacher's daily routine. Throughout the school year, she has used a variety of traditional read-alouds from the horror, mystery, humor, and realistic fiction genres. Before implementing the MERA, the teacher used a traditional read-aloud from the same genre (horror/scary story) as the MERA stories. Using the same genre ensured that the change of genre did not impact reading motivation. For the MERA, the teacher used the read-aloud, *3:15: Things that go bump in the night* (Carman, 2011). This text contains 11 short stories from the horror/mystery genre. For this study, a read-aloud was used instead of independent reading. Listening comprehension is certainly not the same as reading comprehension. However, because the focus was on motivation, the read-aloud helped eliminate any comprehension barriers that unmotivated students may face during independent reading. Further, because the read-aloud was already part of the classroom routine, student motivation would not be impacted by the act of a teacher "reading aloud," but rather the focus was on a multimedia-text as a read aloud. The practice of read-alouds is already an encouraged instructional practice to promote students' reading success (e.g. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). This study sought to explore the practice of a multimedia-text as a read aloud to further improve adolescent male motivation.

This multimedia –enhanced text (*3:15: Things That Go Bump in the Night*) was selected because of my previous experience using the text with middle school students. Although it is not award-winning literature, it contains high interest stories written to engage adolescent students. When implemented informally in my own classroom, there was an increase in excitement about reading, especially among the male students. After experiencing the read-aloud, many of the

male students sought my advice for help in selecting other books from that genre and by the

same author for their own independent reading. The success with the informal experience in

using this text led me to include it in this formal research study.

The other reason this text was selected was due to its inclusion of multimedia elements.

Each of the 11 stories have 3 parts. First, students listen to an audio introduction online. Next,

the story is read aloud by the teacher from the text. Finally, a video must be viewed online via

the SmartBoard to learn how the story ends. Each short story takes approximately 15 minutes

total to "read." *3:15* is a text that I have categorized as a multimedia-enhanced text for its

combination of traditional text and a multimedia element, namely the video clips and audio

introductions.

Participants and Setting

The study took place in two seventh-grade classrooms that share the same teacher, Mrs.

Gray. One classroom is part of the Mrs. Gray's morning teaching block, and the other classroom

is part of her afternoon teaching block. The classrooms are situated in a middle school in a

suburban, medium-sized suburb in the Midwest.

The student body has almost 700 students in 6th-8th grade classrooms. The student

population consists of racial backgrounds which include: 53.6% White, 7.2% Black, 25.8%

Hispanic, 10% Asian, 2.7% Multiracial, and less than 1% Native American. Based on the

number of students who qualify to receive free or reduced lunch, 38.4% of students are

considered low income. According to the 2013 school report card, 62.3% of the students met or

exceeded standards on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), and 66.4% of seventh-

grade students met or exceeded standards in reading. The seventh-grade reading scores and

several categories of student demographics closely mirror the state average, which makes it an

ideal school for addressing the needs of the "typical" adolescent male. The two classrooms used

for the study are heterogeneously grouped and include demographics representative of the entire

school's population.

The school and classrooms were selected because of my familiarity with the school,

teacher, administration, and student population. As a former seventh-grade reading teacher

within the school, I am very familiar with the challenges its teachers face in motivating their

struggling, adolescent male readers. Instead of only one classroom, two classrooms sharing the

same teacher were selected to increase the sample size from 19 to 36.

The teacher, Mrs. Gray, is in her early sixties and retired at the end of the school year in

which this study took place. Her entire 16-year teaching career has taken place at this same

middle school, and she has taught seventh-grade reading for the last 9 years. During every

formal evaluation she has received an "excellent" rating which is the highest rating a teacher can

receive. In addition, she is a veteran teacher who has served on literacy and curriculum

committees, has been selected to guide multiple student teachers, and has mentored several

literacy teachers during their first years of teaching. Mrs. Gray's veteran status and commitment

to literacy made her an ideal candidate because it is more likely that her experience enabled her

to support the students who were part of the research. It is also important to note that Mrs. Gray

and I have built a trusting relationship over the past several years so that she and I were able to

work professionally, candidly, and collaboratively with one another throughout the research

process.

Each seventh-grade classroom selected was considered a general education classroom, as

opposed to the accelerated or ESL classrooms within the school. There were 17 males and 19

females in the classes who participated in the multimedia enhanced read-aloud (MERA)

instructional approach. All 36 students completed the MRP before and after the MERA instructional approach.   In addition, all 36 students engaged with the MERA instructional approach including discussions and writing prompts. However, there were six total focal students selected for the study. Because the focus of this study was targeting unmotivated adolescent male readers, four students were identified as such. These students were identified as unmotivated adolescent male readers by (a) their low score on the MRP, (b) their low amount and quality of writing about a story during the initial writing prompt, (c) their low participation and lack of quality content shared during the initial discussion, and (d) information from the classroom teacher. In addition, two focal students were identified as motivated male readers to compare their data with the unmotivated focal students' data. These students were identified as motivated adolescent male readers by (a) their high score on the MRP, (b) their high amount and quality of writing about a story during the initial writing prompt, (c) their frequent participation and quality content shared during the initial discussion, and (d) information from the classroom teacher. Although the focus of the study was on gender and not race, it is worth noting that the six students selected as focus students all came from a diverse background representing both the diversity of the classroom and the school. The unmotivated focus students identified themselves as: Caucasian, mixed-race (African American and Caucasian), Asian, and Latino. The motivated focus students identified themselves as Latino and African-American.

Prior to the inception of this study, all rules and regulations for working with human subject participants as set forth by the Institutional Research Review Board at National Louis University were followed. The rights and anonymity of each human subject were strictly protected. A pseudonym was used for each participant and only I have access to original materials, which are kept on a password-protected computer and in a locked cabinet. I informed

participants of the research purpose, process, and use of results. In addition, I obtained consent

from the principal, the teacher, the parents of focal students, and the parents of non-focal

students informing them of the research that was taking place in the classroom (See Appendix G

for letters of consent).

<div align="center">**Data Sets**</div>

Both quantitative and qualitative data sets were used for this study. They include the

Motivation to Read Profile data, interviews, writing prompts, and transcribed discussions. Each

of the data sets is described below.

Motivation to Read Profile (MRP)

Originally designed by Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, and Mazzoni (1996) and updated by

Malloy et al. in 2013, students completed the adolescent version of the MRP adapted by Pitcher

et al. (2007). The first half of the MRP is a 20-question survey designed to assess reading

motivation through a Likert-scale cued response. Even-numbered questions address students'

self-concept as a reader, and odd-numbered questions assess students' value of reading. Items

that focus on self-concept are designed to elicit information about students' self-perceived

competence and performance in reading compared to their peers. Items that focus on the value

of reading are designed to elicit information about the value students place on reading tasks and

activities in terms of frequency and engagement.   The survey was designed to be read aloud by

the teacher, and took about 15-20 minutes to administer. Students had the ability to answer each

question on a 4-point scale with 4 being the most positive and 1 being the least positive. The 4-

point scale ensures that there are no neutral responses.

The survey was field-tested by Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni (1996) with three

experienced classroom teachers and graduate students in reading who critiqued over 100 items

for their construct validity. To ensure validity, only items that received 100% agreement were used. These items were then submitted to four different classroom teachers to sort by (1) self-concept, (2) value of reading, or (3) not sure. Once again, only items with 100% agreement were included on the reading survey. Three hundred-thirty third- and fifth- grade students in twenty-seven classrooms in four schools from two school districts field-tested the final version of the survey. The field test revealed a moderately high reliability for both third (.70) and fifth (.76) grade. The internal consistency of the value scale was .82 and the internal consistency of the self-concept scale was .75.

The MRP was revised by Pitcher et al. (2007) to provide a more flexible instrument that could be used to better understand adolescents' reading motivation. The authors used current adolescent research to guide them to include more "adolescent-friendly" topics such as electronic resources, projects students enjoyed, and reading and writing students completed on their own time. In addition, some of the language was revised to better reach adolescents such as changing "When I grow up" to "As an adult" (Pitcher et al., 2007, p.380). The conversational interview was also revised to include more prompts that would yield information on new technologies and new literacy practices students participate in outside of traditional school literacy.

Thirty-six students from two seventh-grade language arts classes in this study completed the survey portion of the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile before beginning the MERA for four weeks. At the end of the four weeks, all 36 students again completed the MRP survey. (See Appendix B for MRP survey.)

Interviews

The interview portion of the MRP was used to gather qualitative data through individual study administrations. This portion of the MRP consists of three sections. The first section

inquires into motivational factors related to narrative text. The second section asks about motivational factors related to informational text. The third section focuses on general reading motivation factors. Although each section includes scripted questions, the interview is intended to be conversational so as to initiate an informal exchange between the researcher and student. Therefore, the administrator is encouraged to diverge from the script to obtain information from the student that may otherwise be missed during a formal, completely scripted interview (Gambrell et al., 1996). This less formal approach was employed so that I was able to gather additional insight into the students' reading motivation, including insight into a potential change in their reading motivation as a result of the MERA.

Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni (1996) field-tested the interview portion of the MRP by creating 60 open-ended questions about students' reading experiences of narrative and informational text, as well as home and school reading practices. These 60 questions were field tested with a group of 48 students, with 24 identified as highly motivated and 24 identified as highly unmotivated. Two graduate students and former classroom teachers then analyzed responses to the 60 questions and selected the 14 questions which revealed the most useful information about students' reading motivation to read. These 14 questions make up the final interview portion of the MRP.

Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni (1996) took an additional step toward validating the MRP by having both the survey and the interview responses of two highly motivated and two highly unmotivated readers randomly selected and analyzed by two independent raters. The raters compared students' responses on the survey with comments they made during the interview to determine if their self –perceived reading motivation and competence on the survey was consistent with their comments during the interview. The results of this analysis showed

that students' responses on both the survey and the interview were consistent with one another.

After selecting six focal students, I individually interviewed each using the interview portion of the MRP before and after the MERA. I used the pre-MERA interview to gather baseline data about the students' current levels of reading motivation. I then used the post-MERA interview to determine if there was a change in levels of reading motivation based on the implementation of the MERA. In addition to the interview questions on the MRP, I also used several of my own follow-up questions to gain insight into students' thoughts on the MERA (See Appendix C for additional questions). In addition, I attempted to conduct follow-up interviews three weeks after the completion of the MERA to determine if there was a change over time in the focal students' reading motivation as a result of the MERA. However, due to the timing of the follow-up interview, which occurred during the summer, I was only able to complete one of the six follow-up interviews. To target my specific interest in change over time as a result of the MERA, as well as to avoid redundancy in interviews, I only used section C and section D, questions, 1, 3, and 4 in the follow-up interview. (See Appendix B for MRP interview.)

Small Group Discussion

According to Guthrie (1997), motivated readers want to share understandings from their learning. In addition, intrinsically motived readers like to share books with peers and participate responsibly in a community of learners (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Therefore, for my research, an additional measure of reading motivation included a focus on students' amount and quality of participation in peer discussions about the MERA. Since peer discussions were already a regular practice in Mrs. Gray's classroom, this strategy was used to keep routines as similar as possible to avoid impacting student motivation either negatively or positively. Before the MERA was introduced, students listened to a traditional read-aloud from the same genre (horror/scary story)

as the MERA stories. Using the same genre ensured that the change of genre did not impact

reading motivation. After listening to the traditional read-aloud, students were placed in

discussion groups, where they were given several prompts to guide their discussions (See

Appendix D for traditional read-aloud with writing and discussion prompts). When the MERA

was then introduced, students also participated in discussions after each MERA story 1-2 times

per week. Small group discussions took place after the MERA in an alternating rotation with

writing prompts.

Although all students were involved in small group discussions after the MERA, I only

audio recorded focal student groups. For quantitative data, I tracked the number of times each

focal student chose to participate in the discussion. For qualitative data, I analyzed the content to

determine the quality of student responses. For example, I noted if a comment was simplistic

and rote, such as, "I liked the story. It was good." Or, I noted if a comment revealed constructed

meaning and analysis, furthered the discussion, and/or contributed new understandings and

insight to the group such as, "I believe the main characters' fate was meant to scare readers into

always listening to their parents and doing their chores." (See Appendix E for discussion

prompts.)

Writing Samples

In addition to sharing understandings from their learning through discussions, I also

analyzed students' writing related to what they read. Like the peer discussions, writing and

drawing prompts were also a regular practice in Mrs. Gray's classroom. According to Wigfield

and Guthrie (1995), motivation influences the amount and breadth of students' reading activities.

Therefore, I measured the amount and breadth of students' written responses to the MERA, as

well as the content of their writing. Before the MERA was introduced, students listened to a

traditional read-aloud from the same genre (horror) as the MERA stories. After listening to the

traditional read-aloud, students responded in writing to a prompt about the story. In addition,

during the MERA, students continued to participate in writing prompts about each MERA story

1-2 times per week. Writing prompts were given in an alternating rotation with the small group

discussions. In order to meet the needs of all of the learners, students also had the option of

including drawings with their writing responses. For the quantitative data, I collected and

tracked the amount of writing and drawing the focal students completed about each MERA to

measure any change over time in the amount of writing and drawing a focal student composed

about the MERA. For the qualitative data, I analyzed the content of the writing and drawing to

determine the depth and insights represented in their written work, including content such as

character analysis, personal connections, new understandings, and/or synthesis of the text. (See

Appendix F for writing/drawing prompts.)

Data Collection Procedures

This study sought to investigate the impact of a MERA on unmotivated adolescent male

readers. Several methods of both quantitative and qualitative data collection were used. These

include surveys, interviews, discussions, and writing samples.

Motivation to Read Profile (MRP): Survey

The survey was administered to all 36 students during part one and part three of the

study. The survey was explained to students and read aloud by the teacher. Surveys were

collected, scored, and entered into a spreadsheet in IBM SPSS Statistics.

Motivation to Read Profile (MRP): Interviews

Interviews took place individually with six focal students during part one and part three

of the study. Only one focal student was interviewed during part four of the study due to the fact

that it occurred during the summer when students were on vacation. Each interview was

audiotaped and then transcribed by myself with the assistance of an iPhone application.

Small Group Discussion

During parts one and two of the study, all 36 students participated in small group

discussions about a short scary story (part one) and then about the MERA (part two). Students

were heterogeneously grouped based on the classroom teacher's recommendations. The MERA

discussions took place between 1-2 times per week. During these small group discussions, the

teacher rotated among the groups to listen to discussions. I tape-recorded and transcribed the

focal student groups and quantitatively tracked the number of times that focal students chose to

participate in each discussion. In addition, the quality of their comments was qualitatively

analyzed for depth of content.

Writing Samples

During parts one and two of the study, students completed a writing sample with an

option to include drawings about a short scary story (part one) and then about the MERA (part

two). The MERA writing prompts took place between 1-2 times per week. Students were given

approximately 10 minutes to complete a writing and drawing sample in response to that day's

MERA. If a student needed more time, they had the option to continue working on it the next

day. However, all 36 students finished their writing and drawing prompts during the given time.

The researcher collected and copied all 36 students' writing and drawing samples so that focal

student responses could be compared with their peers. Samples were quantitatively measured for

amount of writing and drawing, and qualitatively measured for depth of content.

Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative pre- and post- MERA data were analyzed and compared to determine the impact of the MERA on adolescent boys' reading motivation. Data analysis procedures are describes below.

Motivation to Read Profile (MRP): Survey and Interviews

The survey and interviews were conducted before and after the implementation of the MERA instructional approach. The survey was initially used to help select four unmotivated adolescent males as focal students. The pre and post surveys were scored using the 4-point Likert-scale, with 4 being the most positive and 1 being the least positive, for a maximum total of 80 points. Scores from both surveys were compared using a paired samples t-test to determine if there was a change in reading motivation based on the implementation of the MERA. The paired samples t-test compared pre- and post- scores for (a) all students participating in the study, (b) boys only, (c) girls only, (d) boys identified as unmotivated, and (e) boys identified as motivated. Although the focus of this study was on boys' motivation, it was also important to determine if the MERA can improve the motivation, or not negatively affect the motivation of their female classmates. I predicted that both boys' and girls' motivation will improve. However, I predicted that the boys' motivation would improve by more points than that of the girls'. Further, I predicted that the unmotivated boys' motivation would improve by more points than the already motivated boys' motivation.

The content of the pre- and post-MERA interviews was compared to determine if the post-MERA interviews for students included more positive ideas and comments about reading. Further, the post-MERA interview was analyzed to determine if the focal students verbally shared a specific change in their reading motivation due to the implementation of the MERA. In

addition, the interviews of the focal students identified as motivated were compared with the

interviews of the focal students identified an unmotivated. The single follow-up interview was

analyzed to determine the potential long-term impact of the MERA. For example, I was

interested to see if the student was reading additional multimedia-enhanced texts, texts from the

same genre (horror) as the MERA, or other texts by the same author (Patrick Carman) as their

MERA text.

Small Group Discussion

Data from each focal student's small group discussion was reported based on the number

of times each student chose to participate in a discussion about the short story (part one) and

about each MERA (part two). The number of times a student participated in discussion about the

MERA was compared to the number of times a student chose to discuss the traditional short

story. This comparison was used to determine if students' responsible participation in a

community of learners improved as a result of the MERA (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). In

addition, the content of the focal students' responses about the MERA was analyzed and

compared to the content of their comments about the traditional read-aloud. This comparison

was used to determine if the quality and depth of student responses improved.

To measure the quality of student comments about the text, Hillocks' (1980) taxonomy of

skills in reading and interpreting fiction was used. This model classifies types of responses about

fiction in a hierarchical order. The lowest level of skills is categorized as literal levels of

comprehension. These include basic stated information, key details, and stated relationships.

Basic stated information (BSI) includes important information in the story that is explicitly and

implicitly stated multiple times. Key details (KD) include details explicitly stated at important

points in the story that affect the plot. Stated relationships include connecting two pieces of

information explicitly stated to determine a relationship (SR). An example of a student's literal response about fiction would include rote information directly from the text such as, "The main character is young and a boy" (BSI). This would be considered a simplistic answer lacking depth.

In contrast, the higher levels of responses about fiction are categorized as inferential levels of comprehension. These include simple implied relationships, context implied relationships, author's generalization, and structural generalization. Simple implied relationships (SIR) include a relationship that must be inferred based on two to pieces of information that are positioned closely together in the text. Context implied relationships (CIR) include a relationship that must be inferred based on multiple pieces of information spread throughout the text. Author's generalization (AG) includes inferred ideas implied about the world outside of the text. Structural generalization (SG) includes ideas about how parts of the text work together to achieve a certain effect. An example of a student's inferential response about fiction would include analysis of the text such as "the main character is young and naïve and therefore does not sense the danger coming his way" (CIR). This would be considered a deeper response and would show an improvement in quality from the first response.

The discussion comments of the focal students identified as motivated were compared with the comments of the focal students identified as unmotivated. In addition to the qualitative analysis, the quality of student comments was also be analyzed by a Literacy Professor of Education who is experienced in data analysis, but is unfamiliar with the study's goals, to confirm validity of qualitative analysis of student responses.

Writing Samples

Data from each focal student's writing and drawing sample was reported based upon how many "on-task" and "off-task" words each student chose to write about the short story (part one) and about each MERA (part two). "On-task" words were considered to be any words directly related to the topic, theme, opinion, or summary of the traditional short story or MERA. "Off-task" words were considered any words written to fill space or time with no connection to the text. An example of "off-task" writing would be, "I don't know what I think about this story. I have no idea. Is time up yet?" By contrast, "on-task" writing would be, "I thought the ending was very surprising. I didn't expect the main character to disappear." The number of "on-task" words a student wrote about the MERA was compared to the number of "on-task" words a student chose to write about the traditional short story. This comparison was used to determine if the amount and breadth of students' reading activities improved with the implementation of the MERA (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1995).

In addition, the quality of written and drawn responses was analyzed to determine if students included higher levels of written and drawn responses about the MERA as compared to those for the traditional read-aloud. The same qualitative measure for the small group discussions, Hillocks' (1980) taxonomy, was used to measure the quality of student writing/drawing prompts. An example of a student's literal responses about fiction would include rote information directly from the text such as, "The main character checked into a bed and breakfast (BSI). The landlady was glad to have him there (SR). He thought the tea tasted bitter (KD)." An example of a low-level drawing would include a drawing of a person with no distinguishing characteristics and a one-sentence explanation such as, "This is the landlady (BSI)." In contrast, an example of a student's inferential response about fiction would include

analysis of the text such as "I can infer the landlady must have poisoned the tea which is why it tasted bitter (CIR). I am guessing she does this because she is lonely (SIR) and wants to keep the visitors in her bed and breakfast forever (CIR)." An example of a higher level drawing could include a drawing of a landlady with the poison hiding behind her back (CIR) and a thought bubble showing she is lonely (SIR) with a one-sentence explanation of the drawing such as, "This is the landlady who is plotting to kill her next guest so that she can continue to fill her bed and breakfast with 'visitors' so she never is lonely again (CIR)."

The writing/drawing samples of the focal students identified as motivated were compared with the writing/drawing samples of the focal students identified an unmotivated. Like the analysis of the student discussions, in addition to my analysis, the quality of writing prompts and drawings was also analyzed by another Literacy Professor of Education with data analysis experience to confirm validity of qualitative analysis.

Conclusion

It was the aim of this study to determine if the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read alouds improves adolescent male reading motivation. There is significant research on strategies to promote male reading motivation. However, the use of new literacies, specifically the impact of multimedia-enhanced text on boys' reading motivation, to date, has not been researched. This current study sought to gather rich data through surveys, interviews, writing prompts, and discussions to help inform classroom teachers in the critical area of adolescent male reading motivation. The results and findings are analyzed and shared in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 includes a summary and discussion of the results, with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the use of multimedia enhanced read-alouds (MERA) and their impact on the reading motivation of adolescent males. This chapter presents the results of this exploratory study. The participants of this study included 35 students: 17 males and 18 females. Survey data was collected on the entire class, while four males were selected as focal students because they were identified as "unmotivated," and two males were selected as focal students because they were identified as "motivated." Data collection included whole class quantitative data including the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP), and individual focal student data including the MRP, interviews, writing responses, and transcripts of discussions.

As the researcher, I was the primary source of data collection and analysis. The classroom teacher first administered the MRP, which is a 20-question survey designed to assess reading motivation through a Likert-scale cued response. She then implemented a multimedia-enhanced read aloud (MERA) 2-3 days per week. The MERA used was *3:15* by Patrick Carman and consisted of short horror stories with three parts. First, students listened to a spooky audio introduction. Then, text was read aloud by the teacher. Finally, an online video was viewed to see how the story ended. After each story, students responded to the text through either a discussion or a writing prompt. The teacher administered the writing prompts. In addition, the discussions were facilitated by the teacher for the entire class with the exception of the focal students. I collected the MRPs and writing prompts, and led the focal student discussions. Further, I conducted all the interviews. To increase the reliability of the codes assigned to the discussions and writing

prompts, I enlisted the aid of a local literacy professor. She and I coded these separately, then met to discuss them.

In the section below, I begin the chapter focusing on the whole class quantitative data collected by providing the results of the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) for adolescent males, adolescent females, and unmotivated males compared to motivated males. Next, I review the data collection procedures for the focal students. Then, I share the results of both the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the focal students with specific attention to two of the six focal students. The remaining four focal students are also briefly discussed by highlighting several key aspects of their quantitative and qualitative data. In addition, I provide impressions of the MERA from the perspective of the classroom teacher. The chapter concludes with a summary of the important findings.

Whole Class Data: Motivation to Read Profile (MRP)

The MRP was first administered to 18 females and 17 males in Mrs. Gray's seventh-grade class during week one of the study. Questions on the MRP are designed to assess a student's motivation to read (see Appendix B). Even-numbered questions address a student's self- concept as a reader and odd-numbered questions address a student's perceived value of reading. Each of the 20 questions contains a 4-point Likert scale. The minimum score that can be obtained is 20, while the maximum total score that can be obtained is 80.

The MRP was distributed to both males and females to compare the impact of the MERA on the motivation levels of males compared to females. In addition, males were categorized as either motivated or unmotivated to measure the impact of the MERA on the motivation levels of unmotivated males compared to motivated males.

Overall scores, reading value scores, and self-concept scores comparing all males to all females are presented first. Next, overall scores, reading value scores, and self-concept scores comparing males identified as unmotivated to males identified as motivated are shared. The MRP data then focuses specifically on male and female responses to question 18, followed by unmotivated males versus motivated males responses to question 18. Although there are 20 different questions on the MRP, question 18 is the only one that is discussed individually because it deals directly with classroom read-alouds.

Gender Comparison

Results of the pre-MERA MRP showed females with a mean score of 58.5 and males with a mean score of 54.59. When the MRP was re-administered during week 7 after the implementation of the MERA, the females' mean score was 58.78, while the males' mean score improved to 58.18 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

MRP Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores: Males (n=17) vs. Females (n=18)

Score	Gender	Mean	SD	*t* Value	*p*
Total Pretest	Female	58.50	8.508	1,174	.125
	Male	54.59	11.102		
Total Posttest	Female	58.78	7.689	0.204	.42
	Male	58.18	9.665		

This shows that the females' overall gain score remained relatively unchanged, while the males made gains from the pre-MERA MRP to the post-MERA MRP (see Table 4.2). Males increased their reading motivation by 3.59 points, while females increased by

only 0.28 points. This gender difference in gain is statistically significant ($p<.05$). In

breaking down the gain scores based on the two categories assessed, reading value and self-

concept, there were also statistically significant gender differences in gains in reading value.

Females' value of reading decreased by .28 points, while males' value of reading increased

by 2.65 points. This statistical significance shows that the multimedia-enhanced text did

play a role in improving motivation scores for males.   Specifically, after participating in

the MERA, males' reading motivation increased significantly compared to females' reading

motivation.

Table 4.2

MRP Gain Scores of Males (n=17) and Females (n=18)

Score	Gender	Mean	SD	*t* Value	*p*
Total Gain	Female	0.28	5.278	-1.821	.039
	Male	3.59	5.478		
Reading Value Gain	Female	-0.28	3.754	-1.980	.028
	Male	2.65	4.936		
Self-Concept Gain	Female	0.56	2.479	-0.476	.319
	Male	0.94	2.304		

Unmotivated Males Compared to Motivated Males

        Results of the MRP were also compared between 9 males identified as motivated and

8 males identified as unmotivated. Males were categorized as either motivated or

unmotivated based on the recommendation of their classroom teacher. These

recommendations were then compared with their scores on the MRP pretest to determine if

their categorization matched the scores. The difference in scores between unmotivated

males and motivated males on the pretest was statistically significant making it clear that

the teacher correctly categorized her students' motivation levels. In addition, the difference

in scores on the posttest MRP was also statistically significant showing unmotivated males

scoring significantly lower in motivation and motivated males scoring significantly higher

in motivation levels (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

MRP Pretest and Posttest: Unmotivated (n=9) vs. Motivated (n=8) Males

Score	Motivation Level	Mean	SD	t Value	p
Total Pretest	Unmotivated	46.89	6.918	-4.504	.000
	Motivated	63.25	8.067		
Total Posttest	Unmotivated	52.22	7.242	-3.530	.002
	Motivated	64.88	7.530		

Further, pre- and posttest scores in the subcategories of reading value and self-concept also

showed statistically significant differences between the males identified as motivated and

those seeming to be unmotivated. As expected, unmotivated males scored significantly

lower in both reading value and self-concept, while motivated males scored significantly

higher in the same categories. (See Tables 4.4 and 4.5.) These scores give credence to the

classroom teacher's assessment and categorization of her students' motivation levels.

Table 4.4

Reading Value: Unmotivated (n=9) vs. Motivated (n=8) Males

Score	Motivation Level	Mean	SD	*t* Value	*p*
Pretest	Unmotivated	21.00	4.873	-4.205	.000
	Motivated	30.75	4.652		
Posttest	Unmotivated	24.89	4.649	-3.116	.004
	Motivated	32.00	4.751		

Table 4.5

Self-Concept: Unmotivated (n=9) vs. Motivated (n=8) Males

Score	Motivation Level	Mean	SD	*t* Value	*p*
Pretest	Unmotivated	25.89	5.947	-2.658	.009
	Motivated	32.50	3.964		
Posttest	Unmotivated	27.33	3.969	-2.894	.006
	Motivated	32.88	3.907		

Thus far, the statistically significant findings have shown the expected results that unmotivated males would score low and motivated males would score high on all measures. However, when comparing the gain scores of both groups, a notable finding emerges. That is, the unmotivated males had greater gains in scores from the pretest to the posttest in all

areas including reading value, self-concept, and overall score (see Table 4.6). Overall, they

increased by more than 5 points in their motivation. Although motivated males also showed

gains, their overall gain was less than 2 points. It is important to note that the motivated

males who started with a higher score had less room to grow than the unmotivated males.

Nevertheless, the MRP gain scores show that the MERA had the greatest impact on

improving the reading motivation of the unmotivated males.

Table 4.6

MRP Gain Scores of Motivated (n=8) and Unmotivated (n=9) Males

Gain Score	Motivation Level	Mean	SD	t Value	p
Total	Unmotivated	5.33	6.500	1.44	.09
	Motivated	1.63	3.462		
Reading Value	Unmotivated	3.89	6.314	1.11	.14
	Motivated	1.25	2.435		
Self-Concept	Unmotivated	1.44	2.455	-0.95	.18
	Motivated	0.38	2.134		

Read Alouds: Males vs. Females

Because question 18 on the MRP dealt directly with classroom read-alouds, data

from this specific question was used to compare males to females, as well as unmotivated

and motivated males. Question 18 states, "I would like for my teachers to read out loud in

my classes…" followed by the choices of (a) every day-4 points, (b) almost every day-3

points, (c) once in a while-2 points, and (d) never-1 point. The practice of read-alouds is

already an encouraged classroom practice to promote students' reading success (e.g.

Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). For this study, a read-aloud was used

because it was already part of the classroom routine. Therefore, student motivation was not

impacted by the act of a teacher "reading aloud," but rather the focus was on a multimedia-

text. This specific question was compared to see if using a multimedia-enhanced text

increased the students' desire for a classroom read aloud. During the pretest, females' mean

score was 2.28, while males' mean score for question 18 was 2.71. During the posttest,

females mean score increased .89 points to 3.17, while males' mean score increased 0.7

points to 3.41 (see Table 4.7). Mean scores for both males and females showed an increase

from wanting their teacher to read aloud once in a while to wanting their teachers to read

aloud almost every day. This shows that the implementation of the MERA improved both

genders' interest in hearing teacher read-alouds on a daily basis.

Table 4.7

Question 18: Males (n=17) vs. Females (n=18)

Score	Gender	Mean	SD	*t* Value	*p*
Pretest	Female	2.28	0.752	-1.450	.078
	Male	2.71	0.985		
Posttest	Female	3.17	0.924	-0.839	.204
	Male	3.41	0.795		

Read Alouds: Unmotivated Males vs. Motivated Males

　　Scores for question 18 on the MRP were also compared between males identified as motivated and males identified as unmotivated. As stated above, Question 18 asks readers how often they would like their classroom teacher to read aloud. During the pretest, unmotivated males' mean score on this question was 2.33, while motivated males' mean score was 3.13. During the posttest, unmotivated males' mean score increased 0.78 points to 3.11 while motivated males' mean score increased 0.62 points to 3.75. This shows that unmotivated males increased from wanting their teaching to read aloud once in a while to wanting their teachers to read aloud almost every day. Both unmotivated and motivated males increased their desire to hear teacher read-alouds on a daily basis. (See Table 4.8.)

Table 4.8

Question 18: Motivated (n=8) vs. Unmotivated (n=9) Males

Score	Motivation Level	Mean	SD	*t* Value	*p*
Pretest	Unmotivated	2.33	0.866	-1.759	.049
	Motivated	3.13	0.991		
Posttest	Unmotivated	3.11	0.928	-1.758	.049
	Motivated	3.75	0.463		

The MRP data focused on overall comparisons between males and females, as well as between unmotivated and motivated males. The next grouping of data sets displays the results of individual males who served as the focal students in the study.

Focal Students

During the first week of the study, the classroom teacher selected four unmotivated males and two motivated males as focal students for my study. Their scores on the pre-MERA MRP confirmed the teacher's assessment of their motivation level. The data collection is described below. Following the data collection descriptions, I provide thorough descriptions of two of the focal students identified as unmotivated, Mark and Tim. Mark and Tim are described in the greatest detail because they were the focal students who appeared most impacted by the MERA. Next, William and Zack (unmotivated students) and Luke and Scott (motivated males) are briefly described by highlighting several notable findings from their data collection to share the important findings that emerged from their data.

Focal Student Data Collection

During week one of the study, focal students completed the MRP and were individually interviewed about their reading habits using the interview portion of the MRP. Each interview lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. Focal students were then re-interviewed during the last week of the study.

In addition, focal students completed a writing prompt and participated in a small group discussion after the traditional read aloud. The classroom teacher gave the writing prompt, and I led the small group discussion of focal students in a small office connected to the classroom. The traditional read aloud used was "The Landlady" by Roald Dahl. "The Landlady" is a short, scary story from the same genre as the MERA. However, unlike the MERA, the traditional read aloud did not include any multimedia elements. The writing

prompt and discussion were used for baseline data to compare with the writing prompts and discussions that were given after the MERAs.

After each MERA, students participated in either a small group discussion with me, or a writing prompt given by the classroom teacher. These activities took place on a rotating basis starting with a writing prompt after the first MERA and then continuing with writing prompts after subsequent odd-numbered stories. (See Appendix H for Writing Prompts and Student Responses.) Discussions took place after the second MERA and then continued after subsequent even-numbered stories.

According to Wigfield and Guthrie (1995), motivation will influence the amount and breadth of students' reading activities. Therefore, the amount and breadth of students' written responses and participation in discussions was quantitatively measured. After each writing prompt, all on-task words were counted and totaled for the focal students. In addition, after each discussion, the number of times each student chose to participate was counted. For these students, participation meant choosing, without prompting, to engage in an on-topic discussion of the story in response to my discussion prompts. Sometimes students raised their hands, and other times conversations flowed naturally from student to student without the need for me to call on the participants. I did not include clarifying questions (e.g. What was the question again?), off-topic comments (e.g. What time is lunch?), or unsure answers (e.g. I don't know). Further, if a student was interrupted and then continued with his comment, I only counted it as one turn.

Amount of words written and amount of participation turns does not decisively show greater motivation. Therefore, it was also important to measure the quality of students' oral and written responses. In addition to viewing total word count and total participation turns,

each focal student's writing responses and discussion comments were also coded for quality

using Hillocks' (1980) Taxonomy.

As previously mentioned, the multimedia-enhanced text began with an audio

introduction using creepy music and a narrator's voice that previewed the story for students

and often left them with a cliffhanger final sentence. Then, the teacher read aloud the story,

which also ended with a cliffhanger. Finally, a short online video was watched to see how

the story would end.

The three-part structure of the MERA required students to comprehend both auditory

text and visuals. The skill of visual literacy is different from the traditional form of literacy

that students are used to learning about in school. Visual literacy has been described as "the

ability to decode and interpret (make meaning from) visual messages and also to be able to

encode and compose meaningful visual communications" (Metros, 2008, p. 103). Although

students live in a visually rich world, "they are not visually literate" (Metros, 2008, p. 103).

Therefore, students need to learn to be both "more appreciative and more critical of visual

material than in the past. This goal requires exposure to ways of talking about visual

material and methods of visual research" (Metros & Woolsey, 2008, p. 95). Hillocks'

(1980) Taxonomy was used to not only code the quality of students thinking about the text,

but also their thinking about the visuals they encountered with each story.

Hillocks' Taxonomy includes two levels of classification that categorizes types of

responses about fiction in hierarchical order ranging from literal, which is the lowest point

on the scale, to inferential levels of comprehension, which is the highest. Responses

identified as "literal" include three categories: (a) basic stated information, (b) key details,

and (c) stated relationships. "Basic stated information" includes important details in the

story that are explicitly stated multiple times. "Key details" include important points that affect the plot explicitly stated in the story. "Stated relationships" include connecting two pieces of information explicitly stated to determine a connection.

In contrast, the higher levels of responses about fiction are categorized as inferential levels of comprehension. These include: (a) simple implied relationships, (b) context implied relationships, (c) author's generalization, and (d) structural generalization. "Simple implied relationships" include connections that must be inferred based on two pieces of information that are positioned closely together in the text. "Context implied relationships" include connections that must be inferred based on multiple pieces of information spread throughout the text. "Author's generalization" includes inferred ideas about the world outside the text. "Structural generalization" includes ideas about how parts of the text work together to achieve a certain effect.

In addition to Hillocks' seven levels of comprehension, I also added an eight category called "Other (O)." The category of "Other" included comments about the story that did not provide any specific information. For example, if a student answered "Yes" to a question ("Did you like this story?") but did not elaborate, it was counted as "O" because their answer did not provide enough information to determine their comprehension level. Or, if a student shared an opinion about the story that did not provide specific details, such as, "You would have been scared if you were in the story," then that was also counted as "O."

In order to help code the writing responses and discussions, I asked for assistance from a literacy professor from a local college. She has taught at the college level for over 15 years, participates in research regularly, and has frequently published in reading and

literacy journals.   She provided assistance by reading writing prompts and transcripts and

then coding student responses using Hillocks' Taxonomy. Her participation was vital to

improving the reliability of the coding and to help limit any bias I may have had when

coding the data because I had worked closely with the students for two months. She and I

coded separately and then compared our scores. If we disagreed, we then discussed the

repose until we reached consensus.

Individual Focal Student Summaries

Due to the limited number of students studied, it was difficult to show statistically

significant effects from the use of the MERA. Therefore, it was important to weave

together both the quantitative and qualitative data from the focal students to provide a rich

description of the study's impact as well as to specifically tell the story of the male readers

in Mrs. Gray's class. Through interviews and specific analysis of the focal students' writing

prompts and discussions, important information about the impact of the MERA on students

as readers emerged.

In this next section, two of the focal students, Mark and Tim, are thoroughly

described based on each of their quantitative and qualitative data. Their description begins

with their initial interview. Next, the quantitative section includes information from their

MRP, their amount of participation in discussions, and the length of their written responses.

Then, qualitative data includes information on the quality of their discussion and writing

prompts. Their individual summary concludes with the students' specific comments on the

MERA as taken from their final interview. Some of the student comments from the

transcripts were shortened or edited to improve clarity. For example, if a student used the

word "like" several times in a row, or stuttered over a word numerous times throughout his

response, then these words were removed. The original, unedited versions of the edited

comments are included in their entirety in Appendix I. It should also be noted that most

focus students chose to complete the writing prompt and not a drawing prompt. All writing

prompts are transcribed as typed text, while drawing prompts include the actual image of the

picture and text.

Mark

Mark was selected as a focal student because he appeared to be an unmotivated

reader based on information from both his classroom teacher and his initial MRP score. He

identified as a Caucasian male on his MRP. Mark shared that he rarely read and did not

ever want to hear his teacher read aloud. He shared that he did feel he was good at reading;

he just simply did not enjoy it. I felt this made him an ideal focal student since the purpose

of the MERA was to engage males who did not value reading.   However, rather than the

disinterested and unengaged reader I was expecting, my initial interview with Mark showed

something much different.

Mark's initial interview. The below includes my pre-MERA interview with Mark.

All quotes come from the same data set (Mark, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015).

During my initial interview with Mark, he shared that he was currently reading the Harry

Potter series. He decided to read the books after watching the movies and found he

preferred the text version. He said, "I actually like…reading the books better than the

movies just because you get to actually picture it yourself and see how it is…I mean,

sometimes I picture what's already in the movie and stuff but I like to kinda figure it out

myself." Here Mark showed he enjoyed using the visualization comprehension strategy by

creating a sensory image in his mind of the text that he was reading. Then, when he looked

at the filmmaker's interpretation of the text, he compared it to what he pictured himself. However, he preferred his visualization to the images created for him in movies. He prefers to take ownership over his reading by creating his own images rather than being dependent on someone else's interpretation of the text.

Mark shared that his older sister influences his reading. He says that she is a good reader, and he seeks her advice about what books to read. He also shared that he likes books with mystery and magic and is enjoying the Harry Potter series because, "It's about magic and they can do things that people in our world can't and they find out about different spells and there's a big castle and there's these bad guys and people can control things." Here, Mark's enthusiasm for the Harry Potter series was demonstrated by both the excitement in his voice and his continuous additions of more reasons why he enjoyed the series ("and"…"and"…) The comments from Mark about enjoying Harry Potter and enjoying books with mystery and magic showed that he has an appreciation for the fantasy genre. Unfortunately, this is a genre that is not often studied in the classroom but is often appreciated by adolescent males (e.g. Hebert & Pagnani, 2010).

Although Mark has a computer at home, he shared that he rarely uses it. The only times he claimed to use it was to play games or to look up information if he forgot his textbook in his locker. He also shared that he will use the Internet to read stories about his favorite sports teams and wants to know current stories about these teams such as how long a sports player will be out for an injury. Although Mark does not claim to value digital reading practices, his comments about using the computer to play games, research information from a textbook, and stay up to date with current stories about his favorite sports teams show his ability to use technology to gather important information for both his

academic and personal interests. This willingness to use technology as a "back up" to

textbooks or sports pages show that when it comes to something he cares about (e.g. sports,

completing homework) he is not a reluctant reader but a self-motivated reader and learner.

Mark shared that his favorite subject to read about in school was science "because I learn a

lot of things about how things work and how things are invented and how we use

environmental stuff." This comment showed that Mark is motivated to read informational

text that conveys information to the reader and answers the question, "How?" When asked

about a favorite reading activity in school, Mark immediately recalled a science activity that

he enjoyed. He said his science teacher "made a story out what we were doing…as we were

doing the lungs, she made almost a timeline how, like, goes from this to this to this to this to

this." Mark's answer demonstrates his appreciation for story and sequencing, but not

necessarily in a traditional sense. For example, his science teacher created a sequencing

story of how the respiratory system works, which helped him understand that concept. This

traditional concept of chronological sequence, which combined nonfiction text with what he

described as a "story," built on his preference for this type of text. Like many previous

studies on male readers (e.g. Hebert & Pagnani, 2010), Mark's comments indicated that he

values and enjoys nonfiction texts. In this case, he appreciated the content area reading

strategy employed by his science teacher. Rather than assign text and expect students to

regurgitate the information, this teacher made the informational text into a "timeline story"

as a way to engage the readers.

       Despite Mark's initial impression that he rarely read and was unmotivated to do so,

his motivation for certain types of texts and literacy activities was apparent. He excitedly

discussed Harry Potter and other stories from the fantasy genre. He eagerly shared his

interest in both the science textbook and a content area reading activity his science teacher

employed. He shared his motivation to read informational text and his interest in receiving

book recommendations from his older sister. He also claimed to spend very little time on

the computer, yet he easily listed off multiple digital literacy practices that he engages in on

a daily basis. Although Mark did not define himself as a motivated reader, this initial

interview showed evidence that contradicted this. Mark had reading motivation when it

came to something he was interested in, such as Harry Potter, science text, or a sport's

article. However, he appeared to have a misconception of what activities and genres could

be defined as "reading" when he described himself as a reader.

     Mark's MRP. The MRP is a 20-question survey designed to assess reading

motivation through a Likert-scale cued response. The odd-numbered questions assess

students' value of reading and are designed to elicit information about the value students

place on reading tasks and activities in terms of frequency and engagement. On his pre-

MERA MRP, Mark's reading value score was a 16/40 showing he did not value the practice

of reading. Mark cited reading as something he did "not very often," and believed it to be "a

boring way to spend time." He did not plan on spending any of his time reading as an adult

and preferred his classroom teachers to "never" read out loud in class. In contrast to his low

score on the reading value portion of the MRP, Mark scored a 34/40 on the MRP for self-

concept as a reader. The even-numbered items that focus on self-concept are designed to

elicit information about students' self-perceived competence and performance in reading

compared to their peers. Mark believed he was a "good reader" and felt that reading came

easily to him. This is a surprising discrepancy because my assumption was that students

who believed themselves to be "good readers" would find value in reading. Almost every

other student who believed they were a "good reader" scored high on their value of reading.

This inconsistency was one of the reasons Mark was chosen as a focal student. Although

Mark showed confidence in his reading abilities, this score showed that he did not value or

enjoy reading based on his MRP score.

On his post-MERA MRP, Mark's self-concept score stayed almost the same (33/40).

However, his reading value score increased from 16/40 to 33/40. He claimed reading a

book was something he liked to do "often" and believed it was a "great way to spend time."

He planned on spending "some" time reading as an adult and wished his teachers would

read out loud in class "every day." This change showed a tremendous change in Mark's

value of reading compared to his initial MRP. Rather than imagining a future where he

never read, Mark shared that he plans on spending time reading as an adult. Further, his

response seemed to indicate that he changed his view of reading from believing it was

boring to then sharing that it was a great way to spend time. Rather than wanting his

teachers to never read, he reported that he hoped they would read out loud every day. Each

of these responses appeared to reflect a change in Mark's thinking about reading. These

potential changes in reading motivation were further supported by data that showed he more

than doubled his reading value score after the implementation of the MERA. In addition to

his enjoyment of the MERA text, based on Mark's initial interview, it is also possible that

Mark saw that reading and text could have an expanded definition. For example, using a

multimedia-enhanced text rather than the traditional text could show Mark that reading is

not just the novels he was used to in his language arts classes. Instead, reading can include

an array of texts including digital texts, informational texts, and fantasy texts. Each of these

genres were ones that Mark showed excitement over during his initial interview.

Mark's amount of writing and participation. According to Wigfield and Guthrie

(1995), motivation influences the amount and breadth of students' reading activities.

Therefore, the amount of writing about a topic was measured to determine if students'

motivation to read increased the amount of writing they would complete about a topic.

During the baseline writing prompt where he responded to the traditional read aloud, Mark

wrote 11 total words. After the MERA was introduced, Mark's writing increased to an

average of 48.4 words per prompt. My initial goal to measure an improvement in

motivation was to see a 20% increase. Mark showed an increase of over 400% in his

amount of writing. Table 4.9 shows Mark's on-task writing prompts.

Table 4.9

Total On-Task Words for Mark's Writing Prompts

	Baseline	Story 1	Story 3	Story 5	Story 7	Story 9	MERA Stories' Mean
Mark	11	31	87	50	46	28	48.4

Like his increase in writing, Mark also showed an increase in his amount of

participation during discussions. After the traditional read aloud, Mark chose to participate

6 times in the discussion. After the implementation of the MERA, Mark's participation

average increased to over 12 times per discussion. My initial goal to measure an

improvement in motivation was to see a 20% increase in amount of participation. Mark

showed a 100% increase in his amount of participation. See Table 4.10 for Mark's amount

of participation during discussions.

Table 4.10

Total Amount of Participation for Mark's Discussions

	Baseline	Story 2	Story 4	Story 6	Story 8	Mean
Mark	6	6	19	10	15	12.5

Both Mark's amount of writing and amount of participation more than doubled after the introduction of the MERA. An increase in the words he wrote in response to reading and the number of times he participated in the discussion could be evidence of his increased motivation to read from the MERA materials.

Mark's quality of writing and participation. The baseline story used for this study was "The Landlady" by Roald Dahl (See Appendix D for full version of the story). In the story, a young man, Billy, stays at a Bed and Breakfast run by the titular landlady. She is extremely interested in taxidermy and makes many references to stuffing her "pets." While at the Bed and Breakfast, Billy notices the two previous guests in the guestbook and he vaguely recalls that their names sound like two young men who went missing three years back. The landlady mentions that they are still upstairs. The story ends with the landlady encouraging him to drink up his tea (which has a bitter, almond taste) while sharing that he is the only guest she has had in the last three years. It is the job of the reader to infer that the landlady poisons and then "stuffs" Billy as she did to her animals and previous guests. During Mark's baseline writing prompt about "The Landlady," he is asked how he thinks the story ended. For his writing prompt, Mark included 11 total words and a drawing of a stick figure standing next to a table as can be see in Figure 4.1. He labeled the drawing

"Billy (old)" and had the stick figure say, "I love living here." He also included the

sentence "Billy living in the house."

Figure 4.1: Mark's Baseline Writing Prompt
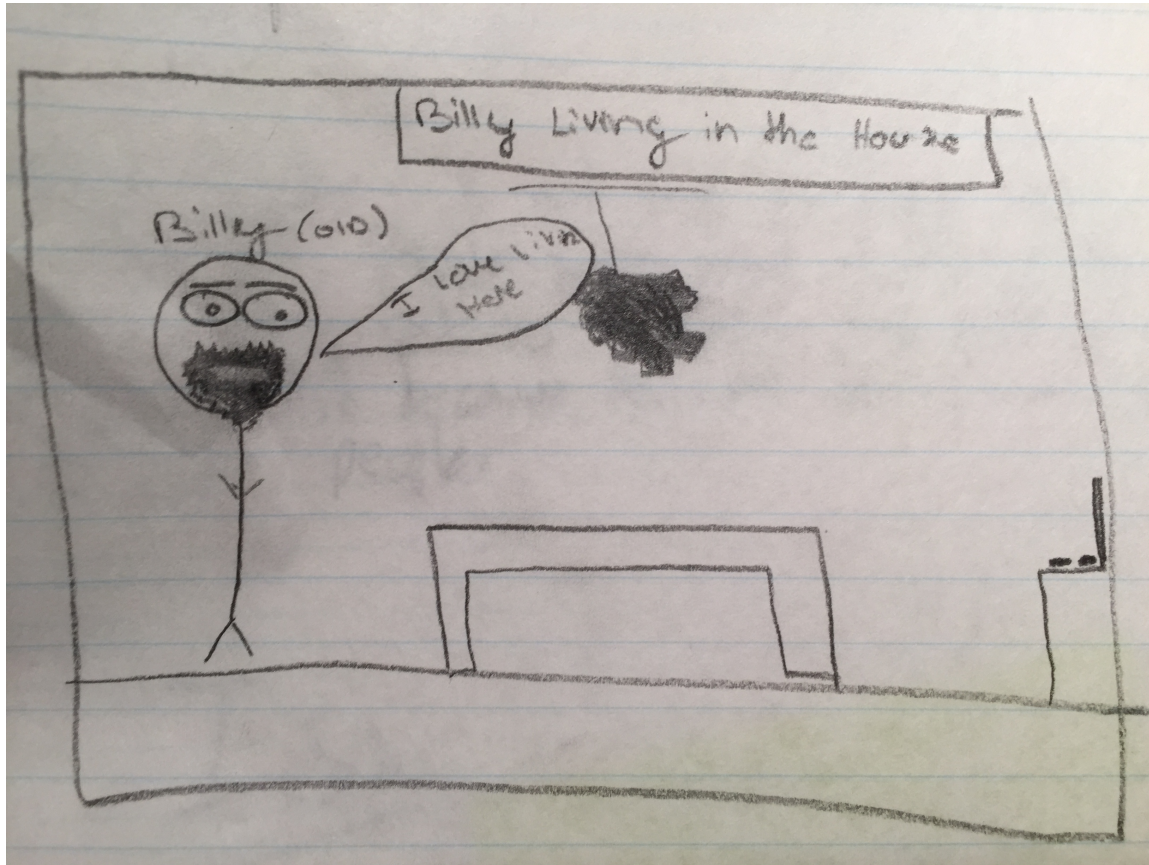
        This information was coded as basic stated information because the story directly

stated that Billy was staying in the landlady's home. However, it included faulty

information because Billy would not have grown old in that home since the landlady killed

Billy in the end. This death should be inferred by the reader. An "older" Billy would not

have survived, let alone enjoyed living in the landlady's home. This baseline writing

prompt showed Mark's limited comprehension about the story and his inability to infer the

ending of the story. Understanding a story, especially a critical component of the story such

as the death of the main character, are necessary for a reader to value the text and feel

confident in themselves as a reader. Both value and self-concept are important components

of motivation.

This is in complete contrast to Mark's discussion about the story. During Mark's

baseline discussion, he contributed six comments. Of the six comments, three showed little

depth and were coded as lower level comments demonstrating a literal response. For

example, he shared that "the beginning was slow" and "it was a good book" (Mark, "The

Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015). At the same time, three of his answers demonstrated

an inferential response. Mark correctly inferred that the landlady "killed him or captured

him." He also analyzed the structure of the story by sharing that as a reader, "you have to

think about it…it kind of leaves you hanging and then the reader, I mean the writer really

makes you have to, you need to pay attention to the whole thing" (Mark, "The Landlady"

Discussion, April 30, 2015). Because the ending of "The Landlady" is left open-ended, a

skilled reader must use clues from the text to infer that the landlady killed the main

character. During this discussion, Mark showed his ability to make an important inference

and his ability to recognize that the author left clues for the reader to think about in order to

make this inference. This shows a major contrast between his limited understanding during

the writing prompt immediately following the story and then his inferential understanding

during the discussion 10 minutes later.

Mark completed the writing prompt immediately after the story was finished and

before the discussion began. During the discussion, several classmates inferred that

something sinister happened to Billy. One student felt maybe "she captured him" and

another student felt maybe "she poisoned him-with the tea" ("The Landlady" Discussion,

April 30, 2015).   Mark then jumped in and shared that he did feel she had captured or killed

him. He then shared his understanding that the author leaves you hanging at the end and

requires you to pay attention to the whole story (Mark, "The Landlady" Discussion, April

30, 2015). It is likely that Mark's initial inference was based not on his own immediate

understanding, but was constructed through both the text and the comments of his

classmates. Mark had more time during the discussion to process and talk through what he

felt had happened. Students' comments began building off of one another. For example,

when asked about the ending, one student shared that he thought the landlady killed or

captured Billy. The next student built off of that and shared that he thought she poisoned

him with the tea. Then Mark jumped in and explained that he first thought "that maybe he

stayed there for a little longer and forgot about leaving." But then his thinking changed and

now he thinks "she killed him or captured him later." Another student jumped in and

further elaborated that after killing him, she "ended up stuffing him like the rest of

collection, animals she had" ("The Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015).   This

conversation sequence demonstrates how Mark and his discussion group were able to

construct meaning together to further their understanding of the story together. This shows

the power of collaborative group talk in building students' comprehension.

          After the MERA was introduced, Mark's amount of participation increased from 6

comments to an average of 12.5 comments. In addition to an increase in quantity of

participation, he also showed an increase in quality of participation. He included more key

details from the stories and an increase in the number of higher-level inferences. One of the

MERA stories read was "Heart of Stone." In "Heart of Stone," a young girl is frequently

frightened of the stone gargoyle outside of her window. One night, she hears scraping and

sees two red eyes in her closet. The stone gargoyle comes to life and flies toward her as the

story ends. The ending of "Heart of Stone" leaves the reader wondering about the fate of

the main character. After reading "Heart of Stone," Mark discussed what happened to the

main character. During the discussion, Mark recalled several key details from the video clip

of the MERA including "the eyes of the bunny turned red when it popped out…" and

described the "big growling noise" from the video clip (Mark, "Heart of Stone" Discussion,

May 21, 2015). Both the red eyes and the growling noise were key details essential to

making the inference that something sinister would happen to the main character. Mark's

use of key details from the video to interpret the text shows the influence of the media

element on Mark's reading of the story. Mark used these details to infer that the gargoyle

"made her into stone, into one of like the other gargoyles and that she's the statue there

now. And the other statue went to somewhere else." He continued by explaining that the

purpose was to "puts them into stone and then it keeps them for, to get everyone. And just

to try to build a population of them. And make the cities bigger" (Mark, "Heart of Stone"

Discussion, May 21, 2015). Mark's comments here show his use of text clues to infer a

logical outcome (a sinister ending for the main character) as well as show his ability to think

beyond the text to imagine the gargoyle's behavior motivation, such as explaining why the

gargoyle went after the main character.

During the discussion about "The Lift," Mark continued to pull out key details from

the video clips to help make higher-level inferences. In this story, two friends go

snowboarding down a mountain that is rumored to be haunted by a phantom snowboarder.

One friend warns the main character to never snowboard after dark. However, the main

character is having so much fun that he decides to take one more run down the hill. As he is

riding up the ski lift, a dark figure leaps out at the main character. The main character

disappears forever. The reader is left to infer that the dark figure is the phantom

snowboarder that haunts the ski lift.

     During the group discussion, Mark jumped in right away to discuss how much he

enjoyed the ending. He liked how "his walkie-talkie kept crackling as he was talking, and

it built more suspense with it." He also enjoyed when the main character "looked over, and

then when he saw it, [the phantom] you didn't even, he wouldn't have, like, a mouth, or

eyes" (Mark, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015).   Mark demonstrates his ability to

piece together the clues of the crackling walkie-talkie and the dark face (missing eyes and

mouth) to infer that the phantom snowboarder does exist and attacked the main character.

Mark also shared that the main character should have listened to his friend. He felt the

lesson was, "Listen to him because sometimes they actually have better ideas and better

thinking than you 'cause when someone else thinks something and heard something, it could

be true" (Mark, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015). Here he takes his understanding of

the story and expands it to include his understanding of the author's message that you

should listen to your friends and realize that sometimes they may have better thinking or

better knowledge than you.

     During the final story, "Take Out," Mark shared key details from the story as well as

higher-level inferences about characters and their motivations. In "Take Out," three boys

(best friends with the same birthday) are home alone waiting for the pizza they ordered.

These boys are described as the three smartest boys on earth. The pizza is delivered by a

strange delivery-man who gives it to them for free. After eating the pizza, they all pass out,

the pizza box emits an eerie glow, and they all disappear while the camera pans out to the

starry night sky. The reader is left to infer that the boys were taken to outer space and the delivery-man was an alien.

Mark began his discussion of the story by critiquing the video because he wanted it to be "scarier" and "I wished that he [delivery man] came in the house and they woke up and saw him." He really wanted to see how the characters "reacted to it." He was disappointed that all he saw was that they "put the pizza box down and…have smoke coming and put it in their nose and mouth" (Mark, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). All of the key details (smoke, pizza box, deliver man, etc.…) that Mark mentions are details that are also reiterated in the video clip. This is a continuing pattern for Mark. He uses the details from the video clips to then make inferences about the text. For example, Mark continued discussing "Take Out" by explaining that the reason the boys were the smartest boys on earth was because

"back then [1970s] people really focused on education more than they are

now, but also they were born on the same day and I feel like they all thought

that they were better than each other so that they studied even harder. Then

they said well, we should just do it together and then like they were the

smartest people they'd work together" (Mark, "Take Out" Discussion, May

28, 2015).

This inference for how they became smart required Mark to connect to the text (all three boys constantly working/playing/learning together), make connections from his life (competitiveness of boys), and share his opinion of previous schooling (people really focused on education more). He then made the inference that they were "taken to Mars… because that's where aliens are usually at" (Mark, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015).

Here Mark demonstrated his ability to use multiple strategies (connections, inferences, prior

knowledge) to create a deeper understanding of the text. He was also able to confidently

critique the video elements and the story ending.

Mark's development over the course of the MERA discussions demonstrated his use

of the multimedia elements to further his understanding of the text, which increased his

motivation to read and participate. During the baseline discussion he relied on his

classmates to construct meaning. Although he (and all other students) continued to rely on

classmates to help construct meaning, Mark more frequently used the visual elements to

draw out key details and make inferences. Further, by the final MERA, he showed

confidence in critiquing the story through the video elements, which was a skill he had not

previously shown. See Table 4.11 for a full breakdown of Mark's coded comments.

Table 4.11

Mark's Coded Comments

	BSI	KD	SR	**SIR**	**CIR**	**AG**	**SG**	O
The Landlady (Baseline)	1			**2**			**1**	2
Reflecting Pool	2			**1**	**2**			1
The Lift		2	1	**2**	**1**	**1**		3
Heart of Stone		6			**6**		**1**	6
Take Out	1	4			**6**			4

* items in bold=inferential

After the MERA texts, Mark's writing prompts averaged 48 words, an increase from his 11 words in the baseline prompt. Further, and more importantly, 4 of the 5 responses showed his ability to make inferences, compared to his baseline, which only showed a literal response with faulty information.

His first MERA response after "Buried Treasure" showed an immediate improvement in his ability to include key details from the story without any faulty information. In "Buried Treasure," a young boy steals a golden hook off of the arm of a dead man in order to melt the gold and sell it to make money for his family. While he is melting the golden hook, a shadow emerges, turns off the lights, and the young man screams. The reader is left to infer that the old man came back from the dead to defend his golden hook. After "Buried Treasure," the prompt asks students if they would have stolen the golden hook like the main character did. Mark wrote, "I would have done it because I need to provide for my family and that may have been the only option or the other option would be to starve and die." Here Mark understood the character's desperation based on the details from the text about the character's need for money to survive. Although he did not include any inferences, his use of key details from the text was an improvement from his baseline information.

During the next writing response, Mark showed his ability to make context implied inferences using important details from the text. "Mr. Mason's Jars" tells the story of a teacher who dislikes a student in his class who frequently talks and makes jokes. One day, he invites this student to his back room to view his jars. He opens a jar, the student sniffs it, and the next day the once loud student is quiet and subdued. When the camera zooms in on the jars you can see the names of various students written on them. The reader must infer

that Mr. Mason uses his jars to take the personalities away from his boisterous students.

The prompt asks students what Mr. Mason has in his jars? In Mark's response, he wrote,

> He puts stuff in there that will take their personality away and then he puts their
>
> name on it to know who's personality it is. But whenever there is a kid who is loud
>
> or talkative he has a jar for them and it takes their personality away and then they
>
> don't talk a lot anymore. But he makes a bunch of these so that when he has a
>
> student that is talkative or loud he will use it on them and put their name on it.

This response showed Mark's ability to use the key details including the names on

the jars and the changes in the student's personality to infer the teacher's use of the jars.

Here Mark showed an improvement from literal comprehension in the first two stories to

inferential comprehension of this story. He continued to show inferential thinking in each

of the subsequent MERA prompts.

For example, after "Nightrider," students must answer why the young girl pushed the

main character into ongoing traffic. Students must infer that the young girl died earlier that

day and wants a friend to join her so they can skateboard together as ghosts. Mark wrote,

> I think that she did that because she wanted to see what he would do if there was an
>
> oncoming truck or car in front of him or her but since she wanted to have him with
>
> her in heaven to be a ghost and to be a good rider.

Here he correctly infers that she is a ghost and she wants someone with her to help her

become a good skateboard rider.

During, "The Beast," the main character continually forgets to walk his dog after

school because he is too distracted playing video games. By the time his dad gets home

from work to remind him, it is dark out and he is too afraid to walk the dog because of the

rumored "beast" in the park. The dad continues to walk the dog for him at night until

finally he warns him that he will no longer walk the dog. Once again, the main character

forgets and is forced to walk the dog in the dark. When he gets near the park, he hears a

growling in the trees. He runs away while "something" chases him. The prompt asked

student to decide if there actually was a "beast," Mark wrote,

> I think that there actually is a [sic] because what would he be running away from
>
> when he saw it but I think that he made it out alive and that he learned his lesson and
>
> he will now do his chores when he is asked to.

This prompt showed that Mark made a context implied inference because he needed several

pieces of information to determine not only that the boy was running away from the beast,

but also that the story was supposed to teach the reader a lesson about doing their chores.

See Table 4.12 for Mark's total word count and coded writing prompts for each story.

Table 4.12

Mark's Writing Prompts

	Baseline	Buried Treasure	Mr. Mason's Jars	Night Rider	The Beast	Atomic Ants
Total Words	11	31	87	50	46	28
Code	BSI	KD	**CIR**	**CIR**	**CIR**	**SIR**

*items in bold=inferential

The quality of Mark's writing prompts increased over the course of the MERA.

During the baseline story, Mark struggled to make the inference needed to understand the

ending of the story. Instead, he relied on his peers during the discussion to help build his

knowledge of the story. However, during the MERA discussions and writing prompts, Mark

was able to rely on the visuals. His deepest responses appeared to have been prompted by

the videos. It seemed that when viewing the videos during the MERA, Mark was able to

gather clues from the visuals and combine them with the text to make correct inferences and

deepen his understanding of the text.

Mark's post-MERA interview. The following contains my post-MERA interview

with Mark. All quotes come from the same data set (Mark, post-MERA interview, June 2,

2015). During my post interview with Mark, he mentioned right away that he had been

reading a Star Wars book at home which includes videos just like the MERA in class. He

chose the Star Wars book because he liked the MERA and wanted to read "something like

that." He "loved" the MERA and said,

> I just liked how it gave you a little suspense and then the video really added onto it
>
> just because I could be okay with just reading it because it gives you that story. And
>
> then it kinda shows the ending of it and you have to see it in that and you have to
>
> visualize it then you can see it to read it out. You just have to kinda figure it out by
>
> yourself. I like that.

This showed Mark's interest in combining both text and visual elements of the MERA to

create inferences and deepen his comprehension of the text by figuring it out on his own.

He enjoyed the challenge that came with using multiple elements to create an inference

rather than being directly told the ending of a traditional story or struggling to infer the

ending of a traditional story like "The Landlady" where clues are given in the text alone

without the help of the multimedia clues. He enjoyed that the video "kinda shows the

ending" but he also had to "visualize it" and "read it out" to "figure it out by yourself."

This showed he enjoys making inferences. However, he struggled to infer the traditional

story, which required inferences on text clues alone. The multimedia clues gave him the

extra help needed to help him construct inferences on his own. In addition, each of the

MERA stories was from the same genre (horror) and followed a similar pattern leaving the

reader to infer the ending with the clues from the text and videos. After reading multiple

stories that follow a similar pattern and genre, it is also likely that Mark began to learn the

patterns of the stories and learned how to look for clues. This could be an additional factor

to explain both his increased inferential skills and his increased motivation.

He also reported that he was always "excited for the next day" when he knew his

teacher would be using a MERA. His favorite part of the MERA was the video endings

because,

> It really, really, really added on to how I loved the book because the reading was
>
> amazing and I liked just to listen to how it happening [sic], you know, why things
>
> happen and then it just kinda told you, you gotta figure it out on your own after the
>
> video.

Here Mark showed that even after the video provided visual confirmation of what he

inferred was happening, he liked how the videos frequently ended with the reading still

having to "figure it out on your own." He enjoyed the empowerment of creating his own

inference even after the video ended.

Mark also shared that he preferred multimedia-enhanced books to traditional books

because they are "more fun." He was interested in reading more multimedia-enhanced

books on his own and felt he had read a lot more books since being introduced to the

MERA. He discussed that he specifically sought out books similar to the MERA, such as

the Star Wars book, which included video elements. He reported,

I've read more books since like read more books like that too. I, I just started Star

Wars like 2 days ago – because I like the 315 I wanted to do something like that.

But that was the only one I could find like 315.

Since there are not a large amount of multimedia books available, he also planned to read

traditional books such as "The Hunger Games" from the fantasy genre.

Mark was the only student to respond to my request for a follow-up interview over

the summer. He emailed to tell me that he was currently reading two traditional books that

he really enjoyed. He shared that he preferred to read a multimedia book because he likes

"the concept of it and how it is set up and how it is showing you the ending images of what

would have happened" (Mark, Follow-Up Interview, August 2, 2015). Since, there are not

many multimedia books readily accessible for him to check out or purchase, he instead

enjoyed traditional books throughout the summer such as *The Diary of a Wimpy Kid* and

The Teens Guide to World Domination.

Mark's excitement and motivation for the multimedia-enhanced text was visible.

Although he identified as an unmotivated reader, his initial interview showed him to be

motivated to read types of texts (i.e. Informational texts, fantasy, online sports articles,

etc.…) that did not fit with a school's definition of reading. The MERA introduced Mark to

a completely different type of text that he continued to seek out even after the study was

over.

The next student discussed, Tim, was also identified as an unmotivated reader. Of

the remaining unmotivated focal students, Tim appeared to be the student whose motivation

improved the most by the end of the MERA. Like Mark, he is discussed beginning with his

initial interview, continuing with his quantitative (MRP and amount of writing and

participation) and qualitative data (quality of his writing prompts and discussions), and then

finally his evaluation of the MERA based on his final interview.

Tim

Tim was selected as a focal student based on Mrs. Gray's perception that he was the

most unmotivated reader in the class. In addition, his score on the pre-MERA MRP was the

lowest of all the potential focal students.   Tim identified as multiracial including both

African-American and Caucasian on his MRP. During his initial interview, Tim expressed a

lack of interest in both books and technology, which are the two main elements of the

MERA: a book combined with multimedia/technology elements. Since he shared he was

unmotivated in both reading and technology, it made him an ideal focal student to determine

if the combination of the two elements (books and technology) would introduce him to a

new way of looking at reading and impact his motivation in either category.

Tim's initial interview. The below contains my pre-MERA interview with Tim.

All quotes come from the same data set (Tim, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015).

During my initial interview with Tim, he appeared uninterested and unengaged in answering

questions about books. However, he surprised me by sharing a positive experience with

books when he told me that he loved the book, *Stormbreaker,* and he was currently enjoying

The Uglies, which was his novel choice for a unit in Mrs. Gray's class. He further

elaborated that he liked "the books that she [Mrs. Gray] makes us pick out."   Mrs. Gray

shared that students were given the choice of six different fantasy novels to choose for that

novel unit. Tim selected *The Uglies* and appeared happy with his choice. Of all his classes,

he shared that he liked reading during homeroom the best. Homeroom is an 8-minute period

at the beginning of the day where students listen to announcements and discuss

nonacademic, school-related issues. The only reading done in homeroom is if students read by choice. No reading is actually assigned. Therefore, his homeroom reading would consist of books Tim is choosing to read on his own. Both his excitement for his self-selected fantasy novel and his interest in reading in homeroom highlights the importance of choice to engage and motivate readers (Guthrie, 2011).

Tim shared that his favorite author was James Patterson because, "he writes really interesting books, like, funny" and he also enjoyed books from the fantasy genre. Both humorous books and fantasy stories align with research (e.g. Hebert & Pagnani, 2010) on genres that adolescent boys find engaging. However, these genres are not usually used in the classroom.

Unlike Mark who enjoyed informational text, Tim shared that he never read to get information. He also disliked reading in social studies the most because the words are "kinda confusing." Here, Tim showed that his struggle with vocabulary impacted his understanding and interest in informational text. Tim shared that he did not think reading was important. But, he did think maybe it was a good idea so that you would not "just be on…like phones and stuff all day." This showed Tim's view of traditional text as a better use of time compared to his view of using technology all day as problematic. Here he placed value on reading traditional text and criticized digital reading practices.
The interview continued with a string of "No" answers from Tim about reading and technology. "No" he did not have any books he wanted to read. "No" there was not anyone who got him excited to read. "No" he never talked about reading or magazines. "No" he did not have a computer. "No" he did not have any reason to use a computer. "No" he did

not have anything he wanted to look up on a computer. "No" he did not have any interest in sending email. By this point it was clear Tim was ready for the interview to be over.

I was encouraged to hear that Tim did find certain aspects of reading to be motivating. His excitement over the fantasy genre and desire to have a choice of what and when to read were both potential ways to improve his motivation. Since some of the MERA stories included fantasy elements, I was eager to see how Tim's motivation would be impacted. I was especially interested in Tim because the MERA was embedded in technological elements, and Tim showed a complete disinterest in discussing any aspect of technology. Therefore, I felt it would be important to determine if the technological elements of the MERA turned him off from reading further, or if these elements changed his mind about technology and increased his motivation.

Tim's MRP. On Tim's pre-MERA MRP, he had low scores for both categories. The Self-concept category is designed to elicit information about students' self-perceived competence and performance in reading compared to their peers. The Value of Reading category is designed to elicit information about the value students place on reading tasks and activities in terms of frequency and engagement. His self-concept score was a 16/40 and his score for reading value was a 13/40. He believed he was a "poor reader" who read "not as well as my friends." He also believed that reading was "very hard for me" and he understood "almost none of what I read." Reading a book is something he does "never" and he felt it was "a boring way to spend time." If he received a book as a gift he would be "unhappy" and would only like his teachers to read out loud in class "once in a while." When his teachers ask him a question about his reading, he "has trouble thinking of an

answer" and only talked about his ideas in groups "sometimes."   These answers on the

MRP showed Tim to be the least motivated focal student.

However, on Tim's post-MERA MRP, both his reading value and self-concept scores

increased significantly. His self-concept score went from a 16/40 to a 24/40. He felt when

his teacher asked him a question about reading he could "always think of an answer" and he

would "almost always talk about my ideas" during group discussions. He also felt reading

had become "very easy for me." His reading value score also increased from 13/40 to

22/40. He felt that reading a book was something he liked to do "often" and it was an

"interesting way to spend time." He would also like his teachers to read out loud in class

"almost every day." This was a dramatic change from his initial interview and MRP score.

Not only did his motivation to read improve, but there was also a strong increase is his self-

concept as a reader. This showed the potential of the MERA to not only reach students who

were not technologically savvy and engaged in online reading practices (like Tim), but also

had implications for how multimedia elements could improve the reading confidence of

students.

Tim's amount of writing and participation. As previously stated, the amount of

writing about a topic was measured to determine if students' motivation to read increased

the amount of writing they would complete about a topic (Wigfield and Guthrie 1995).

During the baseline writing prompt where he responded to the traditional read aloud, Tim

wrote 32 total words. After the MERA was introduced, Tim's writing decreased steadily to

an average of 22.6 words per prompt. See Table 4.13 for Tim's on-task writing prompts.

Table 4.13

Total On-Task Words for Tim's Writing Prompts

	Baseline	Story 1	Story 3	Story 5	Story 7	Story 9	MERA Prompts Mean
Tim	32	32	20	29	14	18	22.6

Like his decrease in amount of writing, Tim also showed a slight decrease in his amount of participation during discussions. After the traditional read aloud, Tim chose to participate 7 times in the discussion. After the implementation of the MERA, Tim's participation stayed somewhat consistent with an overall average decrease to 6 participation turns per discussion. See Table 4.14 for Tim's amount of participation during discussions.

Table 4.14

Total Amount of Participation for Tim's Discussions

	Baseline	Story 2	Story 4	Story 6	Story 8	MERA Discussions Mean
Tim	7	5	8	3	8	6

Contrary to expectations, both Tim's amount of writing and amount of participation decreased after the introduction of the MERA. For Tim, the MERA did not increase his amount of writing and talking about stories like I hoped would happen. However, because amount of words written and amount of participation turns does not decisively show greater motivation, I was eager to measure the quality of Tim's oral and written responses.

Tim's quality of writing and participation. During Tim's baseline discussion, he contributed 7 comments. As previously shared, the short story, "The Landlady," was used as the baseline story. This story focuses on a young man, Billy, who unwittingly enters a bed-and-breakfast run by a landlady who poisons and "stuffs" her guests. The reader must

infer the fate of Billy. During the discussion, Tim correctly inferred the ending of the story

by sharing that the landlady "killed Billy" (Tim, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30,

2015). He focused on very specific details from the story, including basic stated

information such as "Well my favorite part is like when he saw the thing saying bed and

breakfast –and then he rang the doorbell and then it opened right away." Other literal

information included his comment that "she should a let him talk instead of just like cutting

him off right away. Because she didn't want him to know anything. But I still think he

should a talked to her" (Tim, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015). Both of these

comments were important pieces of information that helped build suspense in the story and

helped clue in the reader to recognize that something suspicious was happening at the bed

and breakfast. He also discussed "the two guys and like how he, how he remembers them.

And then like she's talks and then just stops" (Tim, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30,

2015). This was another essential piece of information to help the reader recognize that the

landlady may have had something to do with the two guys who went missing. It was

surprising that Tim had a low self-concept as a reader and shared that he did not know the

answers to his teacher's questions, because during the baseline he showed his ability to

make inferences. It became clear that Tim had a lack of confidence in his ability to share

his inferences about the text.

Tim also shared a misunderstanding when he stated that the schoolboy from "Eaton"

he believed was actually "eaten" by the landlady (Tim, "The Landlady" Discussion, April

30, 2015). Since he was listening to the story out loud and could not see the text, and Eaton

is a city the student was unfamiliar with, it made sense that this misunderstanding would

have occurred. The story also alludes to the landlady's interest in taxidermy where she

"stuffs" her "pets." Therefore, Tim believed that she "ate" the missing guys and stuffed

them as one would stuff a turkey at Thanksgiving. Tim's lack of background knowledge

about cities in England (Eaton) and taxidermy directly contributed to this confusion. Despite

his low self-concept score on the MRP, during the baseline reading of the traditional text,

Tim showed his ability to make basic inferences from the text.

After the MERA was introduced, Tim's amount of participation stayed steady

moving from 7 comments to an average of 6 comments after the stories. Although the

amount of participation stayed steady, I was more interested in noting how the quality of his

comments would improve. After the first MERA discussion of "Reflecting Pool," Tim

discussed how he liked the video ending "because reading out it makes you kind of

suspicious when she stops, and seeing the video gets it, the way you see it, it gets in your

mind better" (Tim, "Reflecting Pool" Discussion, May 7, 2015). For Tim, the visualization

that the video provided helped him make better sense of the story. He also shared specific

details from the story including his favorite part "when everything started…going away"

and a lesson he learned from the story, "don't take something from your boss to see if

they're that old, and plus you say don't take anything without asking" (Tim, "Reflecting

Pool" Discussion, May 7, 2015). Both of these details were essential to the video ending

and allowed him to understand the lesson learned. Using the video elements allowed Tim to

move from basic inferences, like the ones he shared in the baseline discussion, to an author

generalization, which is a higher level of understanding according to Hillocks' Taxonomy.

As soon as the MERA was introduced, Tim continued to expand his ability to infer by

making author generalizations. For example, in "The Lift," the story about the phantom

snowboarder, Tim continued to focus on lessons that could be learned from the story. He

felt the main character, "made the mistake of trying to go over by himself and not meeting up with his friend. And he thought it was his friend, but not checking, just going along with it, when he said nothing" (Tim, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015). He continued explaining,

> The lesson's don't do something – I don't know how you say it but, it's like, how he wanted to go again –but, he also wanted to leave too. But he just wanted to go again just because it was fun. He shouldn't have went down (Tim, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015).

Here Tim continued to show his ability to use the video clues combined with some textual information to understand the lesson the author was intending for his audience to infer.

During the next story, "Heart of Stone," 6 out of 8 of Tim's comments were higher-level inferential thinking as he provided multiple critiques of the character's decisions. Like the previous MERA discussions, the majority of Tim's comments related to the video ending, rather than the text. "Heart of Stone" is the story of the young girl who fears the stone gargoyle outside of her window. During the discussion, Tim shared, "I would change the part where the door opened and she just ran to the window. Why would you run to the window? I say close the door and put something in front of it so if it tried to open it wouldn't 'cause it's kind of a small gargoyle." He also gets upset with the character because

> Her just sitting there and letting it just attack her and everything — that was kinda dumb. I would at least try to do something. Like if you know you can't hurt it 'cause it's stone at least try to throw it back out the window (Tim, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 21, 2015).

This critique of the story showed Tim's increased confidence in his ability to discuss and analyze a story. The video never actually showed the girl "just sitting there and letting it attack her." It showed her lying in bed afraid. But when the gargoyle flew in, the video ended forcing the reader to infer. Tim inferred the ending with confidence by critiquing what he inferred the character would have done. During his initial MRP he shared that he had trouble thinking of answers to his teacher's questions. Yet here, Tim not only shared 8 different comments about the story, but he also felt confident enough to critique the character's inferred actions in the video. The use of video aided Tim's confidence to make inferences about the story. This was an important step in building his self-concept as a reader and increasing his motivation to read and analyze text.

Tim's inferential thinking continued with the last story, "Take Out." This was the story about the three "smartest boys on earth" who are zapped into outer space by a pizza delivery-man. Here Tim continued to provide critique of the story. However, for this final story, he showed an increased focus on the text in addition to the video ending. He critiqued the text by saying "I probably would change when they open the door and they just took it [the pizza] for free 'cause they know it would be something bad. Not good since the person gave it to you for free" (Tim, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). Here he is using his background knowledge of the concept that things that appear free are usually "too good to be true" to infer that the boys should have been smart enough to not take the free pizza. He then discussed the video by saying "I like the video ending because in the book it just says they all just fell asleep and Zach only saw the guy pulling the light and then in the video part it showed him pulling the light and them like getting up and just being taken away" (Tim, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). Here his confidence improved to

critique not only the video but also the text. In addition, he combined both the text and the

video to create his higher-level inference that,

> It's not a coincidence, that they were all born on the same day and that the three
>
> smartest persons on earth, people on earth, I think it's that they're all, they're
>
> actually aliens that were sent down there and – then they describe a change because
>
> their — mission was successful (Tim, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015).

This higher-level inference required multiple pieces of information from both the text (three

smartest people on earth, born the same day) and the video (aliens), which Tim successfully

pieced together. He also inferred that the parents,

> Probably were in it too. Because if they just came down there, if they were aliens
>
> and came down there they can't just be with random families. They probably gave
>
> 'em, they chose some parents from the planet to go down with them (Tim, "Take
>
> Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015).

This showed Tim's ability to think beyond the text to discuss the parents who were a very

minor part of the story. Although Tim shared several inferential comments during the

baseline story, the MERA videos built his confidence and helped him develop into a reader

that thinks beyond the text and can understand author's generalizations. See Table 4.15 for a

full breakdown of Tim's coded comments.

Table 4.15

Tim's Comments Coded

	BSI	KD	SR	**SIR**	**CIR**	**AG**	**SG**	O
The Landlady (Baseline)	2	1		**3**	**1**			
Reflecting Pool		2			**1**	**1**		1
The Lift		1	1			**1**		
Heart of Stone		1		**1**	**3**	**2**		1
Take Out		2		**2**	**3**			1

*items in bold=inferential

Like the increase of quality in his discussions, Tim also showed an increase in quality during his writing prompts, despite his decrease in amount of writing. During Tim's baseline writing prompt, when asked how he thought the story would end, he combined a correct inference "The landlady is gonna kill him…the [sic] stuff him," with a misunderstanding that she will also "eat his insides." He wrote that she will eat him because "In the newspaper it said a eaton schoolboy." He does correctly explain how he inferred the first part by writing, "she stuffs all her pets, and the guys are still with her." As previously mentioned, this misunderstanding made sense since the word "Eaton" was not in print form but rather read aloud by the teacher. Also, since he had no background knowledge on the city, Eaton, it most similarly sounded like the phrase "eat him."

Tim's writing prompts continued to include inferential thinking as well as key details from the stories. For example, after "Buried Treasure," he explained that the main character should not have stolen the hook because "he had a deal and he broke it. He should have

thought of the ways this would work out. He took gold from a dead old helpless good

mysterious man. " This prompt showed he was able to think about the key details of the

story (took gold, stole the hook, dead man) to critique the main character's actions. After

"Night Rider," the story about the ghostly skateboarder, Tim correctly inferred that the girl

pushed the main character in front of the truck because, "She wanted him to join her. I

would've explained to him I was a ghost so he wouldn't freak out when he learned." This

response required Tim to combine multiple pieces of information (the girl was a ghost, she

pushed him, she was lonely) from various parts of the story to correctly infer the ending

(she wanted him to join her). In the final story, "Atomic Ants," a camp counselor named

Eddie scares the younger campers with stories of "Atomic Ants" down a sewer that eat

campers at night. Eddie then opens the sewer lid and terrifies the young campers who worry

about Atomic Ants getting them as they sleep. The story ends with shadowy creatures

sneaking into the campsite and dragging Eddie away. The reader must infer that the Atomic

Ants were real and dragged Eddie into the sewer. When asked if Eddie deserved his fate in

"Atomic Ants," Tim used key details to infer that, "Eddie did deserve his fate because he

bullied kids and he got tortured because of his bullying ways." Tim once again shows that

he can make an inference (he got tortured by the Ants) about the ending of the story and

understand the lesson (because of his bullying ways) the author wanted the readers to learn.

This showed his ability to make an author generalization, which is on the highest end of

Hillocks Taxonomy. Like his discussions, Tim's inferential thinking improved throughout

his writing responses about the MERA stories. See Table 4.16 for Tim's total word count

and coded writing prompts for each story.

Table 4.16

Tim's Writing Prompts

	The Landlady (Baseline)	Buried Treasure	Mr. Mason's Jars	Night Rider	The Beast	Atomic Ants
Total Words	32	32	20	29	14	18
Code	**CIR**	KD	**CIR**	**CIR**	KD	**SIR/AG**

*items in bold=inferential

Tim's post-MERA interview. The following contains my post-MERA interview with Tim. All quotes come from the same data set (Tim, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). During my post interview with Tim, he shared that he enjoyed reading in his Language Arts class because his teacher "gives us time" to read. This showed the importance of giving students time to read, rather than expecting them to make time on their own. When asked if his teacher had done anything with reading that he really enjoyed, he mentioned the MERA. He liked it because,

> The part where you listen to what you're gonna, about to read –and then you read it and then it cuts you off and puts a video in –the part where you have to just read and then you visualize it later.

This showed Tim's enjoyment of the audio introduction ("listen to what you're about to read"), the text ("then you read"), and the video ending ("it cuts you off and puts a video in"). He also enjoyed having to visualize the inferred endings ("then you visualize it later"). But he felt it "wasn't enough…the book of the video should be longer." The desire for longer text and media elements is a major change from his first interview where he did not like to read or spend time on the computer.

Tim specifically elaborated on his enjoyment of the audio introductions because,

It would say what you're about to read – and if it's what you like then you know you

really want to read it -other than some books, you can only read the back page and

they only give you that much information about it.

This showed he preferred the audio introduction of a MERA to engage him each day

compared to the back of a traditional text that only captured his attention once. In our fast

paced technological world, students are used to being engaged in something online within

seconds. Here, Tim's comment showed his desire for that instant engagement every day.

The MERA audio introductions provided that instant engagement.

In addition to the audio introductions, Tim also really enjoyed the video,

Because when you, when she's [Mrs. Gray] reading it to us and you're trying to

visualize it, what it is and then seeing the video and then what actually it is, you can

kind of compare what you thought it is to what it really was.

 Strategic readers visualize and engage in comparing and contrasting as they read. Here

Tim shared how he enjoyed visualizing as Mrs. Gray read, and then comparing and

contrasting his image with the image in the video.

When asked if his reading habits had changed at all since the MERA was introduced,

Tim felt they had changed "a little bit, but not much." He further explained that the change

was "me getting more interested in books and trying to find books I like to read." My initial

goal in introducing the MERA into classrooms was finding ways to motivate the

unmotivated adolescent boy to read. Although Tim claimed his change was just "a little

bit," his increase of 17 points on the MRP combined with his comment that he is "more

interested in books and trying to find books I like to read" showed a much stronger

improvement in his motivation than his claim of "a little bit."

William and Zack (Unmotivated Males)

William and Zack were the two other focal students selected to represent unmotivated males. William's scores and interview commentary were fairly representative of most of the males in Mrs. Gray's class, which is why he was selected. Zack appeared to have the largest interest in digital literacies of all the students and was selected due to the high value he places on information gained from online sources, specifically audio and visual sources, compared to information from traditional texts. Although Mark and Tim's sections tell a richer story about the MERA, both William and Zack had important findings about the MERA emerge from their data sets. William and Zack are briefly summarized below based on their interviews and notable findings.

William. William identified as Latino on his MRP. During his initial interview, William shared that he chose to read only "if I don't have anything else to do." When he does read, he preferred to read, "whatever's like popular" which he usually found out about on the Internet. He used a computer sometimes, but most of the time he used his phone to access the Internet. He liked to use the Internet to "look at shoes" and "to read about different articles about sports and stuff" (William, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015). This initial interview showed that he was interested and knowledgeable about using technology for his own personal interests and he enjoyed popular books, but will only read them if he has nothing else to do.

William's MRP score showed an increase in reading value from a 16/40 to a 21/40. Rather than sharing that he would like to read a book "not very often," he changed his answer to wanting to read a book "often." Further, he changed wanting his teacher to read out loud "once in a while," to wanting his teacher to read out loud "almost every day."

Since the MERA was based on Mrs. Gray's read aloud, this was a noted increase from

wanting her to read out loud "almost every day" after the use of the multimedia-enhanced

text.

William's writing prompts stayed fairly consistent in both quantity and quality. But,

the quantity and quality of his discussions showed a notable increase. During William's

baseline discussion, he contributed only two comments. Both comments were of high

quality as he correctly inferred the ending of the story by guessing that the landlady

"poisoned him-with the tea" (William, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015). The

inference was correct and needed to be inferred by combining multiple clues in the text.

However, he was unable to explain how he made that inference using any text clues.

Although he made a high-quality inference, he did not know how to use textual evidence to

explain his inference. William shared that he enjoyed the ending because "the reader is kind

of shocked when they have to figure it out" (William, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30,

2015). William enjoyed both the surprise ending and the role the reader played in making

the inference to figure out the ending.

After the MERA was introduced, William's average amount of participation

increased from 2 comments to almost 9 comments. This amounted to a 450% increase in

participation. He showed not only a stronger interest in participating, but he also continued

to provide high-quality, well-reasoned inferences about the stories. For example, in

"Reflecting Pool," an antique-store owner "traps" her young workers in her antique mirrors

if they steal from her. The reader sees the young girl get sucked into a mirror in the end, but

they must infer that it was the antique store owner's doing and that the reason was based on

the stealing. William inferred that the antique store-owner, "offers jobs for young people

who need them and…collects people who come into the store." He also felt the owner was specifically targeting girls because "I don't think guys would actually want anything" from the antique store (William, "Reflecting Pool" Discussion, May 7, 2015). Here he used his background knowledge about antique stores, as well as some gender stereotyping, and clues from the text to make a correct inference about the sinister motivation of the store-owner. After reading the gargoyle story, "Heart of Stone," William felt frustrated with the use of a female protagonist in the video. He said, "I thought she shoulda done something. Like that, it would've been better maybe if it was a boy and then, I dunno, you probably coulda kicked his stone or something, broke it" (William, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 21, 2015).

When other boys mentioned that a girl could have attacked the gargoyle too, he disagreed because he felt she was "probably scared" (William, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 21, 2015). This showed his continued gender stereotyping and his preference for male protagonists in stories. Despite his male counterparts disagreement on his gender stereotype, he continued to defend his belief in having a male protagonist rather than a female. He predicted that the main character would be "scarred for life" and worried that it would come back for her. He also felt "her parents aren't gonna believe her" which is a common theme in adolescent literature (William, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 21, 2015).   In this story, William increased his inferential thinking by including a critique of the character's actions ("you probably coulda kicked his stone") and adding a prediction based on his background knowledge of text ("her parent's aren't gonna believe her"). Both critique and prediction are strategies employed by proficient readers.

During the final story discussion of "Take Out," the boys were discussing the aliens taking the three adolescent boys to another planet.   William had a different, but well-reasoned idea than the rest of the group. He thought,

Well, I think they were on a different planet, and then a whole different world, so

maybe they were in this planet and then they got taken back to earth to live the rest

of their lives…maybe their parents were bad and then the guy wants to go retrieve

them to bring them back to earth (William, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015).

Both of these inferences were plausible and supported by clues from the video. These

inferences required William to think more deeply outside of the text (parent's motivation)

and bring in background knowledge (different planet), rather than relying on text clues

alone.

William made correct inferences in both the baseline and the MERA discussions and

his ability to inference increased over time. His ability to critique and think outside of the

text also increased and was displayed during the final two discussions. Further, he was able

to use clues from the video to support his inferences, as opposed to his baseline prompt

when he was unable to recall text clues to support his inference. This shows the potential

power of the video element to provide students with visual clues to support their higher-

level comprehension strategies. Table 4.17 shows a full breakdown of William's coded

comments.

Table 4.17

William's Comments Coded

	BSI	KD	SR	**SIR**	**CIR**	**AG**	**SG**	O
The Landlady (Baseline)				**1**	**1**			
Reflecting Pool		2			**2**			1
The Lift *Absent*								
Heart of Stone		2		**1**	**3**			3
Take Out	3		1		**3**			5

*items in bold=inferential

During my post interview with William, he shared that the one thing his teacher did with reading that he really enjoyed this year was the use of the MERA. He liked it because "it was cool. Like there was a video after each story and each story had a good story." He liked the video endings because "some were funny, some were scary." Overall, the use of the multimedia book got him "a little bit" excited to read because "it actually had a good story…and most books when I read them, I think they're kind of boring…so it has to be like something to drag my attention." He planned on reading this summer as long as he found a book that "grabs my attention" (William, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). His final interview showed the importance of the qualitative interview data to bring to light the positive influence the MERA had on William's reading motivation. He cited the MERA as the one thing he enjoyed about reading this year. Like Tim's comments, William's comments also show the importance of getting the reader's attention quickly ("grab my attention"), especially a reader like William who enjoyed using the Internet for personal

entertainment. In our fast-paced technological world, we are used to quick and instant

entertainment online. William noted that this multimedia book grabbed his attention

compared to traditional books, which he considered boring to get into. These audio

introductions serve as quick (about 1-minute) ways to grab a reader's attention and engage

them in the story. In William's case, it was a successful way to get him into the text.

Zack. Zack identified as Asian on his MRP. During my initial interview with Zack,

he shared that the most interesting story he read recently was *Prisoner B* because "it was a

true story and I do like the whole true story thing" (Zack, pre-MERA interview, April 29,

2015). Zack's statement here showed he has a preference for the nonfiction genre, which is

a common genre preferred by adolescent boys (e.g. Hebert and Pagnani, 2010). He reported

during our interview that he did not spend much time reading but instead preferred to be

online, on his phone, and sometimes his computer. He estimated that he spends 9 hours a

day online on either social networks or looking at videos. He liked to watch YouTube

videos to get information, rather than read the information online. He said, "I mean it's

kinda the same thing but you're being told from, by other people…and it gives you outside

information that you can bring into other conversations really" (Zack, pre-MERA interview,

April 29, 2015). Zack reported spending a lot of time online and valued the information he

gleaned from Internet and social media sources. This once again showed Zack's preference

for nonfiction and informational text. Rather than reading it in a traditional way, Zack

valued getting this information through new literacies such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook,

and other websites.

During our interview, Zack recalled a memorable experience with reading in fifth

grade because his teacher rarely gave them homework in that class. As a result, he felt "it

kinda made reading real fun…because, yeah, I had more time to do it. Not much else to

worry about" (Zack, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015). Here Zack made the argument

that when he has a lot of homework, he chooses not to read. However, when he does not

have homework and has more free time, he finds the time to read and enjoys it. He showed

that he does value reading, as long as it is reading he is selecting and he has time to do it, as

opposed to reading assigned by the teacher or reading after hours of homework. This

preference for having choice in the texts he reads is another common preference among

adolescent males as cited by research (e.g. Boltz, 2007).

Zack's overall MRP score increased by 5 points, which was less than the other focal

students. The most notable change from Zack's MRP was his increase from liking to read

"sometimes" to liking to read "often." Since Zack showed a strong motivation for reading

online texts in his initial interview, this change could be based on his new understanding

that online texts counted as reading.

During Zack's baseline discussion, he contributed six comments. Some of these

comments were about his opinion of the story. For example, he felt that he "was very

confused by the entire book really." Nevertheless, he did feel that the "slow" beginning was

good because "You gotta build a story nice and slow. You can't just go right to the climax

immediately. It's kind of worthless" (Zack, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015).

Here he shows an understanding of author's craft when developing the plot. He also

provided insight into why the landlady was stuffing her pets by saying, "a lot of people

taxidermy because, they want to feel...that their pet is still there" (Zack, "The Landlady"

Discussion, April 30, 2015). These comments showed analysis of the author's writing

techniques and insight into the character's motivation that required both background

knowledge and an inference to understand. These comments were in the highest levels of

Hillocks' Taxonomy and showcased Zack's deep understanding of text. Despite his ability

to engage in higher-level critique and textual analysis, Zack was not interested in discussing

any specific parts or details of the plot.

After the MERA was introduced, Zack's amount of participation increased from 6

comments to an average of 15.5 comments. This showed a participation increase of over

150%. Zack showed much stronger engagement in discussions as the MERA continued. In

addition to his focus on the higher-level inferential comments like he did in the baseline, he

began specifically discussing a lot of key details from the video clips. For example, after

reading "The Lift," the story about the phantom snowboarder, Zack observed,

> I don't know if anyone else noticed this, but in the video ending one of the shots you
>
> could see three people. It was the two people who were going to go onto the lift, and
>
> then there was someone in the background – So I don't — know if that was one of
>
> the guy's friends, because some said, someone said something about meeting up at
>
> the lodge (Zack, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015).

This observation triggered a conversation among all of the boys about who the third person

could be and its impact on the story. Many of Zack's comments and insights triggered

discussions among the rest of the focal students and he seemed to relish his role as

"discussion leader/instigator." This could account for the increase in his participation.

Zack also provided a key lesson from "The Lift" sharing that this story could teach people

to "stick with your friends" (Zack, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015). Here Zack

showed that he can continue to make author generalizations and inferences about the text,

but he also engaged in conversations about key details from the plot and especially the

video clips.

Zack spent a lot of time critiquing the details in the film-making of the video

endings. For example, after reading and watching the ending to "Heart of Stone," he

questioned, "What skyscraper has like doors that you'd find on a regular home? Like I, I

get it, it's just a video ending, but if you're gonna make it in a skyscraper, you gotta play

the part" (Zack, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 21, 2015). He also felt it was unrealistic

for the gargoyle to scream and not have the family wake up. He noted,

> With the sound that the thing was making, it didn't really make sense that no one
>
> else in the apartment could hear. You must be the heaviest sleepers in the world. I
>
> mean, that's ridiculous. I'm a heavy sleeper and I would've woke up for that. And I
>
> don't think apartments have heavy walls (Zack, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May
>
> 21, 2015).

Zack was excited and animated as he discussed the film-making and the plot

elements from the videos; yet he did not have the same engagement when discussing the

text. His critique and analysis of the video elements of the story led to other focal students

also viewing the video more critically. This highlighted Zack's visual literacy ability as he

was able to be "critical of visual material." His discussions also exposed his group to "ways

of talking about visual material" (Metros & Woolsey, 2008, p. 95).

Zack continued to critique the film-making for the story "Take Out" saying that "the

video…didn't look '70s enough. It, it was too almost '90s. Need, need more '70s, 'cause the

story took place in '78" (Zack, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). He spoke about the

lighting making the pizza box look purple, and the unrealistic film making that showed the

boys closing the pizza box when they were done eating. He felt, "It wasn't realistic enough. If you have three boys, they're just gonna leave the pizza box open" (Zack, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). Zack relied heavily on his strong background knowledge to make these critiques of the film-making. All of these details led him to then further critique the plot of the story where he questioned, "if these children have parents and these parents clearly know that that's their child, where does this whole alien thing fit in?" (Zack, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). Despite relying more heavily on background knowledge than text to discuss the stories, here Zack brought in his background knowledge and critiqued it to then connect with and analyze the text. Zack proved to be a valuable member of his group as his type of thinking influenced the other focal group students and encouraged them to begin critiquing the videos as well. See Table 4.18 for a full breakdown of Zack's coded comments.

Table 4.18

Zack's Comments Coded

	BSI	KD	SR	**SIR**	**CIR**	**AG**	**SG**	O
The Landlady (Baseline)				**3**			**2**	1
Reflecting Pool	2	1		**1**		1		6
The Lift		1		**1**	1	1		4
Heart of Stone	1	3			7		**1**	5
Take Out	4			**1**	7		**3**	11

*items in bold=inferential

During my post interview with Zack, he shared that he still does not consider himself a reader. Instead, he preferred to be on the Internet watching videos. He preferred this because he says, "I'm more of an auditory learner…I like to listen and watch." He thought the MERA was "kinda cool…because, you know, it wasn't just purely reading. Like there was also something to do." He liked the video endings the best because they made him feel like "I was kind of in the story." However, he also critiqued some of the videos saying, "some of them didn't really relate to the story in my opinion and some of 'em really worked" (Zack, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). So Zack did not like the videos just for the sake of having a "movie" to watch. Instead, he showed that he needed the video to be well-made, realistic, and engaging for it "to work" for his enjoyment. He also said he preferred reading a multimedia book "because obviously I'm an auditory learner so I like the fact that that's there." The MERA got him "a little" more excited about reading and he planned to "maybe" read more books by the same author (Zack, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). Zack's interview showed that he understood his learning style (auditory) and recognized the potential of using multimedia books to engage students who shared his preference for multimedia elements.

Luke and Scott (Motivated Males)

Although the focus of this study was on unmotivated males, it was also important to focus on several motivated male students to use as both a comparison to the unmotivated males and to determine how they were impacted by the MERA. During each visit to Mrs. Gray's classroom, Luke was constantly reading a book, even if he was supposed to be completing a different task. His teacher mentioned that he sometimes got in trouble for reading "too much" in other classes. Scott was identified by Mrs. Gray as a struggling

reader, but one who enjoyed reading immensely and was highly motivated to read. Both students were selected to as the motivated male focal students. Luke and Scott will be briefly summarized below based on their interviews and important findings.

Luke. Luke identified as African-American on his MRP. During my first interview with Luke, he was excited to be talking about the book *This Side of Paradise* by Stephen Layne. He said,

> It just, amazes me…how good…of a book it was. So then I asked my teacher…if there was a second one. And so she said that there was a whole series of 'em. So, now I'm currently reading the second book (Luke, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015).

As a motivated reader, Luke shares a common pattern for his book selections. When he finds a book he enjoys, he seeks to continue reading another book in the series or another book by the same author.

Like many adolescent boys, (e.g. Scieszka, 2003), another genre that Luke enjoys is comic books. He shared that he has a "whole shelf" of them at home because he has to "keep on reading and reading because each of 'em are…really small…And…every issue leaves you on a cliffhanger" (Luke, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015). Luke's enjoyment and discussion of comic books shows his interest in both visual literacy as well as his enjoyment of quick, engaging reads. Like Tim and William, Luke also showed an interest in the "instant" engagement. For Luke, a short comic with cliffhanger endings provides that instant engagement and immediately gets him into the next story in the collection. Luke's enthusiasm for reading was evident in both the content of his comments and the way he excitedly talked about the books.

Luke believed he spent several hours a day on the Internet at home. He said that he used it mostly for social media and reading updates on Facebook, Twitter, and to read reviews on things. However he shared that he did not consider this time spent reading. Instead, he considered it a "pastime" (Luke, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015). This is in contrast to the previous focal student, Zack, who valued online reading over traditional texts. Luke instead valued traditional texts and did not find value in his time spent reading online. Luke's lack of value placed on online texts made him an interesting focal student to see if this type of text could potentially turn-off a motivated reader to a form of reading that required the Internet.

Luke's initial MRP score was a 77/80 leaving very little room for change. The one interesting change was his perception of his peers. Luke believed his peers found reading "no fun at all" before the MERA. But, after the MERA, he felt his peers thought reading was "OK." This change could be based on his time with the other focal students who he normally did not associate with or talk about books with. Engaging in discussions with unmotivated readers allowed Luke to see his typically unmotivated peers as "readers." During Luke's baseline discussion, he contributed six comments. Building off of a classmate's comment that the landlady "eats people," Luke inferred that the landlady "ate Billy" and "maybe like their spirits are still in that fourth floor –and like purgatory pretty much" (Luke, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015). He made several comments about the structure of the story including "the build up to the climax…was very low slow and boring." Nevertheless, he felt "the ending kind of left me on a cliffhanger." He further elaborated, "I normally don't think about a lotta books," but this type of cliffhanger ending "they get you thinking" (Luke, "The Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015). Each of

Luke's comments showed his ability to inference as well as his understanding of plot development and how elements of a story contribute to its development.

After the MERA was introduced, Luke's amount of participation increased by 50% and moved from 6 comments to an average of almost 9 comments after the stories. He showed an increase in quantity while still maintaining high quality comments. The majority of Luke's comments were inferential, as well as focused on the structure of the stories and videos. For example he felt the "Reflecting Pool" video was "not as ominous as the first video" (Luke, "Reflecting Pool" Discussion, May 7, 2015). He also felt the video ending of "The Lift" should have been longer because "this one was shorter and it didn't really…have you hooked…it didn't…give you time to think about what might happen" (Luke, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015). Like Zack, he enjoyed comparing and contrasting the video endings as well as critiquing the film-making.

During the story, "Take Out," Luke compared it to "The Twilight Zone" and made several inferences about the story (Luke, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). One key question that emerged from the discussion was if the parents knew their sons were aliens. Luke says,

> I have the best like idea ever. Okay. So maybe the mother and father were sterile and couldn't have kids so the aliens they gave each of those parents a child and they said that they would be back for 'em in a couple of years. So when they left they knew that they were going to be abducted. So that's why they had bought him the Atari 2600 because he was being good, because it was like his last day of earth (Luke, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015).

This inference shows Luke's ability to think beyond the text and analyze the characters' motivations and decisions.

Luke also shared several lessons that can be learned from the characters' actions, and critiques the decisions that they made. For example, after "The Lift" he believed if he was the main character, he would have questioned the boy next to him on the lift, and when he realized it was not his friend, "I'll jumped off just like this, the ski lift thing." He also felt the lesson to be learned was to stay with your friends. He said "if I were Dillon...I would've just like snowboard with 'em the whole time instead of losing 'em" (Luke, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015). In "Heart of Stone," he also questioned the main character's actions. If he was in her position, he said, "as soon as that door opened I would've asked who it was. And, as soon as I heard that growling I probably would've went out there with my flashlight." He also " would've called out mom, dad" or "would grab the nearest blunt object then just start hittin' it with that" (Luke, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 21, 2015). The videos led Luke to put himself in the story, connect to the characters, analyze their actions, and then determine what he would do in their situation. This type of thinking was not shown from Luke during the baseline discussion or during his discussions of books he enjoyed in the initial interview. His connection to the characters and placing himself in their situations came directly from the video endings. See Table 4.19 for Luke's coded comments.

Table 4.19

Luke's Comments Coded

	BSI	KD	SR	**SIR**	**CIR**	**AG**	**SG**	O
The Landlady (Baseline)				1	2		3	
Reflecting Pool	1			2	2		2	
The Lift		1		1	1		2	7
Heart of Stone		3			2	1		2
Take Out		2		2	2			2

*items in bold=inferential

Luke's writing prompts also demonstrated important findings. Luke's discussions showed a high quality of thinking compared to his writing responses. During Luke's baseline writing prompt, when asked how he thought the story would end, he included 7 words and a drawing of two stick figures. (See Figure 4.2) One was a boy with no other distinguishing characteristics. The other was a woman labeled "Lady." She is wearing a dress with a pearl necklace, carrying a tray of tea. Above the boy is written "Rushed Weaver." The woman is speaking saying, "Your soul is mine." The drawing and comments do not show any inferential level thinking and include only basic stated information, which is Hillocks' lowest level in the taxonomy.

Figure 4.2: Luke's "The Landlady" Writing Response
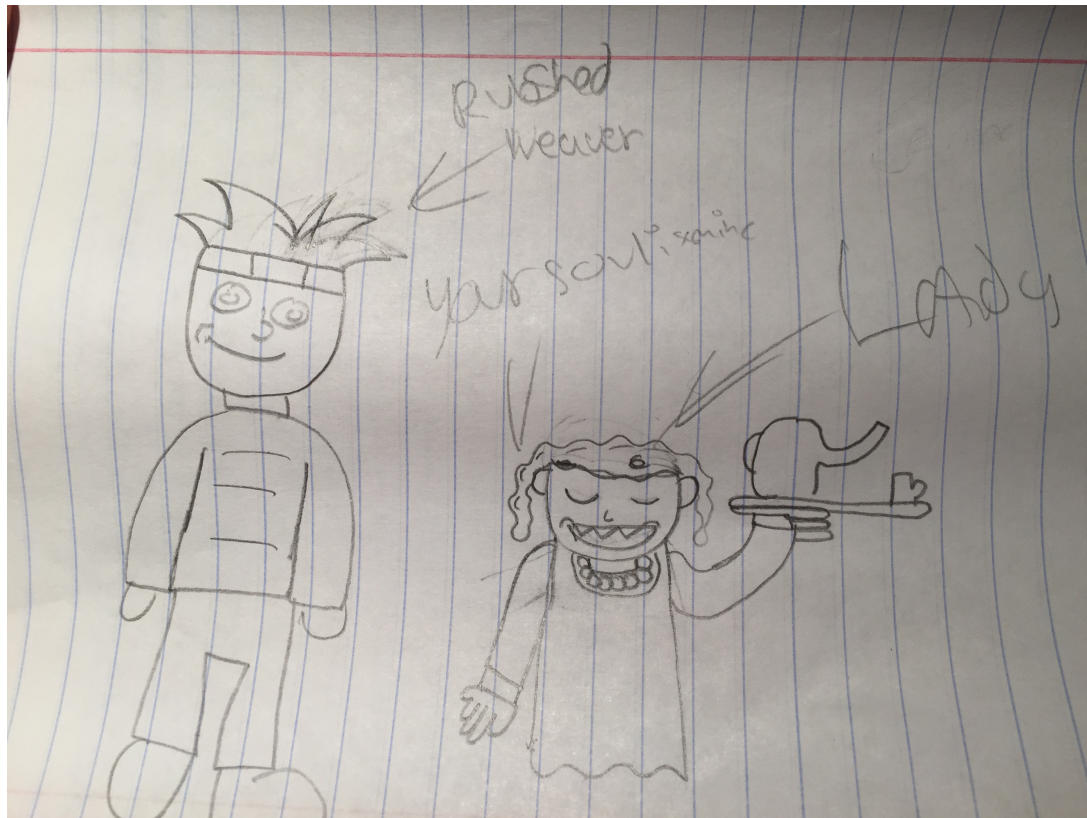
Luke's baseline prompt was 7 total words, while his MERA prompts average increases to almost 23 total words. Although his quantity increased by over 300%, Luke's writing prompts continued to include mostly literal comments and drawings. For example, when asked what Mr. Mason kept in his jars after "Mr. Mason's Jar," Luke drew a jar labeled "Troy" and 2 people with no distinguishing characteristics. See Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Luke's "Mr. Mason's Jars" Drawing
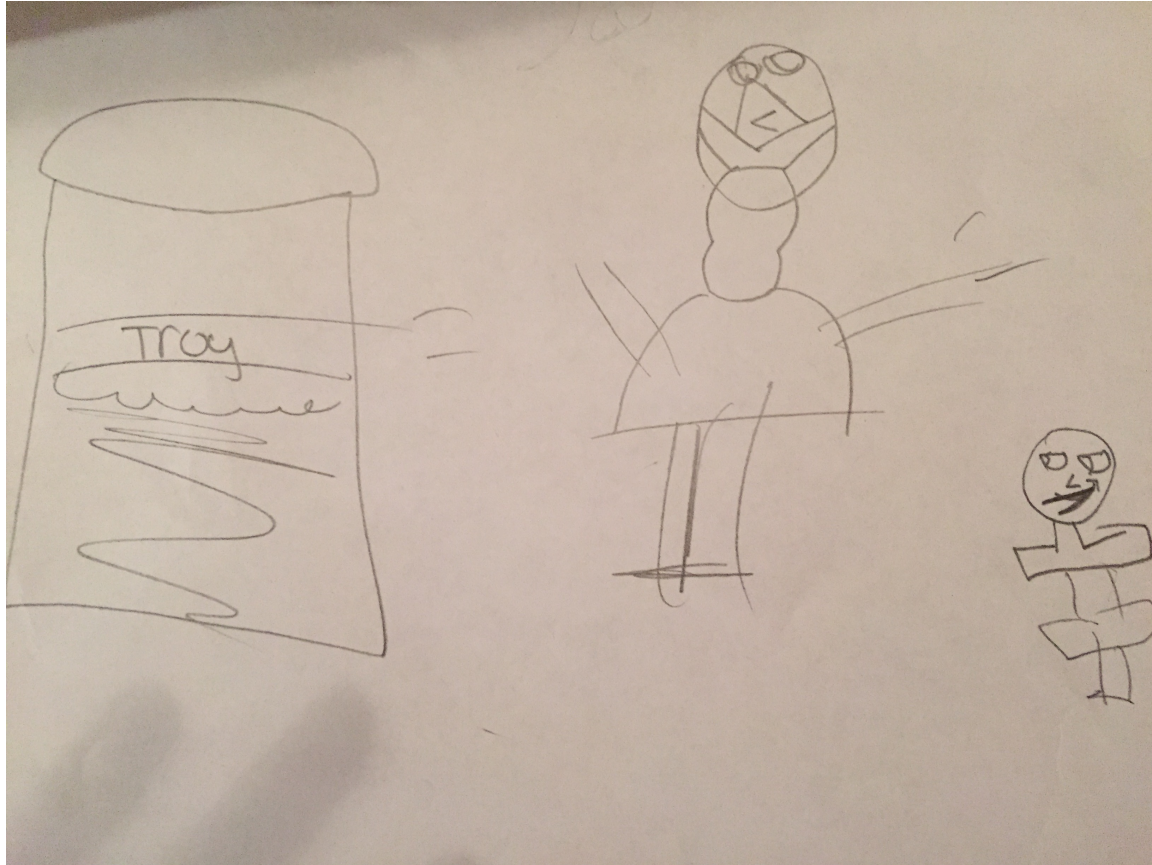
During the last writing prompt, Luke is asked if the main character deserved his fate.

Luke responded about all of the stories in general by writing, "He deserved what he got I

mean all the stories have to do with someone doing [what] they're not supposed to do and

dies." This final prompt briefly showed Luke's understanding of author generalization in

his ability to draw out the common lesson shared in each of the author's stories.

During my post interview with Luke, he mentioned that the next book he was hoping

to read was season two of the *3:15* series, which was used for the MERA. He also said the

MERA was one thing that got him excited about reading because when he saw the video, it

got him really "intrigued to read it at night." When asked if his teacher had done anything

with reading that he really enjoyed, he mentioned the MERA. He liked it because "it was

just like a fun time waster and, and…day wait made me super excited to go to seventh

period" (Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015). The "day wait" he is referring to is

the implementation of the MERA every other day in Mrs. Gray's class. Luke clarified the

term "time waster" by saying, "they were all intriguing and stuff, but let's say you're bored

and just you're on an airplane and you're bored, you can watch those videos, then read the

book, then watch the ending" (Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015). This comment

showed his view of the MERA as entertainment and something he would choose to engage

with rather than be forced to use. His support and excitement for the MERA was surprising

since his passion had clearly been traditional texts.

Luke further explained that he enjoyed the videos because they were "well directed"

and "well put together." He also enjoyed the audio introductions because it got his mind

thinking about how creepy the story would be. Luke especially enjoyed the story "Heart of

Stone" because "it just makes you look at things just a different way." He loved how the

endings "left you up in mystery…so you would have to watch the video." However, he also

felt you did not have to listen to the audio or watch the video to enjoy the stories. He said

"but if you just had the book and you…didn't…watch the videos, then…you

would…get…like an inference to what…happened" (Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3,

2015). This showed Luke's understanding of the inferential thinking needed to understand

these stories, as well as his enjoyment of making inferences to understand the ending of the

story.

Luke shared that he still liked his traditional books, but was more excited to read multimedia books. He wanted to read more books like the *3:15* books and more books by the same author, Patrick Carman (Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015). Despite his belief that online texts did not count as reading, Luke found value and excitement from this multimedia-enhanced text.

Scott. During my first interview with Scott, who identified as Latino on his MRP, he excitedly told me that all of the books he read recently were "his favorites." He enjoyed when his teacher, Mrs. Gray, gave him a book to read.   Scott shared that he usually found out about books by getting them assigned to him in school. Whenever a book was assigned to him, he read it "every single time." He said that "anything" and "everything" gets him excited about reading. He commented that he spends less than an hour a day on the Internet, and usually uses it to check his grades or watch a sports video. He also shared that he really enjoyed when teachers read a book to the class (Scott, pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015). Scott showed that he was an enthusiastic reader who used the Internet for both practical and entertainment purposes.

Scott's MRP confirmed his teacher's impression of his motivation. He scored high for reading value, but lower on his reading self-concept. Although Scott is an enthusiastic reader, he struggles with confidence in his reading ability.

During Scott's baseline discussion, he contributed two comments. He stayed quiet for the beginning of the discussion, but when asked what happens to Billy, he incorrectly inferred that "Billy did some bad stuff," but then correctly inferred that the landlady "wanted to kill him." His other comment was to agree with a classmate's comment that he thought the ending was "the same as William but killing someone, it's shocking" (Scott,

"The Landlady" Discussion, April 30, 2015).   His comments were low in both quantity and

quality and it appeared as though he misunderstood the story, but used his classmates'

comments to help him understand the outcome.

After the MERA was introduced, Scott's amount of participation slowly moved from

two comments to an average of nine and one half comments after the stories. This was an

increased of 450%. After the first MERA story, Scott once again contributed two comments

about the story. In his first comment he agreed with a classmate who was confused by

saying "it'll be almost the same as Zack but like the way she got disappeared — it was like

we don't know where she is now." He reiterated that comment by agreeing that he liked the

video because the "way she is now we don't know which is a mystery" (Scott, "Reflecting

Pool" Discussion, May 7, 2015). Like the baseline comments, both of these comments are

in response to another student's comments and give little information about the story. Scott

appeared to struggle with both confidence and understanding the content of the stories.

In "The Lift," Scott continued to share comments that align with other classmates'

comments. For example, he felt "the same as Mark" about the ending and he "will agree

that he's just somewhere waiting for someone, and then suddenly some action just

happened." He inferred that the main character died and wished the story could be changed

to "let the man live." He felt the moral of the story was "don't get lost, and don't do —

stuff again what you just did" (Scott, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015). This moral is

vague and general and provides little insight into the author's message. Although Scott

began to share his inferences, he continued to rely on his classmates for support.

During the last two stories, Scott correctly inferred the endings on his own. In

"Heart of Stone" he inferred that "the gargoyle is alive and it came to, and it killed her"

(Scott, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 14, 2015). In "Take Out," he inferred that the

main characters "were taken somewhere with the aliens, but I don't know where exactly."

He later inferred that "the scientists, they found new planets, and they could be some life

sources in there because of the water and temperature," which would explain the abduction

(Scott, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). When asked what his favorite part was or

what part he would change, he listens to the other classmates share first and then says "I

would agree with Zack, and, uh, I don't know what to change in it." He felt the lesson in the

story is "Next time just order Chinese" (Scott, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). Both

of these responses again show both a reliance on his classmates and a lesson that does not

include author generalization. He does take note of visual cues by commenting on the use

of the color purple in the video. He inferred it is the aliens' favorite color because "they use

a lot of purple, like the purple pizza box – the purple flashlight, the purple car" (Scott,

"Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). His commentary on the use of color appeared to be

directly linked to influence from Zack's commentary critiquing video elements. He also

appeared to have much more confidence discussing the video elements than the text itself.

See Table 4.20 for a full breakdown of Scott's coded comments.

Table 4.20

Scott's Comments Coded

	BSI	KD	SR	**SIR**	**CIR**	**AG**	**SG**	O
The Landlady (Baseline)				**2**				
Reflecting Pool		2						2
The Lift	1	2		**1**		**1**		2
Heart of Stone		5			**3**			4
Take Out	3	2		**1**	**2**	**1**		6

*items in green=literal, items in red=inferential

During Scott's baseline writing prompt, when asked how he thought the story would end, he included 39 words and provided an explanation that did not fit what happened in the story. He wrote, "I think Billy will not live so long. After what he did. People were at him cause he did something bad. So I think he will die soon. And because he was being weird and trying to scare people." This had nothing to do with the story and showed a complete misunderstanding.

Scott's baseline prompt was 39 total words, while his MERA prompts average increased to almost 71 total words. However, his prompts included a lot of repetition and stream of consciousness writing. This would account for the increase in the amount of his writing, which did not necessarily result in an increase in the quality of his writing. For example, when asked what Mr. Mason kept in his jars after "Mr. Mason's Jar," Scott wrote,

I think Mr. Mason had magic in his jar, because it looks like magic and if it wasn't

magic it be science, but it isn't because he would work with people but he doesn't.

To me he sounds like a villain of magic.

This prompt contains a lot of rambling and repetition but does not directly address the story.

When asked if Eddie deserved his fate in Atomic Ants, he wrote,

I think Eddie does not deserve his death because the atomic ant was hungry so it was

looking for food to eat. Even though Eddie was be a bully he shouldn't do it. The

Atomic Ant needed food so it got a random victim to eat him. And the Atomic Ant

wouldn't try to find its true victim because if it did he wouldn't find it already.

Here he does share some key details from the story, but he failed to correctly infer the

ending. Overall his writing prompts showed a struggle to fully grasp the stories, make

inferences, and think beyond the text. His increase in the quantity of writing did not

translate into an improvement in quality of writing.

During my post interview with Scott, when asked about the MERA, Scott agreed that

he liked it because "mostly like about what happens with a lot mysteries." He could not

think of anything he disliked about it. He also liked the video endings because they

"explain more what happens instead of the book." He also thought they reminded him of

another multimedia book he had read, *Skeleton Creek*, and he mentioned he wanted to watch

all of the *Skeleton Creek* videos again (Scott, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015).

Although he continued to struggle with comprehension throughout the MERA, the videos

seemed to help him understand the text better and increased his confidence when discussing

the stories.

Teacher Impression

During a follow-up interview with Mrs. Gray, she shared that using a multimedia text was a "refreshing change" due to the "combination of a read aloud followed by the video ending" (Mrs. Gray, post-MERA interview, April 21, 2016). She felt the "fear and suspense" elements of this genre were certainly appealing to students since "middle school students today are particularly fond of fantasy and science fiction." However, she had used a traditional read aloud from the same genre earlier in the year and felt that students were overall "more engaged with the *3:15* style" than the traditional read-alouds she had used previously.   Mrs. Gray also noted that the format of the *3:15* story resulted in students employing the predicting comprehension strategy during each reading. She noticed that many students chose to predict the video ending before she played it (Mrs. Gray, post-MERA interview, April 21, 2016).

Mrs. Gray considers herself a "moderately savvy tech user," and she felt that the audio and video clips were both "easily accessible." As a result, she felt this type of text would be easy for teachers to implement in the classroom since it is "very user friendly with positive feedback from the students." Mrs. Gray was especially pleased when one of her male students located and brought in a similar multimedia-enhanced text for the class to read when the *3:15* series was completed (Mrs. Gray, post-MERA interview, April 21, 2016). .

Summary of Findings

Overall results were promising for the use of the MERA in classrooms to improve adolescent male reading motivation. From a quantitative perspective, males increased their overall motivation scores by 3.59 points compared to females' nominal improvement of .28

points. Further, males identified as unmotivated increased their motivation levels by 5.33

points compared to males identified as motivated who increased by 1.63 points. This shows

the potential of the MERA to specifically target struggling adolescent male readers. In

addition, both males and females showed an increased desire to have their teacher read

aloud to them in class on a daily basis. Therefore, though the MERA may target the

unmotivated males, it also benefits all students in the classroom.

While measuring the quality of focal students writing prompts and discussions, there

was an increase in the use of inferential thinking for each of the six focal students. Several

of the students who struggled with textual evidence in the baseline were able to use details

from the videos to support inferences. Further, students also participated in a critique of

both the storyline and the film-making using the visuals for support.

Finally, interviews conducted with the focal students showed all six focal students

sharing positive comments about the MERA. In addition, several students sought out or

attempted to find multimedia-enhanced books to read on their own. Most notably, all four

focal students identified as unmotivated shared an increase in reading motivation as a result

of the MERA.   In the next chapter, these results will be further discussed and analyzed.

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CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Read-alouds have always played a central role in my life. During my childhood, my brother and I eagerly anticipated the new books my mother would bring home from the library. I spent many nights sleeping on the floor of my brother's room so that my father could read aloud a chapter book to both of us. When I became a seventh-grade teacher, my favorite part of the day was the daily read aloud that I implemented at the beginning of each class. It was always my primary goal to create a classroom that fostered intrinsic reading motivation, and I have always felt the classroom read-aloud was at the heart of this goal.

As my teaching career continued, I became discouraged by the lack of intrinsic motivation that many of my adolescent male students demonstrated. Rather than discussing books, they appeared more interested in discussing their latest Twitter feeds, video games, and humorous YouTube videos. This prompted my quest to find a means to implement new literacies into the classroom to engage adolescent males.

Past research supported my concern for the motivation levels of the adolescent boys in my classroom. Adolescent girls regularly outperform boys in both reading motivation and achievement (e.g., Durik, Vida, and Eccles, 2006; Lietz, 2006; The National Education Alliance, 2007). Research on strategies to promote boys' reading motivation urges educators to broaden their definition of literacy beyond the traditional fiction novel (Taylor, 2005). Instead, teachers must embrace new topics and forms of text to reach their male audience. Boys prefer to read about "yucky stuff and real things" (Sullivan, 2004). They enjoy reading comics, magazines, informational texts, blogs, and multimedia texts (Taylor,

2005). They learn problem solving and innovation from the video games they play (Gee,

2003).

Author Patrick Carman addressed this issue by creating multimedia-enhanced stories

that he described as not a novel, not an audio book, and not a movie, but rather all three at

once (Abrams & Carman, 2011). His goal was:

> For some teen readers-the ones publishing has lost in a rising tide of video games,
>
> movies, TV shows, the Internet, and cell phones — this is the kind of experience that
>
> will help them enjoy reading again. It's a lifeline back to books, if you will. (Abrams
>
> & Carman, 2011, paragraph 7)

The research on boys' preference for these other forms of texts as well as Carman's

creation of multimedia-enhanced stories inspired my thinking and became a driving force

for this study. In the first section of this chapter, I discuss the key findings of the study as

they relate to my research questions. The subsequent sections include: implications for

practice, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Key Findings

Both the qualitative and quantitative data from this exploratory study revealed

significant findings as revealed in Chapter 4. Research question 1 addresses boys'

motivation overall, while questions 2, 3, and 4 address specific components of boys'

motivation. This section begins with a discussion of questions 2, 3, and 4 because these

focus on the specific components of motivation. It then ends with an overall synthesis of

the analysis by discussing the findings related to question number one.

Research Question 2

How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs)

influence the reading motivation of unmotivated adolescent male students?

During the course of this exploratory study, four unmotivated male students were selected as target students. Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected about each student, four key findings about these unmotivated males emerged.

1. The audio introduction of the MERA engaged readers quickly and brought them into the text.

2. The visual elements assisted students' comprehension and improved the quality of their inferences.

3. The multimedia format encouraged students to critique the visual elements.

4. The MERA influenced students to independently seek out other multimedia books.

The first key finding from the unmotivated males was the importance of the audio introductions to engage them in the story. The multimedia-enhanced text began with an audio introduction using eerie music and a narrator's voice that previewed the story for students and often left them with a cliffhanger final sentence. Tim enjoyed the audio introductions because it previewed the story for him and foreshadowed the tale that would follow. Then, if he enjoyed the preview, he knew he would enjoy the story and was excited to read it. He compared that to a traditional novel, which only gives a small preview on the back cover (Tim, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). William also described the importance of the MERA to "grab" his attention. He compared that to traditional books, which he found "boring" and difficult to keep his interest (William, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). For William, these audio introductions were a way into the text. The audio introductions gave a new preview for every story so that a student's attention could be

captured instantly on a daily basis, as compared to a traditional novel, which only captures a

reader's attention one time on the back cover. This multimedia element provided

motivation to bring the unmotivated readers into the story.

In our fast-paced technological world, students are accustomed to being engaged in

online content within seconds. The commercials played before YouTube videos can be

skipped within 5 seconds, so even advertisers must find a way to engage viewers in less than

5 seconds. These audio introductions serve a similar purpose as they seek to gain the

reader's attention and provide instant engagement on a daily basis.

Although the purpose of this study was targeting motivation, Guthrie, Schafer, and

Huang's (2001) assertion that students who can become highly engaged readers can

overcome reading achievement issues makes it clear that targeting adolescent males'

reading motivation is an essential first step to improving their reading achievement. During

this exploratory study of unmotivated males, the second finding demonstrated that as males'

motivation increased, their ability to infer and discuss at higher levels also increased.

For this study, the increase in the unmotivated students' ability to infer appeared to

be related to the use of the visual elements of the MERA. Mark struggled to make an

inference using text clues after the traditional baseline story. However, after each MERA

story, he was able to make inferences using clues from the videos. For example, he

determined that a phantom snowboarder took a character because the author built suspense

with a crackling walkie-talkie and included a brief glimpse of a "dark figure" sitting on the

ski lift. Mark then created a new understanding about the author's message by suggesting

that people listen to their friends and recognize that sometimes peers may have better ideas

and knowledge than one's own understanding (Mark, "The Lift" Discussion, May 14, 2015).

Mark shared that one of his favorite characteristic of the MERA was figuring out (inferring) the ending on his own (Mark, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015).

Tim also enjoyed the visuals because the images put the story in his "mind better" (Tim, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). Because he had a stronger understanding of the story, Tim also improved the level of his inferential thinking. Although he focused initially on visual clues alone to create inferences, that changed with the final story, "Take Out." For this story, he combined visual and textual clues to create a higher-level inference. He also pieced together multiple pieces of information from both the text (three smartest people on earth, born the same day) and the video (aliens) to infer that the three boys were aliens sent down to earth as part of a mission (Tim, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). William also used clues from the text and the video to infer that the three boys were actually on a different planet, and they were taken back to earth at the end of the video. Likewise, he inferred that the parents from the text were "bad" which is why the pizza delivery man zapped them back to earth (William, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). These inferences required him to think more deeply outside of the text (characteristics of the parents, the delivery man's motivation) and utilize background knowledge (different planet).

Throughout the MERA, the use of visuals built confidence in the unmotivated students' understanding of the story, which led to their increased desired to participate and share inferences. Further, as their confidence in sharing inferences based on visuals increased, the unmotivated students also began to weave textual clues, background knowledge, and inferences about the author's message into their discussions. These qualitative findings indicate the potential ability of multimedia text to not only improve

motivation, but confidence and comprehension as well. For many of the focal students, the multimedia-enhanced texts fostered higher order thinking. Higher-order thinking is often a process that adolescents struggle with, yet the visuals in the multimedia-enhanced text appeared to support their thinking in this manner. For these students, the visual format provided "a door" which led to inferences and textual critique.

In addition to improving unmotivated students' ability to comprehend, the third finding indicated that the visuals also inspired students to critique. After the baseline story, none of the students provided a critique of the text. Textual critique was not an anticipated part of this study. However, during the MERA discussions, students began to view first the videos, and then the text, through a critical lens. This was spearheaded by Zack who, after viewing a video that took place in a New York City skyscraper apartment, critiqued the set design as he felt the doors of the apartment were the kind found on a regular home and not a skyscraper. He also critiqued the idea that the loud scream in the video would not have woken up anyone else in the apartment. He especially noted that an apartment full of people not waking up during a loud noise did not make sense since apartments do not have heavy (thick) walls (Zack, "Heart of Stone" Discussion, May 21, 2015). He also critiqued a story that took place in the 1970s because he did not feel the set design was "70's enough" (Zack, "Take Out" Discussion, May 28, 2015). His critique and analysis of the video elements of the story led to other focal students also viewing the video more critically.   For example, Mark also began critiquing videos for not being scary enough or not showing enough of the scene. Tim critiqued characters' actions wishing one had fought harder and wishing that another recognized the danger of taking something for free. Although this was not an initial goal of the study, the unmotivated students' conversations about the text morphed into

"ways of talking about visual material" (Metros & Woolsey, 2008, p. 95). This proved to be

an exciting shift in the conversations and will again be addressed in the discussion of the

study's implications.

The final finding that emerged from the unmotivated males' data was their increased

desire to read more multimedia-enhanced books. All four unmotivated focal students shared

that they enjoyed the MERA. Mark always looked forward to the next day to hear the

newest MERA (Mark, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). Tim and William both cited

the MERA as the one thing they most enjoyed about reading during seventh grade (Tim,

post-MERA interviews, June 2, 2015; William, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015).

After the MERA ended, Mark specifically sought out books like the one used for the

MERA, and was excited to find a Star Wars book that also included an online video

element. However, that was the only multimedia-enhanced book he could find (Mark, post-

MERA interview, June 2, 2015). Tim also cited the MERA as something that heightened his

interest in books and trying to locate books he would like to read (Tim, post-MERA

interview, June 2, 2015). Zack shared that, because he is an auditory learner, he preferred

reading a multimedia book as well. He also felt he might try to find books by the same

author in the future (Zack, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). Unfortunately, these forms

of text were not available in the school library or the local public libraries that are affiliated

with the students' town. This lack of available texts is addressed when discussing

implications for instruction.

Research Question 3

How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact

the reading motivation of adolescent male students compared to adolescent females?

Although this study focused on adolescent males, it was important to compare males and females and determine the impact of the MERA on females. Specifically, since the MERA was implemented to target males, it was important to determine that the inclusion of the MERA would not hurt the motivation of the female students in the classroom.

Results of the pre-MERA MRP supported research that females are more motivated to read than males (e.g., Durik, Vida, and Eccles, 2006). The female motivation average on the MRP was approximately 4 points higher than the male motivation average. However, when the students took the MRP again after the implementation of the MERA, males increased over 3.5 points while females increased only .28 points. This increase for males closed this 4-point gap to less than 1 point. This gender difference in gain was statistically significant as males' reading motivation increased significantly compared to females' reading motivation. This showed that the multimedia-enhanced text did play a role in improving motivation scores for males. Further, because females showed a slight increase in motivation, the male-targeted MERA did not harm the motivation of the female students. These results show promise for closing the motivation gap between males and females through the use of the MERA.

Question 18 on the MRP dealt directly with classroom read-alouds. Question 18 stated, "I would like for my teachers to read out loud in my classes…" followed by the choices of (a) every day-4 points, (b) almost every day-3 points, (c) once in a while-2 points, and (d) never-1 point. During the pretest, males' mean score for question 18 was slightly higher than the females' mean score, which reflected the idea that males preferred the act of teachers reading aloud slightly more than their female counterparts. During the posttest, both males and females increased their desire to hear their teachers read aloud,

although the female increase was slightly higher. Post-MERA MRP data showed that both

male and female scores reflected the notion that students wanted to hear their teacher read

aloud almost every day. This shows that the implementation of the MERA improved both

genders' interest in hearing daily teacher read-alouds. The practice of read-alouds is

already an encouraged classroom practice to promote students' reading success (e.g.

Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). The growth in motivation for both males

and females indicates promise for the use of multimedia-enhanced texts in the classroom to

engage and motivate both males and females.

Research Question 4

How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact

the reading motivation of unmotivated adolescent male students compared to motivated

male students?

The focus of this study was on improving the motivation of adolescent males.

However, I was particularly interested in targeting boys who were identified as

unmotivated. Those are the boys "lost in a rising tide of video games, movies, TV shows,

the Internet, and cell phones" (Abrams & Carman, 2011, paragraph 7). After the classroom

teacher categorized her male students based on their motivation levels, the pre-MERA MRP

data confirmed her groupings by showing unmotivated males (n=9) with statistically

significant lower scores than the males identified as motivated (n=8).

The most noteworthy finding in comparing the two groups of males emerged with the

post-MERA MRP data. All boys showed an improvement in their reading motivation after

the MERA. However, males categorized as unmotivated made a gain of over 5 points in

their motivation, while motivated males' gain was less than 2 points. This showed that of

all the groups in the classroom (girls, boys, motivated boys, and unmotivated boys), the

MERA had the greatest impact on improving the motivation of unmotivated males. In sum,

the MERA targeted and improved the motivation of the group that needed it most.

In addition to four unmotivated male focal students (Mark, Tim, Zack, and William),

I also selected two motivated males (Scott and Luke) as focal students for the purpose of

comparison. Several of the findings from the motivated students were similar to the

unmotivated students. For example, both Scott and Luke improved the quality of their

inferences using the visuals from the MERA. Moreover, both boys engaged in critique of

the videos. In addition to these similar findings, the data from the motivated male focal

students produced one key finding which differed from the unmotivated students: The

motivated students' view of multimedia-enhanced text as less literary than traditional text

changed as a result of the MERA.

Luke is a highly motivated reader who called the *Percy Jackson* series "life-

changing." Though he acknowledged spending a lot of time engaged in online literary

practices such as Facebook, Twitter, and online reviews, he did not consider those practices

to be "reading." He instead considered these practices a "pastime" with little value (Luke,

pre-MERA interview, April 29, 2015). All reading value was placed on traditional texts

without online or multimedia elements. However, during the post-MERA interview, Luke

acknowledged that he wanted to read the next book in the *3:15* series and the MERA was

the one thing that got him most excited to read during the school year. He also enjoyed the

inferential thinking required by the MERA (Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015).

This showed a shift in his perception of what constitutes reading and text. Before the

MERA he felt online reading practice did not count as reading. After the MERA, he

appreciated the thinking required of him and sought out the next book in the series (Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015). This shift in the definition of literacy is further addressed in my discussion of implications for instruction.

Research Question 1

How does the implementation of multimedia-enhanced read-alouds (MERAs) impact the reading motivation of adolescent male students?

Overall, both quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate the positive impact of the MERA on adolescent male students. Quantitative data supported an overall increase in motivation for all male students on the MRP. In addition, when specifically asked about using read-alouds in the classroom, adolescent males increased the amount of read-alouds they desired from their classroom teacher from "once in a while" to "almost ever day." Further, males identified as unmotivated made the largest gains in motivation during the MRP helping to close the gap in motivation between unmotivated males and both the already motivated males and the historically more motivated females.

Moreover, qualitative data showed several positive changes to the focal students' motivation at the end of the study.   Every focal student cited the MERA as something they enjoyed about reading during their seventh-grade year. Several of the students mentioned independently searching for other books similar to the MERA as a result of their experience with the multimedia-enhanced text. One aspect of the MERA that seemed to especially engage students was the use of the audio introductions. These quick introductions were engaging and motivated students to continue reading the story. Several students cited this portion of the multimedia-enhanced text as their "way in" to the text.

There was also a marked improvement in the quality of the focal students' comments

as a result of the MERA. Focal students who had previously struggled to make inferences

using traditional text were assisted by the visual clues in the multimedia text to help them

make inferences and deepen their understanding of the text. They were also inspired to

critique the visuals and the filmmaking. Because students live in such a visual world, it

appeared to be easier for them to critique and discuss the visuals than the text alone.

However, through practice with critiquing the visuals, they eventually experimented with

text critique as well. Since text critique was not a skill they had previously employed in the

classroom, it appeared that the visual critique served as a scaffold to the textual critique.

Many of the focal students did not initially view online literacies as "reading." By

the end of the MERA, not only did students view the multimedia-enhanced text as

"reading," but they also saw the value in such text. Students enjoyed the inferences

required to understand the stories. They liked to think about the text, visualize the text, and

compare and contrast their view of the text with the filmmaker's vision. These are all

strategies employed by proficient readers, and students enjoyed the challenges presented by

this form of text.

Much can be learned, and much remains unknown about the positive impact of the

MERA on the motivation of adolescent boys in this study. The next sections discuss both

the implications of the study as well as the limitations.

Implications for Instruction

Several implications resulted from the data compiled for this study. These

implications specifically influence classroom instruction relating to alternative forms of

text, visual literacy skills, access to multimedia-enhanced texts, and the use of audio to

engage students.

Alternative Forms of Media

The unmotivated males' MRP growth gives insight into the potential power of the

MERA to increase reading value and expand the definition of literacy especially for

adolescent males. As discussed by Taylor (2005), it is essential that schools broaden

definitions of literacy to meet males' reading motivational needs. Teachers must be open to

forms of alternative media such as the multimedia-enhanced text. Curriculum should not be

limited to printed text alone. Instead, audio and visual text must also play a role in literacy.

This does not require a major change in instruction as these new forms of text can be

easily embedded in the current curriculums. YouTube videos, podcasts, music videos,

infographics, collaborative Internet projects, websites, etc. are all easily accessible and

available to teachers (generally without cost) in every subject and grade level. However,

computers, high-speed internet, Smartboards, and projectors are all important resources to

bring multimedia texts to the classroom, and these items can certainly be costly. Although

some schools are able to financially support new technologies, others do not have such resources.

This research demonstrates the potential power new technology can have on male adolescent

readers, thus providing additional support for those advocating the need for all schools to have

modern resources. Although this study demonstrated that the inclusion of multimedia

elements created an environment where students facilitated the critique of visuals, it is

important to note that some teachers may need professional development time to learn how

to include these new literacies in a manner that encourages discussion and leads students to

a critical viewing of the visuals presented. For many districts, professional development on

using the multimedia elements could take the form of colleague demonstrations or brief

tutorials from the media specialist. Mrs. Gray noted that she is a "moderately savvy tech

user" and she found the audio and visual elements to be "easily accessible" and tech difficulties to be a "non-issue" (Mrs. Gray, Interview, April 21, 2016). However, professional development on leading students to critically view visuals would need to be more extensive and include workshops, discussions, teaching demonstrations, and ongoing conversations.

Visual Literacy Skills

Due to the overwhelming evidence showing adolescent boys' struggle with motivation and literacy (e.g., Durik, Vida, and Eccles, 2006; Lietz, 2006; The National Education Alliance, 2007), it is essential that educators help male students become motivated and literate members of our classrooms. We live in a world of instant visual events. We are bombarded with pictures and short clips of video, which we are left to interpret: a police officer shooting an unarmed 16-year old, a young refugee toddler's body washed ashore, a sound bite of a political candidate's latest remarks. Although these are daily occurrences, we are rarely taught how to understand these snapshots. How do students bring a critical eye to visual literacy? What questions should they ask? How much of their own experiences do they bring to their interpretation? These are all important questions to consider in our visually rich world. Therefore, it is of critical importance for 21st Century students to become visually literate.

These considerations are especially important as visual literacy is different from the traditional literacy being taught in schools. How will students learn to interpret the daily barrage of visuals if "they are not visually literate" (Metros, 2008, p. 103)? It is essential that students be "more appreciative and more critical of visual material than in the past. This goal requires exposure to ways of talking about visual material and methods of visual

research" (Metros & Woolsey, 2008, p. 95). One way to encourage this conversation about visuals is through the use of multimedia-enhanced texts in the classroom. Rather than focusing on traditional text alone as has been customary in classrooms, teachers must incorporate multimedia-enhanced texts that include visuals to provide students with a springboard for discussing, analyzing, and critiquing visual materials.

In this study, the critique of visual materials happened organically during the students' discussions. The students critiqued and analyzed the set design, lighting, and actors in addition to the plot and characters. They also compared their vision of the story with the visuals provided by the filmmaker. Although this was not an intended or anticipated part of the discussions, students were highly engaged and motivated to critique the visuals and they were the ones who led the discussions in this direction.

In addition to providing an important exposure to improve their visual literacy skills, the ability to critique the visual aspects of text and other media is also part of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The CCSS for Reading Literature for Grade 7 (the grade of the focal students) requires the analysis of visuals through film or multimedia:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.7

Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film). (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010).

Therefore, the use of multimedia-enhanced text is not only essential to assist in teaching the necessary skill of interpreting visual literacy, but it is also a mandated requirement in 43

states including the state where this study took place (National Governors Association

Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010).

In addition to interpreting visuals, this study also demonstrated how students'

critique of visuals was scaffolded by the multimedia elements and translated into their

critique of printed text as well. For many students, the visuals served as an additional aid in

their understanding of the story. When the printed text alone left them confused, the

visuals, pieced together with the text, provided students with the confidence and information

needed to infer and comprehend the story. The use of multimedia-enhanced text in the

classroom has the power to not only improve the motivation of adolescent boys, but also to

assist the diverse learners in our 21st Century classrooms to comprehend and critique with

higher levels of understanding.

Access to Multimedia-Enhanced Texts and Other Genres

During their final interviews, every focal student shared that he enjoyed the MERA

and was interested in similar reading material. Mark independently located a Star Wars

book that included an online video component (Mark, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015).

However, when I re-interviewed him over the summer, he reported that he was unsuccessful

in finding any other multimedia-enhanced books (Mark, follow-up interview, August 6,

2015). Scott mentioned that he had previously read a multimedia-enhanced book, *Skeleton*

Creek by Patrick Carman, and that he was interested in re-reading it and watching the

videos again (Scott, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015). Zack and Luke were also both

interested in reading more multimedia-enhanced books over traditional books (Zack, post-

MERA interview, June 2, 2015; Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015). Unfortunately,

during my check of the school library, the classroom library, and the local public library

with which the students were affiliated, I could not find a single multimedia-enhanced book.

Upon my request, the local library did offer to order one from another library, but this did

not appear to be an option that was advertised, and most likely students were not aware of

the ability to order materials from other libraries.

Patrick Carman, author of the *3:15* series that was used for this study, has written at

least eight other multimedia-enhanced books. He appears to be a leading author for

multimedia-enhanced books for adolescents. Recently, a multimedia site for author Alyson

Noel's young adult series, "The Immortals," was launched. Another multimedia book, *The

Amanda Project (*Valentino, A., & Kantor, M., 2010), began as a printed text novel about a

girl who mysteriously disappeared. After reading the novel, readers are encouraged to go to

a website and create characters that were friends with Amanda to tell their story. The

website became an entire interactive community of "Amanda's friends" and "Amanda

sightings." Authors Valentino and Kantor used ideas and characters that had been created

online by readers and brought them to life in the subsequent books.

The foregoing is just a small glimpse at the increasingly expanding world of

multimedia-enhanced texts. Yet, these texts are generally not promoted, discussed, or

available to students as frequently as traditional texts. I did find several titles at my local

library, but they were on shelves next to traditional texts and there was nothing

distinguishing about the book to let readers know about the multimedia elements. School

and classroom libraries especially need to create access to these materials and market their

availability to aspiring readers. Many libraries organize their audio books in a section

separate from traditional text. The same should be done with multimedia-enhanced texts.

Libraries need more of these titles, and a separate location for them, to make it obvious to

readers that this form of text exists and is valued. In addition, students need access to the online materials (through computers or tablets) to view the multimedia components.

Further, if teachers want to target and improve the motivation of their male students, it is essential that they include the genres that interest students most. Mrs. Gray noted that the fantasy and science fiction genre, as well as the fear and suspense elements contributed to the students' enjoyment of the text. In addition, several of the focal students shared their excitement for the fantasy genre, yet the first time that the fantasy genre had been used was during the last quarter of the school year. If fantasy had been used earlier, it is possible that some of the students would have shown a stronger motivation to read throughout the school year.

Engaging Students through Audio

One of the most commonly cited aspects of the MERA that the focal students enjoyed was the audio introduction. These introductions were quick and engaging ways to motivate the students to read the story. Tim shared that the introductions helped him know that he really wanted to read the story compared with traditional books where you only read the back page (Tim, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). William shared that the audio preview helped "grab" his attention right away (William, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). For Luke, the introductions activated his mind to start imagining how creepy the story would be (Luke, post-MERA interview, June 3, 2015).

These quick introductions are exactly what our male students need to entice and motivate them into a text. Online commercials that play before YouTube videos, pop-up windows that flash when opening a website, and social media advertisements that appear when scrolling through one's newsfeed are all created to get a consumers' attention in as

little as five seconds. When comparing these tactics with a traditional book's advertising

tactic (an excerpt on the back cover), it is not surprising that so many "wired teens" have a

difficulty developing and maintaining interest in traditional books. The audio introductions

showed a new way to quickly capture and maintain adolescent boys' interests throughout a

text.

Although the majority of books used in a classroom do not have audio introductions,

classroom teachers can find inspiration from these audio introductions and implement other

creative ways to quickly engage their students in reading on a daily basis. For example,

teachers could create their own audio introductions (with cliffhangers) before each chapter

of a textbook. Or, teachers could play a current song whose lyrics or mood relate to the

chapter of a novel that students are about to read. Students would have to predict what the

chapter would be about based on the song chosen. After a book is completed, teachers

could assign chapters to their students and ask students to create cliffhanger audio

introductions that would be used for students the following school year. Whatever strategy

is employed, teachers must ensure that they are seeking and implementing strategies to

quickly engage and maintain students' motivation to read.

Limitations

As with most research, there were several limitations to this study. My personal

perspective on the use of MERAs was certainly biased in that I was excited and enthusiastic

about this new form of text because of my past experiences with it. However, the use of

multiple data points from both quantitative and qualitative sources to drive this research

minimized the likelihood that my perspective interfered with the data collection and findings.

Time played the greatest role in the limitations of the study. A 6-week study that included a 4-week MERA instructional approach was not sufficient time to measure continued improvement in motivation. Due to the mandated testing schedule in the school, a length delay in waiting for IRRB approval, and a two-week delay waiting for permission slips from all of the students, this study did not take place until the end of the last quarter of the school year, which is notoriously a busy, stressful, and often difficult time of year. Because the final interviews took place during the last week of school, the follow-up interviews were scheduled over the summer. Relocations, unreturned phone calls, and incorrect addresses meant that unfortunately, only 1 of the 6 focal students participated in the follow-up interview. This hurt any chance for data collection on the influence of the MERA and its impact on improvement of motivation over time.

Another limitation was that I only had access to the classroom 2-3 days per week, so it was not possible to view the other activities happening during their literacy block, which could have potentially influenced students' motivation. In addition, the small number of students surveyed (n=36) caused some difficulty in finding statistical significance. Despite this limitation, the qualitative data collection procedures, including the use of focal students, helped provide richer detail regarding the potential for change using a MERA approach. Within the qualitative approach, using a less formal, conversational interview resulted in spontaneous questions asked of some students and not others, which made the interviews somewhat difficult to compare.

Because I led the focal student discussions in an office away from the classroom, these student discussions could have been influenced by my role and the impact of being in a new environment. Having me as a discussion leader ensured students stayed on task. My

role as the "new person" also could have encouraged them to stay more focused and to try

harder to impress me since they knew their data was being used for a study. Also, the quiet

back office ensured there were no distractions and no one else listening which helped

students concentrate and gave them confidence to share their thinking. These advantages

could account for some of the increase in quality rather than crediting the MERA alone. I

initially considered that the role of the "motivated" focal students in the discussion groups

could impact the "unmotivated" students in the discussion groups since I imagined the

motivated students would be more vocal. However, both the motivated and unmotivated

focal students contributed similar amounts to the discussions and there did not appear to be

a direct impact from the motivated students on the unmotivated students. Rather, the text

format itself appeared to create a context in which all readers (both motivated and

unmotivated) were engaged.

Although the MRP has been field tested and has shown both high reliability and

validity, I found several discrepancies in the focal students' scores on the MRP compared to

my perceived view of their motivation. This was especially true for Mark. On his initial

MRP, Mark shared that he rarely read and found reading boring. Yet, during the initial

interview, Mark excitedly talking about Harry Potter and informational science text. He

also shared several examples of the reading he completed on a daily basis (Mark, pre-

MERA Interview, April 29, 2015). This did not match the MRP information. Because the

MRP includes predetermined multiple choice response answers, it is possible that MRP data

is not entirely reflective of students' actual motivation.

There are many factors at play in a classroom on a daily basis such as the teacher, the

researcher, the time of day, the time of year, the mood of the students, and the text used.

These factors made it somewhat difficult to determine the "it" factor that contributed to the

increased motivation for males. However, through their final interviews, I am confident that

the multimedia elements, including the audio introductions and the visual endings, played a

key role in improving the adolescent males' motivation to read.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study was limited to only four weeks of MERA implementation. Future

research that includes a daily MERA for an extended period of time may further inform the

field. Moreover, including a wider range of adolescents from multiple classrooms and

multiple grade levels, as well as including additional unmotivated male focal students would

be beneficial to informing the field on adolescent male motivation.

The district in which the study took place includes a 17.3% English Learners (EL)

population. Although the participants in the study included a diverse population, there were

no EL learners in Mrs. Gray's class. Including EL students as focal students would provide

important information to the field. During the 2012-2013 school year, there were almost 4.4

million EL students in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014).

Using visuals to support EL students' reading comprehension is frequently cited as a

successful strategy (e.g. Pang, 2013; Kelly-Jackson & Delacruz, 2014). Therefore, it would

be important to examine the potential power of multimedia-enhanced text to assist English

Learners (EL) in their reading motivation as well as interpretation and comprehension of

text.

During discussions, I noted both enthusiastic responses and eager participation from

not only my focus students, but the rest of the class as well. This was in strong contrast to

the overall low quantity and quality of written responses after the writing prompts. It

appeared that students enjoyed discussions much more than the writing prompts. In fact,

students would frequently "groan" when the teacher announced that they would be

completing a writing prompt, and "cheer" when they were placed in discussion groups.

Because discussion groups were so much more engaging and provided richer data, I feel

future data collection would be stronger if all responses were done through discussion

groups, or if students had a chance to discuss first before they were prompted to create a

written response.

The texts used during the MERA were all fictional. With the emphasis of the

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) on including more informational text in the

classroom, it would be beneficial to look for ways to include multimedia-enhanced texts in a

content area classroom (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices &

Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). Thus, it would be valuable to study how a

similar series with an emphasis on math, science, or social studies themes could impact the

motivation of students. Further, because the definition of literacy is constantly changing,

additional research is needed to study the impact of how this new type of text may

contribute to literacy, as well as noting how teachers' definition of literacy compares to

students' definitions of literacy.

An unexpected result of this study was the use of focal students' critique of the

visuals. Their visual critique led to critique of printed text and resulted in critical thinking

strategies employed by all students. Continued research in implementing instruction of

visual literacy and using multimedia visuals to learn critique could also be advantageous to

the field.

Based on results from the MRP, both motivated and unmotivated males increased their desire to hear teacher read-alouds. Several focal students shared that as a result of the MERA, they were interested in independently reading other similar texts. Therefore, a future direction of research could seek to determine if read alouds enhance motivation among males to read independently.

Finally, we must continue to study strategies to improve adolescent males' reading motivation. Specifically, future research should examine methods to quickly engage readers in text. Using the words of William, we must "grab the attention" of our unmotivated males and bring them into text (William, post-MERA interview, June 2, 2015). Employing a variety of strategies, such as teacher-created audio introductions to texts, could provide insight into how we can quickly and effectively engage reluctant readers who are accustomed to instant entertainment.

Conclusion

This study took place in a seventh-grade classroom during a language arts block. The instructional approach implemented was the use of a multimedia-enhanced read aloud (MERA) followed by writing prompts and discussions. The multimedia-enhanced read aloud included an audio introduction, printed text read aloud by the teacher, and a video ending. The 17 males in the classroom with specific emphasis on six males (four unmotivated and two motivated) were the focus for this study.

The purpose of this study was to measure the impact of the multimedia-enhanced read aloud on the motivation of adolescent boys. The study also compared reading motivation between genders and the effect of the MERA on motivated boys versus unmotivated boys. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used

including a Motivation to Read Profile (MRP), interviews, writing prompts, and transcribed

discussions.

The study's theoretical roots were framed by Vygotsky's (1986) sociocultural

perspective, Rosenblatt's (1938, 1978) view of the transactional nature of text, and

Guthrie's (2004) understanding of motivation. This study's framework for understanding

the vital role of new literacies was derived from Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, and Cammack (2004).

The data collected in this research provides important insight into the use of

multimedia-enhanced text to motivate adolescent male readers. The multimedia-enhanced

text improved motivation for all males, especially those identified as unmotivated. The

audio introduction was found to be an essential component of engaging and bringing

unmotivated male readers quickly into the text. Further, the visual elements assisted

students' comprehension, improved the quality of their inferences, and encouraged visual

literacy critique. The MERA also prompted normally unmotivated male students to

independently seek out other texts with multimedia elements. In essence, the

implementation of the MERA provided the "lifeline back to books" that the boys in our

classroom so desperately need.

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Appendix A

MULTIMEDIA-ENHANCED TEXTS

Carman, P. (2009). *Skeleton creek*. Scholastic.

Skeleton Creek uses a new literacy format by becoming both a book and a movie.

Readers follow two characters, Ryan and Sarah, as they investigate the eerie Skeleton Creek.

Ryan is housebound and records everything in his journal, which serves as the text to the book.

Sarah uses a video camera to record videos of the haunted woods outside of Ryan's cabin. As

students read Ryan's text, they are given links and passwords to view Sarah's videos online.

Carman, P. (2011). *3:15: Things that go bump in the night.* PC Studio, Inc.

3:15: Things that go bump in the night is a series of short stories with three parts. First,

students listen to a spooky audio introduction online. Next, the story is read from the

text. Finally, a creepy video must be viewed online to learn how the story ends.

Pullinger, K., & Joseph, C. (2005). *Inanimate alice*. The Bradfield Company. Retrieved from

http://www.inanimatealice.com/

This completely digital text follows the experiences of 8-year-old Alice and her travels

and adventures through her twenties. The reader is invited to interact with the story through text,

sound, and video. As the story progresses, so does the sophistication of the interactive elements.

Valentino, A., & Kantor, M. (2010). *The amanda project*. Harper Teen.

The Amanda Project is a novel about a girl who mysteriously disappears. After reading

the novel, readers are encouraged to go to a website and create characters that were friends with

Amanda to tell their story. The website became an entire interactive community of "Amanda's

friends" and "Amanda sightings." In authoring the second book, Valentino and Kantor used

ideas and characters that had been created online and brought them to life in the stories.

Appendix B

MOTIVATION TO READ PROFILE (MRP)

See next page

Figure 1
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey

Name: _____   Date: _____

Sample 1: I am in _____.
- ❑ Sixth grade
- ❑ Seventh grade
- ❑ Eighth grade
- ❑ Ninth grade
- ❑ Tenth grade
- ❑ Eleventh grade
- ❑ Twelfth grade

Sample 2: I am a _____.
- ❑ Female
- ❑ Male

Sample 3: My race/ethnicity is _____.
- ❑ African-American
- ❑ Asian/Asian American
- ❑ Caucasian
- ❑ Hispanic
- ❑ Native American
- ❑ Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic
- ❑ Other: Please specify _____

1. My friends think I am _____.
- ❑ a very good reader
- ❑ a good reader
- ❑ an OK reader
- ❑ a poor reader

2. Reading a book is something I like to do.
- ❑ Never
- ❑ Not very often
- ❑ Sometimes
- ❑ Often

3. I read _____.
- ❑ not as well as my friends
- ❑ about the same as my friends
- ❑ a little better than my friends
- ❑ a lot better than my friends

4. My best friends think reading is _____.
- ❑ really fun
- ❑ fun
- ❑ OK to do
- ❑ no fun at all

5. When I come to a word I don't know, I can
_____.
- ❑ almost always figure it out
- ❑ sometimes figure it out
- ❑ almost never figure it out
- ❑ never figure it out

6. I tell my friends about good books I read.
- ❑ I never do this
- ❑ I almost never do this
- ❑ I do this some of the time
- ❑ I do this a lot

7. When I am reading by myself, I understand
_____.
- ❑ almost everything I read
- ❑ some of what I read
- ❑ almost none of what I read
- ❑ none of what I read

8. People who read a lot are _____.
- ❑ very interesting
- ❑ interesting
- ❑ not very interesting
- ❑ boring

9. I am _____.
- ❑ a poor reader
- ❑ an OK reader
- ❑ a good reader
- ❑ a very good reader

(continued)

Figure 1 (continued)
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey

Name: _____   Date: _____

10. I think libraries are _____.
    - ❑ a great place to spend time
    - ❑ an interesting place to spend time
    - ❑ an OK place to spend time
    - ❑ a boring place to spend time

11. I worry about what other kids think about
    my reading _____.
    - ❑ every day
    - ❑ almost every day
    - ❑ once in a while
    - ❑ never

12. Knowing how to read well is _____.
    - ❑ not very important
    - ❑ sort of important
    - ❑ important
    - ❑ very important

13. When my teacher asks me a question about
    what I have read, I _____.
    - ❑ can never think of an answer
    - ❑ have trouble thinking of an answer
    - ❑ sometimes think of an answer
    - ❑ always think of an answer

14. I think reading is _____.
    - ❑ a boring way to spend time
    - ❑ an OK way to spend time
    - ❑ an interesting way to spend time
    - ❑ a great way to spend time

15. Reading is _____.
    - ❑ very easy for me
    - ❑ kind of easy for me
    - ❑ kind of hard for me
    - ❑ very hard for me

16. As an adult, I will spend _____.
    - ❑ none of my time reading
    - ❑ very little time reading
    - ❑ some of my time reading
    - ❑ a lot of my time reading

17. When I am in a group talking about what we are
    reading, I _____.
    - ❑ almost never talk about my ideas
    - ❑ sometimes talk about my ideas
    - ❑ almost always talk about my ideas
    - ❑ always talk about my ideas

18. I would like for my teachers to read out loud in
    my classes _____.
    - ❑ every day
    - ❑ almost every day
    - ❑ once in a while
    - ❑ never

19. When I read out loud I am a _____.
    - ❑ poor reader
    - ❑ OK reader
    - ❑ good reader
    - ❑ very good reader

20. When someone gives me a book for a present, I
    feel _____.
    - ❑ very happy
    - ❑ sort of happy
    - ❑ sort of unhappy
    - ❑ unhappy

Note. Adapted with permission from the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996)

Figure 2
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile
conversational interview
_____

Name _____

A. Emphasis: Narrative text
Suggested prompt (designed to engage student in a natural conversation): I have been reading a good book. I was talking with...about it last night. I enjoy talking about what I am reading with my friends and family. Today, I would like to hear about what you have been reading and if you share it.

1. Tell me about the most interesting story or book you have read recently. Take a few minutes to think about it (wait time). Now, tell me about the book.

   Probe: What else can you tell me? Is there anything else?

2. How did you know or find out about this book?

   (Some possible responses: assigned, chosen, in school, out of school)

3. Why was this story interesting to you?

B. Emphasis: Informational text
Suggested prompt (designed to engage student in a natural conversation): Often we read to find out or learn about something that interests us. For example, a student I recently worked with enjoyed reading about his favorite sports teams on the Internet. I am gong to ask you some questions about what you like to read to learn about.

1. Think about something important that you learned recently, not from your teacher and not from television, but from something you have read. What did you read about? (Wait time.) Tell me about what you learned.

   Probe: What else could you tell me? Is there anything else?

2. How did you know or find out about reading material on this?

   (Some possible responses: assigned, chosen, in school, out of school)

(continued)

Figure 2 (continued)
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile
conversational interview

3. Why was reading this important to you?

C. Emphasis: General reading

  1. Did you read anything at home yesterday? What?

  2. Do you have anything at school (in your desk, locker, or book bag) today that you are reading?

    Tell me about them.

  3. Tell me about your favorite author.

  4. What do you think you have to learn to be a better reader?

  5. Do you know about any books right now that you'd like to read?

    Tell me about them.

  6. How did you find out about these books?

  7. What are some things that get you really excited about reading?

    Tell me about....

(continued)

Figure 2 (continued)
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile
conversational interview

8. Who gets you really interested and excited about reading?

   Tell me more about what they do.

9. Do you have a computer in your home?

   If they answer yes, ask the following questions:

   How much time do you spend on the computer a day?

   What do you usually do?

   What do you like to read when you are on the Internet?

   If they answer no, ask the following questions:

   If you did have a computer in your home, what would you like to do with it?

   Is there anything on the Internet that you would like to be able to read?

D. Emphasis: School reading in comparison to home reading

   1. In what class do you most like to read?

      Why?

   2. In what class do you feel the reading is the most difficult?

      Why?

   (continued)

Figure 2 (continued)
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile
conversational interview

3. Have any of your teachers done something with reading that you really enjoyed?

    Could you explain some of what was done?

4. Do you share and discuss books, magazines, or other reading materials with your friends outside of school?

    What?

    How often?

    Where?

5. Do you write letters or email to friends or family?

    How often?

6. Do you share any of the following reading materials with members of your family: newspapers, magazines, religious materials, games?

    With whom?

    How often?

7. Do you belong to any clubs or organizations for which you read and write?

    Could you explain what kind of reading it is?

Note. Adapted with permission from the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996)

MRP reading survey scoring sheet

Student name _____

Grade _____ Teacher _____

Administration date _____

Recoding scale

1=4
2=3
3=2
4=1

Self-concept as a reader		Value of reading	
*recode	1. _____		2. _____
	3. _____	*recode	4. _____
*recode	5. _____		6. _____
*recode	7. _____	*recode	8. _____
	9. _____	*recode	10. _____
	11. _____		12. _____
	13. _____		14. _____
*recode	15. _____		16. _____
	17. _____	*recode	18. _____
	19. _____	*recode	20. _____

SC raw score: _____ /40   V raw score: _____ /40

Full survey raw score (Self-concept & Value): _____ /80

Percentage scores   Self-concept _____

                        Value   _____

                        Full survey   _____

Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____

Note. Reprinted with permission from the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996)

APPENDIX C

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Post-MERA Interview

1. Did you enjoy the book *3:15 Things that go Bump in the Night?* What did you like or dislike about it?

2. What did you think of the audio introductions? Did they get you excited to read the story?

3. Did you like the video endings? Why or why not?

4. If you had a choice, would you rather read a traditional book or a book with the audio and video elements?

5. Would you be interested in reading more books like this? Or more books by the same author?

6. Did seeing a book like *3:15* get you more excited or interested in reading?

Follow-Up Interview

1. Have your reading habits changed since you were introduced to the *3:15* series?

2. Have you checked out any other books by Patrick Carman?

3. Have you checked out any other books with multimedia elements?

4. Would you be interested in reading more books by that author? Or more books with the multimedia elements?

5. Do you plan on reading this summer? If yes, what kinds of books do you plan on reading?

6.

APPENDIX D

TRADITIONAL READ-ALOUD WITH WRITING/DRAWING PROMPT AND

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

"The Landlady" by Roald Dahl

Billy Weaver had traveled down from London on the slow afternoon train, with a change at

Reading on the way, and by the time he got to Bath, it was about nine o'clock in the evening, and

the moon was coming up out of a clear starry sky over the houses opposite the station entrance.

But the air was deadly cold and the wind was like a flat blade of ice on his cheeks.

"Excuse me," he said, "but is there a fairly cheap hotel not too far away from here?"

"Try The Bell and Dragon," the porter answered, pointing down the road. "They might take you

in. It's about a quarter of a mile along on the other side." Billy thanked him and picked up his

suitcase and set out to walk the quarter-mile to The Bell and Dragon. He had never been to Bath

before. He didn't know anyone who lived there. But Mr. Greenslade at the head office in London

had told him it was a splendid town. "Find your own lodgings," he had said, "and then go along

and report to the branch manager as soon as you've got yourself settled."

Billy was seventeen years old. He was wearing a new navy-blue overcoat, a new brown trilby

hat, and a new brown suit, and he was feeling fine. He walked briskly down the street. He was

trying to do everything briskly these days. Briskness, he had decided, was *the* one common

characteristic of all successful businessmen. The big shots up at the head office were absolutely

fantastically brisk all the time. They were amazing.   There were no shops on this wide street that

he was walking along, only a line of tall houses on each side, all of them identical. They had

porches and pillars and four or five steps going up to their front doors, and it was obvious that

once upon a time they had been very swanky residences. But now, even in the darkness, he could

see that the paint was peeling from the woodwork on their doors and windows and that the

handsome white facades were cracked and blotchy from neglect.

Suddenly, in a downstairs window that was brilliantly illuminated by a street lamp not six yards

away, Billy caught sight of a printed notice propped up against the glass in one of the upper

panes. It said BED AND BREAKFAST. There was a vase of yellow chrysanthemums, tall and

beautiful, standing just underneath the notice.

He stopped walking. He moved a bit closer. Green curtains (some sort of velvety material) were

hanging down on either side of the window. The chrysanthemums looked wonderful beside

them. He went right up and peered through the glass into the room, and the first thing he saw was

a bright fire burning in the hearth. On the carpet in front of the fire, a pretty little dachshund was

curled up asleep with its nose tucked into its belly. The room itself, so far as he could see in the

half darkness, was filled with pleasant furniture. There was a baby grand piano and a big sofa

and several plump armchairs, and in one corner he spotted a large parrot in a cage. Animals were

usually a good sign in a place like this, Billy told himself; and all in all, it looked to him as

though it would be a pretty decent house to stay in. Certainly it would be more comfortable than

The Bell and Dragon.

On the other hand, a pub would be more congenial than a boardinghouse. There would be beer

and darts in the evenings, and lots of people to talk to, and it would probably be a good bit

cheaper, too. He had stayed a couple of nights in a pub once before and he had liked it. He had

never stayed in any boardinghouses, and, to be perfectly honest, he was a tiny bit frightened of

them. The name itself conjured up images of watery cabbage, rapacious landladies, and a

powerful smell of kippers in the living room.

After dithering about like this in the cold for two or three minutes, Billy decided that he would

walk on and take a look at The Bell and Dragon before making up his mind. He turned to

go.   And now a queer thing happened to him. He was in the act of stepping back and turning

away from the window when all at once his eye was caught and held in the most peculiar manner

by the small notice that was there. BED AND BREAKFAST, it said. BED AND BREAKFAST,

BED AND BREAKFAST, BED AND BREAKFAST. Each word was like a large black eye

staring at him through the glass, holding him, compelling him, forcing him to stay where he was

and not to walk away from that house, and the next thing he knew, he was actually moving

across from the window to the front door of the house, climbing the steps that led up to it, and

reaching for the bell.

He pressed the bell. Far away in a back room he heard it ringing, and then at once —it must have

been at once because he hadn't even had time to take his finger from the bell button—the door

swung open and a woman was standing there. Normally you ring the bell and you have at least a

half-minute's wait before the door opens. But this dame was like a jack-in-the-box. He pressed

the bell—and out she popped! It made him jump.

She was about forty-five or fifty years old, and the moment she saw him, she gave him a warm,

welcoming smile. " Please come in," she said pleasantly. She stepped aside, holding the door

wide open, and Billy found himself automatically starting forward. The compulsion or, more

accurately, the desire to follow after her into that house was extraordinarily strong.

"I saw the notice in the window," he said, holding himself back.

"Yes, I know."

"I was wondering about a room."

"It's all ready for you, my dear," she said. She had a round pink face and very gentle blue eyes.

"I was on my way to The Bell and Dragon," Billy told her. "But the notice in your window just

happened to catch my eye.”

“My dear boy,” she said, “why don’t you come in out of the cold?”

“How much do you charge?”

“Five and sixpence a night, including breakfast.”

It was fantastically cheap. It was less than half of what he had been willing to pay.

“If that is too much,” she added, “then perhaps I can reduce it just a tiny bit. Do you desire an egg for breakfast? Eggs are expensive at the moment. It would be sixpence less without the egg.”

“Five and sixpence is fine,” he answered. “I should like very much to stay here.”

“I knew you would. Do come in.”

She seemed terribly nice. She looked exactly like the mother of one’s best school friend welcoming one into the house to stay for the Christmas holidays. Billy took off his hat and stepped over the threshold.

“Just hang it there,” she said, “and let me help you with your coat.”

There were no other hats or coats in the hall. There were no umbrellas, no walking sticks— nothing.

“We have it all to ourselves,” she said, smiling at him over her shoulder as she led the way upstairs. “You see, it isn’t very often I have the pleasure of taking a visitor into my little nest.”

The old girl is slightly dotty, Billy told himself. But at five and sixpence a night, who cares about that? “I should’ve thought you’d be simply swamped with applicants,” he said politely.

“Oh, I am, my dear, I am, of course I am. But the trouble is that I’m inclined to be just a teeny-weeny bit choosy and particular—if you see what I mean.”

“Ah, yes.”

"But I'm always ready. Everything is always ready day and night in this house just on the off chance that an acceptable young gentleman will come along. And it is such a pleasure, my dear, such a very great pleasure when now and again I open the door and I see someone standing there who is just exactly right." She was halfway up the stairs, and she paused with one hand on the stair rail, turning her head and smiling down at him with pale lips. "Like you," she added, and her blue eyes traveled slowly all the way down the length of Billy's body, to his feet, and then up again.

On the second-floor landing she said to him, "This floor is mine."

They climbed up another flight. "And this one is all yours," she said. "Here's your room. I do hope you'll like it." She took him into a small but charming front bedroom, switching on the light as she went in.

"The morning sun comes right in the window, Mr. Perkins. It is Mr. Perkins, isn't it?"

"No," he said. "It's Weaver."

"Mr. Weaver. How nice. I've put a water bottle between the sheets to air them out, Mr. Weaver. It's such a comfort to have a hot-water bottle in a strange bed with clean sheets, don't you agree? And you may light the gas fire at any time if you feel chilly."

"Thank you," Billy said. "Thank you ever so much." He noticed that the bedspread had been taken off the bed and that the bedclothes had been neatly turned back on one side, all ready for someone to get in.

"I'm so glad you appeared," she said, looking earnestly into his face. "I was beginning to get worried."

"That's all right," Billy answered brightly. "You mustn't worry about me." He put his suitcase on the chair and started to open it.

"And what about supper, my dear? Did you manage to get anything to eat before you came

here?"

"I'm not a bit hungry, thank you," he said. "I think I'll just go to bed as soon as possible because

tomorrow I've got to get up rather early and report to the office."

"Very well, then. I'll leave you now so that you can unpack. But before you go to bed, would

you be kind enough to pop into the sitting room on the ground floor and sign the book? Everyone

has to do that because it's the law of the land, and we don't want to go breaking any laws at this

stage in the proceedings, do we?" She gave him a little wave of the hand and went quickly out of

the room and closed the door.

Now, the fact that his landlady appeared to be slightly off her rocker didn't worry Billy in the

least. After all, she not only was harmless—there was no question about that—but she was also

quite obviously a kind and generous soul. He guessed that she had probably lost a son in the war,

or something like that, and had never gotten over it.

So a few minutes later, after unpacking his suitcase and washing his hands, he trotted downstairs

to the ground floor and entered the living room. His landlady wasn't there, but the fire was

glowing in the hearth, and the little dachshund was still sleeping soundly in front of it. The room

was wonderfully warm and cozy. I'm a lucky fellow, he thought, rubbing his hands. This is a bit

of all right.

He found the guest book lying open on the piano, so he took out his pen and wrote down his

name and address. There were only two other entries above his on the page, and as one always

does with guest books, he started to read them. One was a Christopher Mulholland from Cardiff.

The other was Gregory W. Temple from Bristol.

That's funny, he thought suddenly. Christopher Mulholland. It rings a bell.

Now where on earth had he heard that rather unusual name before?

Was it a boy at school? No. Was it one of his sister's numerous young men, perhaps, or a friend of his father's? No, no, it wasn't any of those. He glanced down again at the book.

Christopher Mulholland 231 Cathedral Road, Cardiff

Gregory W. Temple 27 Sycamore Drive, Bristol

As a matter of fact, now he came to think of it, he wasn't at all sure that the second name didn't have almost as much of a familiar ring about it as the first.

"Gregory Temple?" he said aloud, searching his memory. "Christopher Mulholland? . . ."

"Such charming boys," a voice behind him answered, and he turned and saw his landlady sailing into the room with a large silver tea tray in her hands. She was holding it well out in front of her, and rather high up, as though the tray were a pair of reins on a frisky horse.

"They sound somehow familiar," he said.

"They do? How interesting."

"I'm almost positive I've heard those names before somewhere. Isn't that odd? Maybe it was in the newspapers. They weren't famous in any way, were they? I mean famous cricketers7 or footballers or something like that?"   "Famous," she said, setting the tea tray down on the low table in front of the sofa. "Oh no, I don't think they were famous. But they were incredibly handsome, both of them, I can promise you that. They were tall and young and handsome, my dear, just exactly like you."

Once more, Billy glanced down at the book. "Look here," he said, noticing the dates. "This last entry is over two years old."

"It is?"

"Yes, indeed. And Christopher Mulholland's is nearly a year before that—more than three years

ago."

"Dear me," she said, shaking her head and heaving a dainty little sigh. "I would never have thought it. How time does fly away from us all, doesn't it, Mr. Wilkins?"

"It's Weaver," Billy said. "W-e-a-v-e-r."

"Oh, of course it is!" she cried, sitting down on the sofa. "How silly of me. I do apologize. In one ear and out the other, that's me, Mr. Weaver."

"You know something?" Billy said. "Something that's really quite extraordinary about all this?"

"No, dear, I don't."

"Well, you see, both of these names—Mulholland and Temple—I not only seem to remember each one of them separately, so to speak, but somehow or other, in some peculiar way, they both appear to be sort of connected together as well. As though they were both famous for the same sort of thing, if you see what I mean—like . . . well . . . like Dempsey and Tunney, for example, or Churchill and Roosevelt." "How amusing," she said. "But come over here now, dear, and sit down beside me on the sofa and I'll give you a nice cup of tea and a ginger biscuit before you go to bed." "You really shouldn't bother," Billy said. "I didn't mean you to do anything like that." He stood by the piano, watching her as she fussed about with the cups and saucers. He noticed that she had small, white, quickly moving hands and red fingernails.

"I'm almost positive it was in the newspapers I saw them," Billy said. "I'll think of it in a second. I'm sure I will."

There is nothing more tantalizing than a thing like this that lingers just outside the borders of one's memory. He hated to give up.

"Now wait a minute," he said. "Wait just a minute. Mulholland . . . Christopher Mulholland . . . wasn't *that* the name of the Eton schoolboy who was on a walking tour through the West

Country, and then all of a sudden . . ."

"Milk?" she said. "And sugar?"

"Yes, please. And then all of a sudden . . ."

"Eton schoolboy?" she said. "Oh no, my dear, that can't possibly be right, because *my* Mr. Mulholland was certainly not an Eton schoolboy when he came to me. He was a Cambridge undergraduate. Come over here now and sit next to me and warm yourself in front of this lovely fire. Come on. Your tea's all ready for you." She patted the empty place beside her on the sofa, and she sat there smiling at Billy and waiting for him to come over.   He crossed the room slowly and sat down on the edge of the sofa. She placed his teacup on the table in front of him.

" *There* we are," she said. "How nice and cozy this is, isn't it?"

Billy started sipping his tea. She did the same. For half a minute or so, neither of them spoke. But Billy knew that she was looking at him. Her body was half turned toward him, and he could feel her eyes resting on his face, watching him over the rim of her teacup. Now and again, he caught a whiff of a peculiar smell that seemed to emanate directly from her person. It was not in the least unpleasant, and it reminded him—well, he wasn't quite sure what it reminded him of. Pickled walnuts? New leather? Or was it the corridors of a hospital?

At length, she said, "Mr. Mulholland was a great one for his tea. Never in my life have I seen anyone drink as much tea as dear, sweet Mr. Mulholland."

"I suppose he left fairly recently," Billy said. He was still puzzling his head about the two names. He was positive now that he had seen them in the newspapers—in the headlines.

"Left?" she said, arching her brows. "But my dear boy, he never left. He's still here. Mr. Temple is also here. They're on the fourth floor, both of them together."

Billy set his cup down slowly on the table and stared at his landlady. She smiled back at him, and

then she put out one of her white hands and patted him comfortingly on the knee. "How old are you, my dear?" she asked.

"Seventeen."

"Seventeen!" she cried. "Oh, it's the perfect age! Mr. Mulholland was also seventeen. But I think he was a trifle shorter than you are; in fact I'm sure he was, and his teeth weren't quite so white. You have the most beautiful teeth, Mr. Weaver, did you know that?"

"They're not as good as they look," Billy said. "They've got simply masses of fillings in them at the back."

"Mr. Temple, of course, was a little older," she said, ignoring his remark. "He was actually twenty-eight. And yet I never would have guessed it if he hadn't told me, never in my whole life. There wasn't a blemish on his body."

"A what?" Billy said.

"His skin was *just* like a baby's."

There was a pause. Billy picked up his teacup and took another sip of his tea; then he set it down again gently in its saucer. He waited for her to say something else, but she seemed to have lapsed into another of her silences. He sat there staring straight ahead of him into the far corner of the room, biting his lower lip.

"That parrot," he said at last. "You know something? It had me completely fooled when I first saw it through the window. I could have sworn it was alive."

"Alas, no longer."

"It's most terribly clever the way it's been done," he said. "It doesn't look in the least bit dead. Who did it?"

"I did."

" *You* did?"

"Of course," she said. "And have you met my little Basil as well?" She nodded toward the dachshund curled up so comfortably in front of the fire. Billy looked at it. And suddenly, he realized that this animal had all the time been just as silent and motionless as the parrot. He put out a hand and touched it gently on the top of its back. The back was hard and cold, and when he pushed the hair to one side with his fingers, he could see the skin underneath, grayish black and dry and perfectly preserved.

"Good gracious me," he said. "How absolutely fascinating." He turned away from the dog and stared with deep admiration at the little woman beside him on the sofa. "It must be most awfully difficult to do a thing like that."

"Not in the least," she said. "I stuff *all* my little pets myself when they pass away. Will you have another cup of tea?"

"No, thank you," Billy said. The tea tasted faintly of bitter almonds, and he didn't much care for it.

"You did sign the book, didn't you?"

"Oh, yes."

"That's good. Because later on, if I happen to forget what you were called, then I could always come down here and look it up. I still do that almost every day with Mr. Mulholland and Mr. . . . Mr. . . ."

"Temple," Billy said, "Gregory Temple. Excuse my asking, but haven't there been *any* other guests here except them in the last two or three years?"

Holding her teacup high in one hand, inclining her head slightly to the left, she looked up at him out of the corners of her eyes and gave him another gentle little smile.

"No, my dear," she said. "Only you."

Writing/Drawing Prompt

What do you think is going to happen to Billy? What clues lead you to think this?

OR

Draw a picture of how you think this story will end. Be sure to label your drawing and include a 1-2 sentence explanation of your images.

Discussion Prompts

What was your favorite or least favorite part of this story?

If you could change one part of the story, what would you change? Why?

Did you like the ending of the story? Why or why not?

Why do you think the landlady stuffs her "pets?"

Appendix E

Small Group Discussion Prompts

For use after each story:

What was your favorite or least favorite part of this story?

If you could change one part of the story, what would you change? Why?

Did you like the video ending of the story? Why or why not?

Additional Prompts specific to each storyline:

Reflecting Pool

Did Jamie deserve her fate?

What do you think Miss Pratt does with her mirror?

Have you ever been in an antique store? Did it remind you of Miss Pratt's store? How?

The Lift

Have you ever been skiing? Did it remind you of Dylan and Adam's ski hill? How?

What mistake did Dylan make? What lesson could be learned from this story?

Heart of Stone

Emma checks for her gargoyle each night. Do you have any strange nightly rituals that

are similar to Emma's?

What do you think the actual purpose of gargoyles on building are?

What do you think happened to Emma in the end?

Take Out

Why were they the three smartest boys on earth?

Where do you think they were taken? Why?

Do you think their parents had any idea that they were "different" from the rest of the boys on earth?

Night on the Dredge

What do you think a dredge is?

Do you think Ryan is brave? Why or why not?

What do you think the purpose of the Secret Society is?

APPENDIX F

Writing/Drawing Prompts

Buried Treasure

If you were in Cody's position, would you have stolen the golden hook to provide for your family? Why or why not?

OR

Draw a picture that includes both the positive and negative outcome of stealing the golden hook to provide for his family. Be sure to label your drawing and include a 1-2 sentence explanation of your images.

Mr. Mason's Jars

What does Mr. Mason have in his jars? How do you know? What do you think he keeps them for?

OR

Draw a picture that shows what Mr. Mason has inside his jars, as well as an image that shows what you think he uses the jars for when he is alone is his classroom. Be sure to label your drawing and include a 1-2 sentence explanation of your images.

Night Rider

What clues led you to believe that Amy is a ghost? Why would she push Thomas into oncoming traffic? If you were in Amy's position, what would you do? Why?

OR

Draw a picture to show what you would have done if you were in Amy's position. Be sure to label your drawing and include a 1-2 sentence explanation of your images.

The Beast

What do you think the newspaper headline was the next day? Do you think there really was a beast? Or is it an exaggerated story? Why?

OR

Draw a picture of the cover of the next day's newspaper. Be sure to include a headline as well as the front-page photo and caption.

Atomic Ants

Did Eddie deserve his fate? Why or why not?

OR

If the Atomic Ants did not exist, and Eddie continued his "bullying ways," imagine what his future would be like. Draw a picture to show what Eddie's future would be like when he is 30 years old. Be sure to label your drawing and include a 1-2 sentence explanation of your images.

APPENDIX G

LETTERS OF CONSENT

Informed Consent - Teacher

Dear Prospective Participant:

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Jana McNally, doctoral student at National Louis University, Wheeling, Illinois, occurring from April, 2015 through June, 2015. The study is entitled *Creating a Lifeline Back to Books for Adolescent Boys through Multimedia-Enhanced Read-Alouds*. The primary purpose of this study is to determine the impact of the implementation of new literacies, specifically, multimedia-enhanced texts, as a way to improve adolescent males' reading motivation.

Your participation will include the following:

- Administration of part one of the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) to both general education blocks during part 1 and part 3.

- Implementation of a multimedia-enhanced read-aloud (MERA) to both general education blocks 3 days per week during part 2.

- Implementation of either a writing response or small group discussion after each MERA.

- Collection of writing samples and supervision during small group discussions.

- Assistance in selecting focal students for the study

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. Your identity will be kept confidential by the researcher and will not be attached to the data. For confidentiality purposes, any transcripts, taped recordings, field notes, and all files pertaining to your participation in this study will be stored in a locked cabinet for ten years and

destroyed afterwards if no longer needed. All computer files will be kept on a secure server. I

will also maintain a copy of the data on a password-protected computer. Your actual name will

be known only to the principal researcher (me). A pseudonym will be assigned to your name to

keep all the information fully confidential.

Your participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to you beyond

that of everyday life. The likely benefit of being in this research study may lead to a better

understanding of how the implementation of new literacies can improve your adolescent males'

reading motivation.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your

identity will in no way be revealed. Upon request, I will provide you with summary results of

this study.

In the event you have questions or require additional information you may contact the researcher:

Jana McNally, 361 South Street, Elmhurst, IL; 630-248-5942; jwilkening@my.nl.edu.

If you have any concerns or questions before or during participation that you feel have not been

addressed by the researcher, you may contact Dr. Sophie Degener, National-Louis University,

5202 Old Orchard Road, #437, Skokie, Illinois 60076; 224-233-2018; sophie.degener@nl.edu, or

the chair of NLU's Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, National Louis

University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60603; 312-261-3527,

shanti.knauth@nl.edu.

You will be tendered a copy of your signed consent form. Please acknowledge with your

signature below your consent to participate in this study.

_____

Participant Name (Print)

_____   _____

Participant Signature   Date

_____

Researcher (Print)

_____   _____

Researcher Signature   Date

Informed Consent – Principal

Dear Principal,

Your teacher, _____, is being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Jana McNally, doctoral student at National Louis University, Wheeling, Illinois, occurring from April, 2015 through June, 2015. The study is entitled *Creating a Lifeline Back to Books for Adolescent Boys through Multimedia Enhanced Read-Alouds*. The primary purpose of this study is to determine the impact of the implementation of new literacies, specifically, multimedia-enhanced texts, as a way to improve adolescent males' reading motivation.

During this study, _____ will be asked to administer a reading motivation profile to both of her general education classes, collect writing samples, and implement a multimedia-enhanced read-aloud followed by either a writing response or a small group discussion. In addition, students will be asked to complete a reading motivation survey, participate in discussion groups, and complete writing samples. Further, 6-8 students selected as focal students will participate in three 10-minute interviews about their reading interests. Discussion group conversations will be recorded using an audio recording device and student-writing samples will be collected (pending parent consent and student assent).

Your school's participation is voluntary and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Your school's identity will be kept confidential by the researcher and will not be attached to the data. Only the researcher will have access to all original transcripts, taped recordings, and field notes from the interview(s) including identifier information. For confidentiality purposes, any transcripts, taped recordings, field notes, writing samples, and all

files pertaining to participation in this study will be stored in a locked cabinet for ten years and

destroyed afterwards if no longer needed. All computer files will be kept on a secure server. I

will also maintain a copy of the data on a password-protected computer. All actual names will be

known only to the principal researcher (me). A pseudonym will be assigned to all names to keep

all the information fully confidential.

Your school's participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk

to the participating teacher or students beyond that of everyday life. The likely benefit of being

in this research study may lead to a better understanding of how the implementation of new

literacies can improve adolescent males' reading motivation.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific

bodies, your school's identity will in no way be revealed. Upon request, I will provide you with

summary results of this study.

In the event you have questions or require additional information you may contact the researcher:

Jana McNally, 361 South Street, Elmhurst, IL; 630-248-5942; jwilkening@my.nl.edu.

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University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60603; 312-261-3527,

shanti.knauth@nl.edu.

You will be tendered a copy of your signed consent form. Please acknowledge with your

signature below your consent to participate in this study.

_____

Participant Name (Print)

_____   _____

Participant Signature   Date

_____

Researcher (Print)

_____   _____

Researcher Signature   Date

Informed Consent by Parent/Guardian

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This consent form outlines the purposes of the study *Creating a Lifeline Back to Books for Adolescent Boys through Multimedia-Enhanced Read Alouds* and provides a description of your child's involvement and rights as a participant. The second copy of this consent form is for you to keep.

I understand that a research project will be conducted by Jana McNally, doctoral candidate at National Louis University, located in Wheeling, Illinois. The study will take place in my child's classroom with_____ (name of child) from April, 2015 through June, 2015.

I understand that the primary purpose of this study is to determine the impact of the implementation of new literacies, specifically, multimedia-enhanced texts, as a way to improve reading motivation. During the six week study, rather than the traditional read-aloud, the teacher will be using a multimedia enhanced text as the classroom read-aloud. Following the read-aloud, students may participate in either a discussion or complete a short writing sample.

I understand that the lessons, writing samples and discussions that are part of this study are a part of my child's instruction. I understand that the following may also happen during this study:

1. My child will complete a survey on reading motivation at the start and the end of the study.

2. My child may be interviewed by Jana McNally about his or her experience with reading and the reading activities being used in the class. The interview will last for approximately 10 minutes.

3. My child may be in reading discussion groups that are taped by the researcher.

4. My child's writing samples may be analyzed by the researcher.

I understand that my consent is for the purpose of the data collection activities listed above, and that my child's participation in the activities is voluntary, and may be discontinued at any time. I understand that only Jana McNally will have access to a secured file cabinet where all field notes and audio-tapes from classroom lessons in which my child participates, and copies of his/her work will be kept. I understand that my child's name will be removed from any written assignments prior to analysis by peers.

I understand that the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to professional groups of educators, but my child's identity will in no way be revealed. Results of the study will be provided to me, upon my request.

If I have any concerns or questions before, or during participation that I feel have not been addressed by the researcher, I may contact the researcher, Jana McNally; 630-248-5942; jwilkening@my.nl.edu; or the chair of NLU's Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth National Louis University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60603; 312-261-3527, shanti.knauth@nl.edu.

I grant permission for my child's work to be used as part of this study.

Parent's Signature:

_____Date:_____

Researcher's Signature:

_____Date:_____

Student Assent Letter

Dear Student,

This assent form outlines the purposes of the study *Creating a Lifeline Back to Books for*

Adolescent Boys through Multimedia-Enhanced Read Alouds and provides a description of your

involvement and rights as a participant. The second copy of this assent form is for you to keep.

I understand that a research project will be conducted by Jana McNally, doctoral candidate at

National Louis University, located in Wheeling, Illinois. The study will take place in your

classroom from April, 2015 through June, 2015.

I understand that the primary purpose of this research is to see whether using multimedia-

enhanced texts changes how you think about reading. During the study, the teacher will be using

a multimedia-enhanced text as the classroom read-aloud. Following the read-aloud, you may

participate in either a discussion or complete a short writing sample.

I understand that the lessons, writing samples and discussions that are part of this study are a part

of my instruction. I understand that the following may also happen during this study:

1. I will complete a survey on reading motivation at the start and the end of the study.

2. I may be interviewed by Jana McNally about my experience with reading and the

    reading activities being used in the class. The interview will last for approximately 10

    minutes.

3. I may be in reading discussion groups that are taped by the researcher.

4. My writing samples may be analyzed by the researcher.

I understand that my consent is for the purpose of the data collection activities listed above, and

that my participation in the activities is voluntary, and may be discontinued at any time.

I understand that only Jana McNally will have access to a secured file cabinet where all field

notes and audio-tapes from classroom lessons in which I participate, and copies of my work will

be kept. I understand that my name will be removed from any written assignments prior to

analysis by her peers.

I understand that the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to professional

groups of educators, but my identity will in no way be revealed. Results of the study will be

provided to me, upon my request.

If I have any concerns or questions before, or during participation that I feel have not been

addressed by the researcher, I may contact the researcher, Jana McNally; jwilkening@my.nl.edu;

or the chair of NLU's Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth National Louis

University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60603; 312-261-3527,

shanti.knauth@nl.edu.

I grant permission for my work to be used as part of this study.

Student's Signature:

_____Date:_____

Researcher's Signature:

_____Date:_____

Appendix H

Student Writing Prompts

"The Landlady" What do you think is going to happen to Billy? What clues lead you to think this? OR Draw a picture of how you think this story will end. Be sure to label your drawing and include a 1-2 sentence explanation of your images.		
STUDENT NAME/ DRAWING (if applicable)	WRITTEN RESPONSE	WORD COUNT
Luke-drawing of boy (no descript) and lady carrying a tray of tea with a pearl necklace and a dress.	Rushed Weaver. Your soul is mine. Lady.	7
Tim	The landlady is gonna kill him, eat his insides, the stuff him. In the newspaper it said a eaton schoolboy, she stuffs all her pets, and the guys are still with her.	32
William	I think she is going to kill Billy like the other two people because the other people were there for three years.	22
Mark-A smiling stick figure labeled Billy (old) is standing in a room next to a table	Billy living in the house. Billy (old). I love living here.	11

stating that he loves living there.		
Zack	He is killed and taxidermed or he stays forever.	9
Scott	I think Billy will not live so long. After what he did. People were at him cause he did something bad. So I think he will die soon. And because he was being weird and trying to scare people.	39

"Buried Treasure"		
If you were in Cody's position, would you have stolen the golden hook to provide for your family? Why or why not? OR Draw a picture that includes both the positive and negative outcome of stealing the golden hook to provide for his family.		
STUDENT NAME/ DRAWING (if applicable)	WRITTEN RESPONSE	WORD COUNT
Luke-drawing of a stick figure holding up a golden hook. Then a drawing of a stick figure labeled police running	Yay! Town legend should have sold it as it was. Yo check it I'm a thief. Police: come here! Sell gold ring. Duh.	23

after a stick figure labeled thief.		
Tim	No because he had a deal and he broke it. He should have thought of the ways this would work out. He took gold from a dead old helpless good mysterious man.	32
William	I think he should've minded his own business and should've had research on the person first because if he knew what happened he probably wouldn't of stole it.	28
Mark	I would have done it because I need to provide for my family and that may have been the only option or the other option would be to starve and die.	31
Zack	Considering its mid WWII and times were hard stealing it would be very tempting but a bad idea because the man said he wanted to be buried with the hook.	30
Scott	absent	

"Mr. Mason's Jars"		
What does Mr. Mason have in his jars? How do you know? What do you think he keeps them for? OR Draw a picture that shows what Mr. Mason has inside his jars, as well as an image that shows what you think he uses the jars for when he is alone is his classroom.		
STUDENT NAME/ DRAWING (if applicable)	WRITTEN RESPONSE	WORD COUNT
Luke-A jar labeled troy and 2 people with no distinguishing characteristics.	Troy	1
Tim-a drawing of a jar with a snake inside. A drawing of a stick figure sitting next to a table filled with jars. Each jar is talking to the stick figure (Mr. Mason)	Snake that sucks your soul out. Talks to them since he is a loner. Hey Mr. M. Hello. What up.	20
William	His special color for specific kids. He sucks up their personalities. He probably keeps them for collection.	17
Mark	He puts stuff in there that will take their personality away and then he puts their	87

	name on it to know who's personality it is. But whenever there is a kid who is loud or talkative he has a jar for them and it takes their personality away and then they don't talk a lot anymore. But he makes a bunch of these so that when he has a student that is talkative or loud he will use it on them and put their name on it.	
Zack	I believe there is something that take the ability to talk a lot. And I cant make a guess on what he does alone in his classroom.	27
Scott	I think Mr. Mason had magic in his jar, because it looks like magic and if it wasn't magic it be science, but it isn't because he would work with people but he doesn't. To me he sounds like a villain of magic. And what he has in his jar is a group of people that made fun of, or people he didn't like, or their important to him. And if he keeps collecting the people he would be	91

	stronger of magic. I think he is a wizard for his powers.	

"Night Rider"		
What clues led you to believe that Amy is a ghost? Why would she push Thomas into oncoming traffic? If you were in Amy's position, what would you do? Why? OR Draw a picture to show what you would have done if you were in Amy's position.		
STUDENT NAME/ DRAWING (if applicable)	WRITTEN RESPONSE	WORD COUNT
Luke	He heard sirens in the background. And when he was sitting for a while. She asked him will you stay with me? He said yes. I would have gotten him to die I would have Die and killed my mate too because I would be so lonely.	47
Tim	She didn't get hit in traffic. She wanted him to join her. I would've explained to him I was a ghost so he wouldn't freak out when he learned.	29
William	When she first went down the hill. She wanted revenge. Be strong and net let a	19

	girl push me.	
Mark	I think that she did that because she wanted to see what he would do if there was an oncoming truck or car in front of him or her but since she wanted to have him with her in heaven to be a ghost and to be a good rider.	50
Zack	She was emotionless. And she probably pushed him so he could be with her. Nothing.	15
Scott	Amy could be dead and her ghost know what she was going to do: go to the date. So she went there and go kill Thomas. Amy would push Thomas because its not her, it's a ghost figure of herself. And they don't do what a normal human being does. They do bad things. If I was Amy I wouldn't go to the date and do nothing. And I wouldn't kill anyone if I was a ghost.	77

	"The Beast" What do you think the newspaper headline was the next day? Do you think there really was a beast? Or is it an exaggerated story? Why? OR Draw a picture of the cover of the next day's newspaper. Be sure to include a headline as well as the front-page photo and caption.		
STUDENT NAME/ DRAWING (if applicable)	WRITTEN RESPONSE	WORD COUNT
Luke-newspaper titled Jelly Beans with the heading Steven Missing. A drawing of lots of round circles spilling out of a bag (spilled jelly beans).	Jelly Beans. Steven Missing. Looks like the only jellybean Steven is tasting is a mouth full of cat litter.	19
Tim-newspaper titled News. Headline is Kid dies walking his dog. A picture of a boy walking a dog in front of a tree with the sun out.	News: Kid dies walking his dog. No one knows why or how he died.	14
William	10 year old commits suicide in mysterious woods. I think the kid was hallucinating which then led to his death.	20

Mark	I think that there actually is a because what would he be running away from when he saw it but I think that he made it out alive and that he learned his lesson and he will now do his chores when he is asked to.	46
Zack	Child found by front gate of wild wood park. Exaggerate story because most of the other stories were.	18
Scott-picture of newspaper with headline and photo of stick figure laying on ground next to a tree.	Found Dead! 10 year old Steven found dead in the forests! I think there was a beast, it could be the gargoyle from the building and now he is trying to find a next victim. Because if it was a exaggeration, he would stop what he is doing.	48

"Atomic Ants"

Did Eddie deserve his fate? Why or why not?

OR

If the Atomic Ants did not exist, and Eddie continued his "bullying ways," imagine what

his future would be like. Draw a picture to show what Eddie's future would be like when

he is 30 years old.		
STUDENT NAME/ DRAWING (if applicable)	WRITTEN RESPONSE	WORD COUNT
Luke	He deserved what he got I mean all the stories have to do with someone doing there no supposed to do and dies.	23
Tim	Eddie did deserve his fate because he bullied kids and he got tortured because of his bullying ways.	18
William	Yes, because he did not believe in the ants. And he was always a mean clumsy bully.	17
Mark	I think that he would still be a bully because he won't have anyone to tell him that he is being mean to him he doesn't even care.	28
Zack	Kinda. Because he is a jerk. But only people who commit mass genocide or murder really deserve death.	18
Scott	I think Eddie does not deserve his death because the atomic ant was hungry so it was looking for food to eat. Even though Eddie was be a bully he	67

| | shouldn't do it. The Atomic Ant needed food so it got a random victim to eat him. And the Atomic Any wouldn't try to find its true victim because if it did he wouldn't find it already. | |

APPENDIX I

FOCAL STUDENTS' UNEDITED COMMENTS

Mark's Unedited Comments

Pre-MERA Interview	Mark: Um, I actually like the, reading the books better than the movies just because you get to actually picture it yourself and see how it is. Researcher: Mm hmm. Mark: I mean, sometimes I picture what's already in the movie and stuff but, um, I like to kinda figure it out myself. Researcher: Yeah. Mark: And just, like, look at pictures of what's happening and I picture it myself.
	I don't know, cuz it's, like, about, like, magic and, like, they can do things that, like, people in our world can't and they find out about, like, different spells and there's, like, a big castle and there's, like, these bad guys and people that, like, can control things.
	I mean, I think science maybe because, probably more science, yeah,

	because, like, I learn a lot of things about how things work and how things are invented and how we use, like, environmental stuff came to be one day.
	Ah, well I have Miss Drewes for science and she made kinda like a, a story out what we were kinda doing. We were, as we were doing the lungs, she kinda made, like, almost like a timeline how, like, goes from this to this to this to this to this.
"Heart of Stone" Discussion	He made her into stone, into one of like the other gargoyles– and, yeah, and then that, that she's the statue there now. And the other statue went to somewhere else.
	I said earlier, how I think that they're for like when, um, you like, like it takes them. And then it puts them into stone and then it keeps them for, to get everyone. And just to try to build a population of them. And make the cities bigger.
	I feel like there's something, too. Like how the eyes of the bunny turned red when it popped out, when the eyes of the bunny turned red and it like, you could kind of see it like turn red – and then come back.
	It was like all you kinda like heard was like a big growling noise.
Post-MERA Interview	Mason: I've read more books since like read more books like that too. I, I just started Star Wars like 2 days ago – because I like the 315 I wanted to do something like that
	I just liked how like it kinda like gave you a little suspense and then

	like the video like really added onto it just because I'm, I, I could be okay with just reading it because it gives you that story. And then it kinda like shows the like the ending of it and like you kinda have to see it and like in that and you have to visualize it then you can see it to kinda like read it out. You just have to like kinda figure it out by yourself. I like that.
	Yeah and I was always like excited for the next day.
	It's 'cause like it, it really, really, really added on to like how I loved the book because it, the reading was amazing and I liked just to listen to how like how it happening, you know, why things happen because and then it just kinda told you you gotta figure it out on your own after the video.
	Probably the audio and video because like it really adds onto it so it's like more fun.

Tim's Unedited Comments

Pre-MERA Interview	Like, the books that she makes us pick out.
	Um, he writes really interesting books, like, funny.
	Or, like, just to read for fun it's kind of important, it's, like, you don't, like, just be on your like, um, like, phones and stuff all day.

"The Landlady" Discussion	Uh, I think he killed Billy and then ate his insides and then stuffed him.
	Oh. Well my favorite part is like when he went, when he saw the thing saying red, bed and breakfast –and then like he rang the doorbell and then it opened right away. Like that's kinda weird — things. Cool.
	Um, I think I would change the part where like how do I say it, like the beginning part, because like, um, I think she, she should a let him talk instead of just like cutting him off right away. Because she didn't want him to know anything. But I still think he should a talked to her.
	Well I like it because like he started, um, talking about the two guys and like how he, how he remembers them. And then like she's talks and then just stops. And that's, yeah.
	Tim: Because it says, um, like he was talking about the newspaper and how it said a boy, an, an eaten school boy. Researcher: Yeah. Tim: So I'm thinking that she ate him.
"Reflecting	Um, because, like, reading out it makes you kind of suspicious when

Pool" Discussion	she stops, and seeing the video, like, gets it, like, the way you see it, it's, like, gets in your mind better. When you see it instead of just listening.
	Um, my favorite part was, like, when everything started getting way, like, going away. She got suspicious.
	Because you don't take something from, like, your boss to see if they're that old, and plus you say don't take anything without asking.
"The Lift" Discussion	Well, I think he made the mistake of like trying to go over by himself and like not meeting up with his friend. And like he thought it was his friend, but like not checking, just going along with it, when he said nothing.
	I said, he wasn't a stranger, and, 'cause like he dials his friend, and plus, I think he, the lesson's like, like, don't do something – I don't know how you say it but, it's like, how he wanted to go again –but, he also like wanted to leave too. But he just wanted to go again just because it was like fun. He shouldn't have went down.
"Heart of Stone" Discussion	I would change like the part where the door opened and she just like ran to the window. Why would you run to the window? I say like close the door and put something in front of it so if it tried to open it wouldn't 'cause it's kind of a small gargoyle.
	Well yeah, I somewhat liked the ending. But like what Luke said, her just sitting there and letting it just attack her and everything — that was

	kinda dumb. I would at least try to do something. Like it's, like if you know you can't like hurt it 'cause it's stone at least like try, try to throw it back out the window.
"Take Out" Discussion	Well I probably would change like when they open the door and like the just took it for free 'cause they know it's not, it's, it would be something bad. Not good since the person gave it to you for free.
	, I like the video ending because like in the book it like just says, um, like they all just fell asleep and Zach only saw the guy pulling the light and then in the mov-, video part like it showed him pulling the light and like, um, them like getting up and just being taken away.
	'Cause like it said, um, it's not a coincidence, that they were all born on the same day and that the three smartest persons on earth, people on earth, I think it's that like they're all, they're actually aliens that were sent down there and – then they like describe a change because their – mission was like successful.
	Well they probably were in it too. Because you like if they just came down there, if they were aliens and came down there like they can't just be with random families. They probably gave 'em, they chose some parents from the planet to go down with them.
Post-MERA Interview	
	Tim: Um, the part where like you listen to what you're gonna, about

	to read –
	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Tim: – and then you read it and then it cuts you off and puts a video in –
	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Tim: – like the part where you have to just read and then you visualize it later.
	Like, um, like it wasn't enough, I, I think the move, uh, the book or the video should be longer.
	Tim: Yes, 'cause it would like say what you're about to read –
	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Tim: – and like if it's what you like then you know you really want to read it –
	Researcher: Mm hmm.

	Tim: – other than like some books, you can only read the back page and they only give you that much information about it.
	Because like when you, when she's reading it to us and you're trying to visualize it, what it is and then seeing the video and then like what actually it is, you can kind of compare what you thought it is to what it really was.
	Hmm, not real, a little bit but not that much.
	Like me getting more interested in books and trying to find books I like to read.

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William's Unedited Comments

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Pre-MERA Interview	I just do it for like if I don't have anything else to do.
	Whatever's like popular or, – you know.
	Um, well I like to look at shoes and, uh, what else do I like to do? I like to read about like different articles about like sports and stuff.
"The Landlady" Discussion	I think, uh, she poisoned him — with the tea.
	Because it was like, the read is like kind of shocked when like they have to like figure it out and stuff.
"Reflecting	Uh, I bet she like, she like offers jobs like for young people who needs

Pool" Discussion	them and I don't know collects people who come into the store.
	Yeah, but like I think all the girls 'cause I don't think guys would actually want anything.
"Heart of Stone" Discussion	I thought she shoulda done something. Like that, it would've been like better maybe if it was like a boy and then like, I dunno, you probably coulda kicked his stone or something, broke it –
	Yeah, but she's probably scared.
	Uh, I think she just stays away, but she's scarred for her life. And she knows that it's gonna come back for her, like later. And her parents aren't gonna believe her.
"Take Out" Discussion	Well, I think they were on a different planet, and then, like, 'cause, like, a whole different world, so like, maybe, like, they were, like, in this planet and then they got taken back to earth to live the rest of their lives.
	Unless that maybe their parents were, like, bad and then the guy wants to go retrieve them to bring them back to earth.
Post-MERA Interview	Uh, it was cool. Like there was a video after each story and each story had a good story.
	Um, they were kind of, some were funny, some were scary.
	William: Uh, just 'cause it actually had a good story –

	Researcher: Yeah.
	William: – and most books when I read them, I think they're kind of boring –
	Researcher: Uh huh.
	William: – so it has to be like something to drag my attention.

Zack's Unedited Comments

Pre-MERA Interview	Because it was a true story, and, um, and I, I'm, I do like the whole true story thing.
	Zack: I mean it's kinda the same thing but, ya know, you're being told fr, by other people. Researcher: Right…that's really interesting. Um, and why is that kind of reading important to you? Zack: Um, because it, it gives you outside information that you can bring into other conversations really.
	Zack: So it kinda made reading real fun.

	Researcher: Yeah.
	Zack: Because, yeah, I had more time to do it.
	Researcher: Yeah.
	Zack: Not much else to worry about.
"The Landlady" Discussion	I was very confused by the entire book really.
	You gotta build a story nice and slow. You can't just go, go right to the climax immediately. It's kind of worthless.
	Um, a lot of people – a lot of people taxidermy because, um, they, they want to feel like that their, that their pet is still there. That's it.
"The Lift" Discussion	I don't know if anyone else noticed this, but in the video ending, um, like, one o' the shots, like, you could see three people. It was um, uh, the two people who, who were going to go onto the lift, and then there was someone in the background – So I don't — know if that was, um, uh, one o' the guy's friends, like, — you know, like, , because some, some said, someone said something about meeting up at the lodge.
	Stick with your friends.

"Heart of	Zack: – um, uh, something else with the, uh, video ending. What, uh, what skyscraper has like doors that you'd find on a, on a regular home?
Stone"	
Discussion	Researcher: Mm. Good point.
	Zack: Like I, I get it, it's just a video ending, but if you're, if you're gonna make it a, like in a skyscraper, you gotta play the part.
	Zack: – with, with the sound that the thing was making, it didn't really make sense that, uh, that no one else in the apartment could hear.
	Mark: True, it was like –(sound effect). It's like Really loud.
	Zack: You must be the heaviest sleepers in the world. I mean, that, that's ridiculous. I'm a heavy sleeper and I would've woke up for that.
	Mark: All, all you hear is (sound effect)
	Researcher: Go ahead, Mark.
	Mark: It was like all you kinda like heard was like a big growling noise. And I feel like –

	Zack: And I don't think apartments have heavy walls.
"Take Out" Discussion	Um, in the video it didn't look enough, it didn't look '70s enough. It, it was too, like, almost '90s. Need, need more '70s, 'cause the story took place in '78, so.
	It wasn't, it wasn't realistic enough. It wasn't realistic enough. If, if you have three boys, they're just gonna leave the pizza box open.
	The thing is though… if these children have parents and these parents clearly know that thats their child, where does this whole alien thing fit in?
Post-MERA Interview	Zack: Um, no I'm more of an auditory learner. Researcher: Okay. Zack: I, I don't like to read and learn. Researcher: Yeah. Zack: 'Cause I, I like to listen and watch.
	Zack: Um, well we just did with, uh, 315. That was kinda cool. Researcher: Ok. Why did you like that?

	Zack: Because, you know, it wasn't just purely reading. Like there was also something to, like to do.
	Um, I, I liked it because it wasn't purely reading but like I, like I could, I felt like I was kind of in the story –
	Um, they were just kind of interesting to me because, you know, like some, some of them didn't really relate to the story in my op, in my opinion and some of 'em really worked so.
	Zack: I, I'd rather read a, um, a 315-style book. Researcher: How come? Zack: It's because obviously I'm an auditory learner so I, I like the fact that that's there

Luke's Unedited Comments

Pre-MERA Interview	And, and so, like, it, it just, like, amazes me, like, how, like, how good, like, of a, of a book it was. So and, and then I asked my teacher, um, if, uh, if there was, like, a second one. And so she said, like, that there was, like, a whole series of 'em. So, so now I'm currently reading the, the second book.

	Luke: You hafta, like, keep on, like, reading and reading because, like, each of 'em are, like, are, like, they're, like, really small. Researcher: Uh huh. Luke: And so, like, it – every issue, like, leaves you, like, on, like, a cliffhanger.
	Yeah. We would, like, always sit, like, on, like, a, on, like, a blue carpet, like, all of us then, then, then she would, like read it.
"The Landlady" Discussion	Maybe they got like, well, uh, she ate him and so, um, maybe like their spirits are like are still like in their like that, that fourth floor –and like purgatory pretty much.
	The like the build up to like the climax Um, it was very low slow and boring in my opinion.
	Um, the ending kind of left me on a cliffhanger.
	Well like, um, the ending bit was pretty good. Like, um, like it doesn't, I normally don't think about like a lotta books, um, the ending but I liked that and like I usually think like that it has like a sequel, um, if it does that –but, um, like other books that do that are, like they get you like thinking.
"Reflecting	Well, like, I, I, I like the video but, um, but it, but it, but it wasn't, like,

Pool" Discussion	as ominous as, like, the first video – that we saw.
"The Lift" Discussion	Um, yeah, but, but they, but they should've like added more to the video, and it, and it should have been like, not like a 2-minute video of, but like a 5-minute video. Just like the other ones. They were, they were like, they were longer while like, while this one was shorter and it, and it didn't really like have you, like, have you like hooked. Just like, like it didn't, it didn't give you time to like, to think about like what might happen.
"Take Out" Discussion	I have like the best like idea ever. Okay. So, so maybe the mother and father were, were sterile and, and couldn't have kids so the aliens they gave, they gave each of those parents, um, a child and they said that they would be back for 'em in a couple of years. So when they left they knew that they were going to be abducted. So that's why they had bought him the, the Atari 2600 because he was being good, because it was like his last day of earth.
"The Lift" Discussion	I'll jumped off just like this, the ski lift thing.
	if I were Dillon...I would've just like snowboard with 'em the whole time instead of losing 'em."
"Heart of Stone"	Well I would change as soon as that door opened I would've asked who it was. And, and as soon as I heard that growling, um, I would, I

Discussion	probably would've like went out there, with my flashlight. Now, now like I'm not trying to be those horror movie like, um, people jump, just like that girl because she hid like under the covers which was, um one of the dumbest things ever but, but, you know, like, like it would go, uh, go, go like away. But, um, but the thing that I would change was, um, when she looked outside the, the ledge seemed like so, so like, so, so, so close to her that she could probably like make a wish that, that she could've, made the jump like, like, to like the ledge then, then just start running.
	Uh, huh, uh, uh, yeah, but, um, uh, she, um, you know, uh, if, if it was made of stone, uh, it would like, it honestly, like I don't, I don't know like how you would fight it there. But, um, but I, if I were, if like I were her, huh, I would, um, the window thing is just too, too, um, too deathy. So I, I just would've called out like mom, dad. But no, she doesn't do that. She just chills there for like a second. But like same here, like, like I would've been like who is it, uh, and, and if I heard a growling I was like all right, stop playin', um, sister. And, but, but then if I, uh, heard it again like I would've, I would've like called out mom and dad and, and then, you know. If that didn't work I, I would just run out the, no, I wouldn't run out the window. I would, I would, I would grab the nearest blunt object then just start hittin' it with that.

Post-MERA Interview	Luke: Like, it's like 315, like, when you see, like, just like a video, like, of it – Researcher: Mm hmm. Luke: – it gets you really, like, intrigued to read it at night.
	Well, it like, it was just like a fun time waster and, and I, and, and it really like, and it really like, the, the, like, day wait made, made me like super excited to go to, to go to seventh period.
	Luke: Like, just like the videos – Researcher: Mm hmm. Luke: – they, like, they're, they were all like intriguing and stuff, but, but like, let's say like you're bored and, and stuff, um, just like you're, you're on like an airplane and you're like bored, you can watch those videos, then read the book, then watch the ending.
	Luke: Um, the video, like, the, the videos, they were, like, they were,

	like, they were well directed.
	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Luke: And they were just well put together.
	Luke: Well, like, in your mind, like, you just kind have, like, oh, well, well, well, that's kind of creepy, but, but –
	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Luke: – then like other than that, it's, it's just kind of like, like, it's, especially like the gargoyle one, that just kind of like, that just kind of like, like it, it, it just makes you like look at things just like a different way.
	Luke: Well, it, they were, um, they were really, like, like, the book just left you up in mystery –
	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Luke: – so, so if that happened, you would have to watch the video –

	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Luke: – and the video, the video is just, like, a good, a good, like, way to end, to end just, like, any story.
	Luke: But if you didn't, but, but if you just had the book and you, and you didn't, like, read, read the, no, watch the videos, then still, still you would, you would kinda, kinda get, like, in, uh, like an inference to what –
	Researcher: Mm hmm.
	Luke: – to what, to what, like, happened.

Scott's Unedited Comments

Pre-MERA Interview	– when we get an assignment, when we have to get assigned a reading book to read I would get one and then, and then I would read it every single time.
"The Landlady" Discussion	Maybe, um, Billy did some bad stuff and then she wanted to kill him.

	It's probably the same as William but, um, like killing someone, uh, like it's shocking.
"Reflecting Pool" Discussion	it'll be almost the same as Zack but like the way she got disappeared –it was like we don't know where she is now.
	Maybe, uh, the way she is, way she is now we don't know which is a mystery.
"The Lift" Discussion	Um, it's the same as Mark's, and I will agree that, that, um, that he's just somewhere waiting for someone, and then suddenly su, some action just happened.
	Let that man — survive. Let the man live.
	Um, don't get lost, and, uh, oh, and –don't do — stuff again what you just did.
"Heart of Stone" Discussion	Um, I like the way how the gargoyle is alive and it came to, and it killed her.
"Take Out" Discussion	They were taken somewhere with the aliens, but I don't know where exactly.
	I think I know why they might being taken because, like, in, in science, like the scientists, they found new planets, and they could be some life sources in there because of the water and temperature and –
	Uh, I would agree with Zack, and, uh, I don't know what to change in

	it.
	Next time just order Chinese.
	Scott: I think, I think the aliens' favorite color is purple. Researcher: How come? Scott: Because, like, they use a lot of purple, like the purple pizza box – the purple flashlight, the purple car.
Post-MERA Interview	Because like it's quiet and get to have silent read all the time.
	Well, um, mostly like about what happens with myst, a lot of mysteries, and what I dislike is, I don't know, none.
	Yeah, 'cause it emods, it explains more what happens instead of the book.