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The Effects of Traditional and Instructional Models of Sustained Silent Reading on the Reading Achievement and Motivation of Third and Fourth Grade Students

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THE EFFECTS OF TRADITIONAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS OF
SUSTAINED SILENT READING ON THE READING ACHEIVMENT AND
MOTIVATION OF THIRD AND FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS

A Dissertation
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In Partial Fulfillment
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by
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ABSTRACT

Despite a lack of empirical support for the effectiveness of sustained silent reading (SSR) in the literature, the practice of providing time for students to read materials of their own choosing during the school day is still offered in many classrooms today (Block & Mangieri, 2002; Nagy, Campenni, Shaw & Shaw, 2000; Pressley, Rankin & Yokoi, 1996). While many of the previous studies investigated a traditional version of SSR, where the teacher served as a model by reading silently during the period, this research also explores the effects an instructional version of SSR, known as *Instructional Sustained Silent Reading* with five classrooms of third and fourth grade students. The essential elements of ISSR include teacher and student booksharing and weekly student-teacher conferences that focus on student interests and needs. A concurrent nested mixed methods research design was used to measure effects on reading achievement and reading motivation, as well as to explore the experiences of students and teachers as they were involved in both the traditional SSR and ISSR models of independent reading. The results indicate that students from both groups valued the opportunity to read for their own purposes during the school day and appreciated the choice and variety of books offered. Students involved in the ISSR model, particularly those who were low achieving or demonstrated low motivation for reading, benefited from the individualized support of the teacher during the weekly conferences and booksharing opportunities. For some of these students, a change was evidenced in their goal orientations, with a newfound perception of reading as a personally engaging activity (a mastery goal orientation) rather than as a teacher-controlled activity (performance orientation).

DEDICATION

I have been profoundly enriched by those I have known, worked for, married, birthed, and befriended. I would like thank them here.

To my advisor, Linda Gambrell: With very little time of your own to spare, you have provided me a unique entrée to the professorate through your encouragement, firmness, professionalism, and unbeatable opportunities.

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And to my best friends Pegs, Moe, and Liz: Thanks for carting me around to the office, sharing coffee and laughter with me, and for always believing that I would eventually get 'er done.

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INTRODUCTION

In his first President's Message to the International Reading Association published in the June, 2006 edition of *Reading Today*, Timothy Shanahan raised the hackles of more than one literacy professional when he observed,

> I've never said it doesn't matter if kids read. While being "misquoted" is an easy out, I don't want to get off the hook that easily, as I've said enough things like that. For instance, I've said research doesn't show that encouraging reading improves reading and that sustained silent reading (SSR) is probably not such a good idea. (2006a, p. 12).

Independent silent reading, programmatically referred to as *sustained silent reading* (SSR), has been a staple of elementary and secondary classrooms for the past three decades. Representing variations on a major theme and appearing under an assortment of names, such as Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR), Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), free reading, independent reading, and self-selected reading, the practice of providing time for students to read materials of their own choosing during the school day is still offered in many classrooms today (Block & Mangieri, 2002; Nagy, Campenni, Shaw & Shaw, 2000; Pressley, Rankin & Yokoi, 1996).

In his president's message, Shanahan refers to an early version of SSR that he used as a young teacher, where the classroom was filled with books and students were free to choose what they read for a daily period of silent reading. In this original version

of SSR, the teacher served as a model by reading silently during the period and students were not held accountable for what they read. However, finding no support for this version of SSR in the literature, Shanahan concluded that SSR "...is probably not a good idea" (2006a). As a member of the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000), Shanahan and his colleagues found a glaring lack of rigorous research that offered statistical evidence that SSR was effective in raising reading achievement scores. In studies that were selected for review by the panel, the SSR group students were most often found to reveal no gains in reading achievement when compared to controls. Shanahan's argument that SSR is an untenable practice rests on his belief that a program that includes no instruction by the teacher, when shown to be no more effective than "normal instruction", diverts the teacher's attention from the responsibility of teaching. As he states in his 2006 message to the readership of *Reading Today,* "…we must jealously safeguard instructional time….and follow the research carefully" (2006a).

Responses to Shanahan's commentary, presented as letters to the editor in the August/September edition of *Reading Today*, begged disagreement with Shanahan's general lack of support for SSR, questioning both the body of evidence used to justify the conclusion (Krashen, 2006) and the model of SSR that was implemented in the studies reviewed by the Panel (Hebert, 2006; Shaw, 2006). In his response to these letters, Shanahan acknowledges the long-standing disagreement regarding the nature of the research that he and Krashen deem worthy of consideration and calls for evidence in support of the 'improved' models of SSR that Shaw and Hebert allude to in their letters (Shanahan, 2006b). Shaw highlights ways in which SSR has evolved over the past few

decades to include a focus on reinforcing the skills and strategies that are taught in reading instruction, as well as research on reading motivation, which reveal that "…students engage with reading when it is meaningful for them, they expect to be successful, and they are taught essential skills and strategies for achieving success" (p. 16). Unfortunately, as Shanahan notes in his response, this model of SSR has not, as yet, been tested for effectiveness in classrooms.

Shanahan's lack of support for SSR, as based on a review of the literature involving SSR since it's emergence as a practice in 1970, is certainly justified. Empirical studies that utilized what can be referred to as 'traditional' SSR, where teacher involvement during the silent reading period is restricted to their own independent reading, have evidenced little effect on reading achievement (Collins, 1980; Evans & Towner, 1975; Oliver, 1973) or reading attitudes (Langford & Allen, 1983), especially for low ability readers (Sadoski, 1980). Although research indicates that readers respond well to independent reading as a means of practicing comprehension strategies taught (Block, 1993) and when followed by discussion (Manning & Manning, 1984), there is no convincing empirical evidence to support iterations of SSR that integrate these elements into the SSR model. The current exchange brought on by Shanahan's presidential message highlights the need for research on an integrated model of SSR as suggested by Shaw. In fact, Shanahan himself states:

"…if SSR were handled differently – in a way more respectful of theories

of motivation and learning – it would likely work better. I think he [Shaw]

is probably right, but I would want to see the research before I recommend such procedures widely" (2006b, p. 16).

Significance to the Field of Reading

There have been numerous articles in the past thirty-five years that detail the programmatic use of SSR in classrooms. Some highlight the promise of SSR in promoting an appreciation of reading for pleasure (Duffy, 1967), or the potential of practice in reading for sustained periods of time to improve reading ability (Mork, 1972; Oliver, 1970). Gambrell (1978, 1996) emphasizes the motivational aspects of SSR, and introduces an idea that is seconded by other researchers: SSR would be more effective if tied to instruction. Early on, researchers began to theorize that SSR, when provided with increased teacher support to students in integrating the instruction provided during whole class and group instruction, or when followed by discussion or other avenues of literature response, held greater promise of increasing reading ability and reading motivation (Block, 1993; Bryan, Fawson & Reutzell, 2003; Levine, 1984; Manning & Manning, 1984). However, the empirical evidence required to support these propositions is yet lacking in the research literature. Research has reported on the effects of the more traditional model of SSR, in which the teacher provides little in the way of feedback or guidance. This disconnect between skills that are taught during reading instruction and the utilization of these skills in sustained reading practice using whole texts stands at the crux of the debate on SSR today.

Theories of literacy acquisition are presented as either bottom-up, skills based models (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974), or top-down, psycholinguistic versions (Goodman,

1969).   Literacy professionals today recognize that reading practice is important to gaining a proficiency that approaches automaticity with regard to word recognition skills and reading fluency. Once a suitable level of fluency is achieved, attentional resources and working memory are freed to focus on comprehension of passages (Samuels, 1994). As the strategies that facilitate comprehension of texts are practiced to the point of becoming automatic, the reader is able to monitor and repair breaks in comprehension that result from encountering material that is difficult, or when dealing with distractions (Samuels, Ediger, Willicutt, & Palumbo, 2005).

Viewing comprehension as the "essence of reading acquisition" (Durkin, 1993), literacy educators in the field of literacy recognize the importance of making meaning from print, and acknowledge the importance of reading whole texts of sufficient length that cuing systems to buttress comprehension can be developed and practiced (Allington, 1975, 1977; Goodman, 1994). Realizing that comprehension is often an effortful task for the literacy learner, researchers sought to discover the elements of reading motivation that would serve both as impetus to begin and momentum to stay the course for the effort required. With this goal in mind, research initiatives, such as the National Reading Research Center, advanced the *engagement perspective* of reading motivation as a guide to investigating elements of reading instruction that would develop "motivated and strategic readers who use literacy for pleasure and learning" (Baumann & Duffy, 1997, p. 5).

Drawing on the body of research that led up to the five year research initiative, the engagement perspective assumes that desire to read, strategies to improve reading

ability, knowledge, and social interactions are key components to cultivating "highly engaged, self-determining readers who are architects of their own learning" (Alvermann & Guthrie, 1993). Although these elements of engaged reading have also been suggested as elements that would enhance the traditional model of SSR, evidence that an integrated model would be effective in reading success and reading engagement in the classroom remains lacking. Therefore, grounded in theories of literacy acquisition and motivation, and spurred by the present call to provide clear evidence for SSR as a classroom practice, this investigation sought to advance the knowledge in the field of literacy by developing and testing a model of SSR that integrates teacher instruction in the practice of reading – *Instructional Sustained Silent Reading* (ISSR).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the effects of traditional and instructional models of SSR on the reading achievement and reading motivation of third and fourth grade students in a Southeastern U.S. elementary school. The study also sought to describe the experiences of students involved in instructional and traditional models of SSR using a phenomenological design and resulting in a description of themes and patterns that may influence our understanding of elements of reading motivation.

Quantitative analyses were used to determine differences between students randomly assigned to ISSR and traditional SSR groups on measures of word analysis, reading comprehension, analysis of text, and reading level.   Using a concurrent nested mixed methods design, qualitative assessments were used to provide informal appraisals of instructional reading ability, and an embedded phenomenological study was conducted

to describe the experiences of 16 focal students involved in ISSR and traditional SSR models and the effects of these models on elements of reading motivation. A mixed methods research paradigm was selected for this study as it provided empirical evidence that could be used to address a timely debate in the field of literacy concerning the efficacy of SSR as an instructional program, but also allowed for an embedded investigation into the experiences of students involved in the treatment models. An in-depth analysis of student perceptions of ties between instruction offered and changes in their behaviors, motivations and abilities would not only provide support for the construct of instrumentality in understanding reading motivation, but would also inform teachers as they seek to provide instruction that provides a clear path to student success in reading.

Research Questions

The specific research questions that guided the study were:

1. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading achievement of third and fourth grade students?

2. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading motivation of third and fourth grade students?

3. What do students report regarding their experiences of participation in the ISSR and SSR models of independent reading in relation to their perception of valence, instrumentality, and expectancies for reading, particularly students who are representative of the following typologies: *High Achievement/High Motivation; High Achievement/Low Motivation; Low Achievement/High Motivation,* and; *Low Achievement/Low Motivation*?

Assumptions

The following assumptions guided the design and implementation of this research:

1. Reading is a complex process. It requires an exquisite orchestration of perceptual, attentional, cognitive, and metacognitive resources to achieve and maintain.

2. Reading for comprehension requires both bottom-up and top-down processes. Readers successfully negotiate text when they are able to decode print quickly enough to be processed in meaningful pieces, and have the background knowledge, knowledge of contextual cues, and facility with cognitive strategies for word recognition and comprehension to interact with the text meaningfully.

3. Automaticity is important to reading at every level. Each process - from decoding and fluency through comprehension and metacognitive awareness - is enhanced through practice. (Samuels, Ediger, Willicutt, & Palumbo, 2005).

4. A reciprocal relationship exists between achievement and self-efficacy (Gottfried, 1985; Guay, Marsh & Boivin, 2003).

5. By the fourth grade, students have already made determinations regarding their self-efficacy as a reader. (Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meece, & Midgley, 1983).

Definition of Terms

Key terms used in this investigation are defined as follows:

Comprehension: Intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader. (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Comprehension Strategies: Deliberate, planned procedures employed by readers to derive meaning from text. Strategies may include preparing, organizing, elaborating, rehearsing, and monitoring of reading texts. (Gunning, 2005, p. 279).

Decoding: Making a connection between a word as presented in print and a word that exists in the reader's receptive vocabulary.

Decoding strategies: Deliberate, planned procedures for recognizing words in print when automatic processes fail.

Expectancy: The perceived probability that a behavior can be successfully accomplished, and that resources are available, such as time and materials.

Fix-up strategies: A cognitive process selected to repair word recognition or comprehension when automatic processes fail.

Instructional Sustained Silent Reading (ISSR): A proposed model of sustained silent reading that integrates teacher booksharing and conferencing, makes ties to reading instruction and strategy learning, promotes the use of instructional-level texts, and is followed with opportunities for discussion of what is read.

Instrumentality: The degree to which an individual perceives that an activity will lead to achievement of a goal; the degree to which an individual perceives a "clear path" to a goal.

Oral reading fluency: Reading aloud with adequate speed, accuracy, and proper expression. (NICHD, 2000).

Practice reading: Independent reading of connected text.

Miscues: A reader's observed response that differs from the printed text. (Goodman, 1969).

Reading motivation: The likelihood that a student will engage and persist in a reading activity.

Self-efficacy: A self-judgment of a domain-specific ability to perform a task successfully. (Bandura, 1977).

Struggling reader: A reader who does not read grade-level materials with fluency and comprehension. (Lapp & Flood, 2005, p.14).

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR): The practice of providing in-school class time for students to independently and silently read texts of their own choosing.

Traditional Sustained Silent Reading: A model of SSR that is based on the "McCracken rules" (McCracken, 1971). This version of SSR was most often used in research studies to date regarding the efficacy of SSR.

Valence: The perceived value of activities and goals.

Vocabulary: Knowledge of a word's meaning and its use.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Teachers throughout the ages were most likely pleased to see their students independently read books of their own choosing. Reading voluntarily and independently would seem to be a natural goal for teachers of all subjects, but especially rewarding for teachers of reading. It is interesting, therefore, to note that at the end of the 1960s, following a decade of an intense re-focusing of American public schools on increasing student achievement that teachers found it necessary to take a stand in favor of simply reading, uninterrupted by worksheets or instruction, and during the classroom reading period.

In the late 1950s, influence over American public school curriculum moved into the hands of the government and their experts after the launch of Sputnik and the developing Cold War threw the nation into a cold sweat of scientific and technological fear of unpreparedness. In short order, a curriculum revolution was in full swing, driving changes in everything from instructional materials to teaching methods, the physical school layout to teacher education. The curriculum became an increasingly prescribed commodity with teachers receiving instruction in the technical aspects of its delivery only. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the focus on standards, accountability, and high-stakes testing increased as the government took a greater interest in the school's ability to prepare students to compete successfully in a growing world economy. In the midst of these myriad changes, a desire to find ways to nurture within our students a love of

reading was being voiced; reading for enjoyment, to escape from the everydayness of life, and reading just because the topic is fascinating.

Duffy (1967) distinguished 'avid readers' from 'students who can read' when he summarized the beliefs of literacy educators who were concerned that instilling a reading habit in students was being thwarted by curricular and instructional influences of the day that focused on the "skill" of reading rather than the "will," or desire, to read. While Duffy acknowledged that skill development is necessary, he argued that it should not preclude the development of students' interest in and appreciation of reading and their willingness to engage in it. He recommended setting aside time for pleasure reading where pronunciation corrections and skill development were de-emphasized. According to Duffy, independent reading should be promoted as a respite from the usual work – reading as relaxation and escape. His recommendation was for a classroom environment that presented a high value of books though attractive displays and bulletin board reviews and where teachers model the value of reading by engaging in a good book during frequent free reading periods with their students.

It is from this genuine concern for student engagement and appreciation of reading that theorizing and research on methods of including the practice of reading in classroom instruction arose. SSR begins almost as an intuitive assertion – no more than a conventional wisdom – and finds both supporters and critics as it continues to be tweaked toward what promises to become a more research-based and defensible practice.

Following a discussion of the theoretical bases offered in support of sustained silent reading, this review will illuminate the journey of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)

as an instructional practice in classrooms over the past thirty-five years. Subsequent sections will present anecdotal reports of SSR implementations in classrooms, and an examination of the empirical research on the effectiveness of SSR will conclude the review of the pertinent literature and lead to indications for the present research investigation.

<div align="center">Theoretical Bases for SSR</div>

Theoretically, SSR finds support in both the bottom-up and top-down theories of literacy acquisition. Although the type of reading practice called for by Duffy in his 1967 article was clearly a reaction to 'bottom-up' theories of literacy practice that were prevalent at the time, Hunt's (1970) assertion that reading for sustained periods of time was a skill that required development was reflective of skills-based, or bottom-up theories.

Bottom-up Theories

The 'skills approach', as described by LaBerge and Samuels (1974), was based on a developing understanding of how information was processed and held that decoding text and comprehending text were separate mental processes. Developing readers must first learn letters, then letter/sound relationships, then words and sentences before meaning from text could be achieved. The theory holds that decoding skills must be learned to the point of automaticity in order to free the working memory to process the next chunk of input.

The theory of automaticity became important to our developing understanding of reading fluency, as readers cannot comprehend a sentence if the words are not read

quickly enough to be held in working memory for processing and encoding; in fact, Smith (1978) theorized that comprehension is likely to be difficult when reading fluency lags behind oral fluency rates. Samuels recommended that students who struggle with decoding skills spend time in repeated readings – reading the same text several times until the words become more familiar and can be decoded more automatically. The early model of automatic information processing in reading (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974) used the concept of automaticity to explain differences in decoding abilities of beginning and fluent readers. The model was extended by Samuels in 1994 to include comprehension and again in 2005 to include metacognition (Samuels, Ediger, Willicutt, & Palumbo, 2005).

Automaticity theory is rooted in the cognitive psychological assumptions of alertness and selectivity as pre-attentive tasks, and attention as a limited resource. A skill is deemed 'automatic' when it can be performed at a level of proficiency that allows for concomitant execution of another skill without decrease in accuracy or speed of the automatic skill. As it applies to reading, the first skill that must come automatically is word decoding. The ability to decode words assumes an alphabetic knowledge, awareness of letter-sound associations, phonological awareness skills such as blending and segmenting phonemes, phonetic awareness (graphophonemic knowledge), and sufficient receptive vocabulary to support word recognition. These are the tasks of emergent literacy acquisition, and until the ability to decode words quickly and correctly becomes automatic enough that reading fluency approaches oral language fluency, the reader will not be able to hold meaningful portions of sentences in working memory in

order for comprehension of meaning to occur. If word decoding is slow and labored, only small portions of sentences are held in the working memory, and the ability to analyze and compare words for meaning extraction cannot take place. Samuels theorized that frequent readings of passages would increase fluency by encouraging familiarity with word structures in context. As reading fluency increases, word recognition may be influenced by context, such as heteronyms and multiple meanings, as larger portions of sentences are held in the working memory.

Samuels extended this idea of holding larger portions of words in the working memory when he discussed the automaticity of the skill of comprehension in 1994. Once decoding skills become automatic, the reader's attention can be directed toward semantic processing of word, word groups, sentences and passages in a manner that allows for grouping, comparisons and interrelations to occur and enhance meaning making. While beginning readers are still switching attention between decoding and comprehension, fluent decoders are free to focus on comprehension alone. Fluent readers occasionally switch attention back to decoding if a word is unfamiliar, difficult to pronounce, is embedded in a difficult syntactic structure, or doesn't make sense.

In 2005, Samuels et al. extended the theory of automaticity once again to include metacognitive skills. When applied to reading, metacognitive awareness occurs when readers realize that they do not comprehend a portion of the connected text and take the action of slowing down to re-read and utilize various "fix-up" strategies to repair comprehension. The reader may defer attention to the level of decoding to check word recognition before continuing. Strategies for figuring out the pronunciation and meaning

of unfamiliar words and for comprehending difficult passages or text structures are best learned through explicit instruction and practice in using the skills in extended texts (Block, 1993; Bauman & Ivey, 1997).   When proficient in using decoding and comprehension strategies, the reader is able to slow down, "fix-up", and get back to speed once meaning is achieved or a prediction or inference is made.

Samuels et al. (2005) further acknowledge the importance of motivation to the reading process, indicating that when reading is challenging, a will to comprehend what is written must be sufficient enough to engage in the effort of employing fix-up strategies. This willingness to slow down and repair comprehension is suggested by the authors to be related to attitudes and beliefs about reading ability, interest in the topic or story, the reader's ability to monitor and regulate attention and distractions, and insight or ability to see new meanings.

SSR, when used to support specific skill instruction, allows students to practice decoding words as a part of whole texts, and with practice, students can hopefully learn to decode more quickly, freeing attentional resources for comprehension and metacognitive awareness. As the practice of independent silent reading emerged, Duffy (1967), Oliver (1970), and Hunt (1970) expressed a concern that students were not being given opportunities to sustain the length of their reading, and that they were spending much of their read aloud time worrying over the mistakes they might make. When reading silently and for longer periods of time with texts that are self-chosen, and therefore of interest, these scholars proposed that students could work to decode and comprehend without anyone evaluating their performance. Choosing books of interest

would improve the likelihood that the student would persist in reading when it was difficult because they were intrinsically motivated to understand what was read. Students could choose to re-read text that interests them many times, which would only help to increase their automaticity of decoding text. As readers become fluent, they can develop automaticity for comprehension and later, metacognitive strategies for "fixing up", or repairing, comprehension of passages that are not readily understood. At each of these levels of literacy acquisition, SSR provides practice in skill development and strategy use.

Top-Down Theories

A second theory of literacy development was proposed by Goodman (1969) and is referred to as a *psycholinguistic approach*. Goodman's experience and research led him to believe that children learn to read by developing cueing systems that help them to make meaning from text. Reading, in his view, is primarily a meaning making process. The cues come from the pictures provided with text, the context of the sentence, or other features of text, such as when capitalization of letters signals the name of a character. Goodman recommended that teachers read to children and help them to make predictions about the story or draw inferences from the pictures, teaching and orchestrating the cueing systems as children read on their own. Teachers can be made aware of how their students are managing these cueing systems by listening to them read aloud and noting the 'miscues' that they make.

Goodman proposed that when students read aloud, their observed response (the words they actually say) may differ from the expected response (the words as they are

written). These differences between observed responses and printed text, or miscues, provide valuable information regarding the status of the reader's development, and further support for the view that all decoding is a meaning-making venture. For example, a student who exhibits an observed response of "house" for the expected response of "horse" during an oral reading passage is making a fairly sophisticated guess by choosing a noun (syntactic similarity) and a word containing the same initial and final consonants and word length (phonological and structural similarity). Goodman's taxonomy of cues and miscues (1969, pp. 19 – 28), based on the analysis of children's oral reading across several studies cited in the article, serve to indicate that beyond a simple decoding of letters and words, readers consult prior knowledge of graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic elements of visual and oral language as they work to make meaning from print. Beginning and proficient reading is not just the linear process of making automatic a visual/perceptual connection, but occurs as the result of a cyclical interaction of prior knowledge of language structures and interaction with the graphic display. This interrelation of language and thought in the process of reading, he argues, necessitates a psycholinguistic perspective as opposed to a purely cognitive one.

According to Goodman (1969), miscues occur during silent reading as well. While the teacher cannot be informed of the student's reading development without a periodic oral reading sample where miscues can be observed and analyzed, top-down theorists promote the use of whole texts to provide both the context and familiarity with written language structures that provide cues to meaning when reading silently as well. As such, the psycholinguistic approach emphasizes the use of whole texts and privileges

meaning making over oral reading accuracy. When provided with time for extended reading of texts of their own choosing, students are free to practice their use of cuing systems to derive meaning from text. The early promoters of SSR allude to the importance of reading for meaning and pursuing ideas (Duffy, 1967; Hunt, 1970; Oliver, 1970).

Goodman extended his model in 1994 in a chapter entitled, *Reading, Writing, and Written Texts: A Transactional Sociopsycho-linguistic View* to incorporate elements of Rosenblatt's Transactional Theory (1938, 1978). Transactional theory states that meaning is created when the reader's background, experiences, culture, and state of mind interact with the text. What the student brings to the text (background knowledge, for example) plays a large part in what the student will be able to derive from the text. Using this theoretical framework in the classroom, teachers are encouraged to tap into the student's background knowledge of a topic or setting prior to reading and then to provide follow-up discussions in order to discover the new meanings that were attained.

Goodman's sociopsycho-linguistic view also integrates the sociocognitive viewpoint of theorists such as Vygotsky (1978, 1986), who posits that the meanings that children derive from text are further clarified and allowed to develop and evolve through meaningful discussions with others about a text. Based on the unique background each student brings to a text, one student may find meanings in the reading that another might not have considered, and this exchange of ideas enhances what all students derive from the text and enhances what is brought to the next reading experience. Students who participate in SSR and then are encouraged to share their ideas and thoughts with others

are likely to be motivated to read carefully enough to explain their ideas – to put meanings into language and support or explain what they've learned. The ensuing exchange of ideas and perceptions builds schema and knowledge in ways that could enhance future attempts at comprehending text.

Theories of Reading Motivation

Benefiting from the work of educational and cognitive psychologists in achievement motivation, research into the more specific area of reading motivation included a balanced view of cognitive, affective, and social elements. One area of study involved reading attitudes, where positive attitudes toward reading were found to correlate with an increased motivation for reading. The Mathewson model (1994) defines a central factor of attitude as being comprised of *evaluative beliefs* regarding an activity as well as *feelings* and *action readiness* to engage. The factor that mediates between attitude and actual engagement in an activity is *intention*. Intention can be influenced by various external factors and internal states, such as subjective norms, and states that would focus or detract attention from an activity. With regard to engagement in reading activities, these emotional states and external factors may then exert influence on the reader's willingness to continue reading. During and following the reading task, feelings that are stimulated by the act of reading and the reading process itself, as well as memory representations that are updated or reconstructed during the reading, influence perceptions of self-concept and satisfaction with the activity.

Similarly, the McKenna et al. model (McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth, 1995) posits that beliefs are causally related to attitudes and identifies three factors that influence a

change in attitude. These include: (a) beliefs regarding outcomes of reading and the perceived desirability of those outcomes, (b) beliefs regarding the expectations of others and the motivation to conform to those expectations, and (c) the outcomes of specific incidents of reading. (1995, p. 938). These causal factors are believed to proceed from belief to attitude, from attitude to intention (as in the Mathewson model), and from intention to behavior. Theoretically, according to this model, any factor that affects belief could be used to shape attitudes and eventually alter the resulting behavior. The authors postulate in their model that "… an individual's attitude toward reading will develop over time principally as the result of three factors: normative beliefs, beliefs about the outcomes of reading, and specific reading experiences. These factors are complex, they are subject to change, and they influence one another as well as influencing attitude" (1995, p. 939).

Another influential theory in the fields of educational psychology and literacy is the *expectancy-value* theory of motivation (Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meece, & Midgley, 1983). Expectancy-value theory poses that an individual's perception of potential success (*expectancy*) in performing a task, as well as the perceived *value* placed on accomplishing the task, are determinants of their willingness to engage in achievement behaviors. The theory posits four major components of an individual's perceived value of engaging in a task; *attainment value* (importance), *intrinsic value* (personally generated), *utility value* (usefulness), and *cost* (the value of the effort to be expended). These aspects are described as *subjective task values*, and refer to the individual's incentive or reason for engaging in the task. Perceptions of expectancy were

thought to be influenced by the individuals' sense of competence in completing a specific task successfully, based on Bandura's (1977) work on self-efficacy, which he describes as a self-judgment of a domain-specific ability to perform a task successfully. Expectancy is therefore thought to arise from the individual's task-specific self-concept.

What is not accounted for in any of these models is the influence that classroom instruction and school-based reading activities exerts on students' motivation to read. Perhaps the most concentrated and focused effort to understand how reading motivation develops in classrooms was the research conducted through the National Reading Research Center (NRRC), which received funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education in the five year period that spanned 1992 – 1997. It was during this time that an *engagement perspective* of reading motivation was used as a guide to investigation into reading instruction which would develop "motivated and strategic readers who use literacy for pleasure and learning" (Baumann & Duffy, 1997, p. 5).

Drawing on the body of research that led up to the five year research initiative, the engagement perspective assumes that desire to read, strategies to improve reading ability, knowledge, and social interactions are key components to cultivating "highly engaged, self-determining readers who are architects of their own learning" (Alvermann & Guthrie, 1993). Several studies were conducted to explore home, school, and community contexts of literacy motivation for preschool, elementary, and secondary grade students. A pertinent example from the NRRC research was conducted by Gambrell, Codling, and Palmer (1996), who explored the reading motivation of elementary students and found

that access to books, choice of reading materials, and discussion of readings were highly motivating factors in the school setting. At the middle and high school levels, NRRC researchers investigated reading for pleasure through programs designed to encourage students to read with their peers in "Read and Talk Clubs" (Alvermann, Young, & Green, 1997).

The importance of the NRRC initiative was that motivation to read was incorporated into a broader understanding of reading engagement as it affects social and instructional contexts for learning to read. Their research findings, especially with regard to instructional methods, highlight the interrelatedness of values, beliefs, and social factors for reading engagement.

Restructuring reading motivation. These research findings regarding the effects of instructional practices and contexts on reading attitudes and engagement (NRRC, 1997) indicate that an additional subconstruct is needed to describe the relationship between instruction and motivational factors such as values of reading and self-efficacy (Bryan, Fawson & Reutzell, 2003; Lee-Daniels & Murray, 2000; Turner & Paris, 1995). For this reason, a new approach to organizing our knowledge regarding motivation to read is desirable. It is therefore proposed that a theoretical model of motivation developed by Victor Vroom in 1964 for use in organizational psychology applications - an ancestor of expectancy-value theory - can serve as that organizing infrastructure. This infrastructure may serve to assist in framing the proposed instructional model of *ISSR*, as it provides a component for understanding the effect of the teacher's involvement in tying reading instruction to reading practice through teacher conferencing and support.

VIE theory. VIE theory (Vroom, 1964) states that the motivation to engage in a behavior is the product of the **V**alence (the perceived value of the activity and the goal), **I**nstrumentality (the degree to which the individual believes an activity will lead to the goal) and **E**xpectancy (the perceived probability that the behavior can be successfully accomplished). A formula for motivation can then be expressed as:

Motivation for a behavior = (Valence) x (Instrumentality) x (Expectancy)

A better known theory in the field of educational psychology, *expectancy-value theory* (Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meece, & Midgley, 1983) is similar to VIE in that it acknowledges the value of the goal and the expectancy for accomplishing the goal as determinants of motivation. However, as recent research on instruction and motivation indicates (Turner & Paris, 1995; Bryan, Fawson & Reutzell, 2003), teaching methods and practices can also affect both valence and expectancy. This suggests the need for a subconstruct to describe how goals are realized, or the perceived usefulness of instructional activities in achieving a goal. The addition of instrumentality to the formula provides educators a means to represent the effects of teacher instruction and classroom practices on student perceptions of why they want to read; in other words, instrumentality can illuminate the ways in which teachers provide a "clear path" to student goals for reading.

Motivation is here described as the allocation of time and effort to a behavior, in this case reading. As reading can be both an achievement goal and an activity, both the value of the goal and the activity are important to consider. Valuing reading as an achievement goal (" I want to become a better reader") may be a sub-goal of a student's

motivation to achieve a future goal, such as becoming a doctor or an author. Students may also value reading as an activity when they find intrinsic enjoyment in engaging in reading activities or receive extrinsic rewards for being a good reader. Educators will generally agree that if reading is not valued by the student, they will be less likely to engage in reading activities in the classroom.

Valuing the goal of reading *(valence)* can be expressed as interest or attitude and may stem from intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivators or subjective norms as presented in the McKenna model. It is important to recognize that reading can be valued as both a goal ("It's important to me that I learn to read better") and an activity ("I enjoy reading"). Intrinsic motivators may lead to valuing reading when the child's environment provides models and encouragement for reading as a pleasurable activity and for gaining information for meaningful and authentic purposes.

Factors that relate to *instrumentality* for reading involve the child's perception that the reading, writing, or language tasks in which they are engaged will lead them closer to their goal of learning to read, assuming that this goal is valued. The teacher can have great influence in this context by carefully designing instruction and classroom environments that are intended to increase the value of reading while providing skill development and strategic practices to enhance expectancy. As teachers become more explicit in connecting skill and strategy instruction to growth in reading, students begin to perceive that the learning tasks in which they engage lead them to greater success with reading and may begin to view reading as a more enjoyable, and perhaps valuable, activity. Educators can benefit from the current research available that describes

motivating aspects of literacy instruction, such as group discussion, which has social value as well as allowing students to develop deeper meanings of texts through social construction.

Expectancies for reading incorporate ability beliefs, self-efficacy, and self-concept. Expectancy does not only involve the student's perception that they can successfully accomplish a task, but also that they have the resources and time to do so. According to Bandura (1977), expectancy influences choice of activity and willingness to persist through the challenges. When students experience success in reading, they may be more likely to engage in tasks that present a greater challenge, especially if these tasks have meaning for them. This influence of beliefs on future attitudes for reading is further supported by the McKenna model.

As McKenna et al. (1995) suggest, research on reading motivation should focus on the aspects of instruction and classroom contexts that support or detract from reading attitudes and engagement. This proposed research seeks to understand the experience of students involved in two models of SSR – instructional SSR and traditional SSR. Through an analysis of these reported experiences, an improved understanding of the effects of independent reading opportunities on the developing reading motivation of students may be obtained.

A Literature Review of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)

History and Emergence of SSR

Although Duffy's (1967) article regarding the need for students to have independent reading time was published three years prior, Hunt (1970) is the individual

often credited with proposing SSR as an instructional practice. Hunt expressed concern for the frustrated reader who, in a curricular climate that advocated skill proficiency, never learned to enjoy reading. More important than assessing reading levels or the ability to read aloud with fewer errors, Hunt emphasized that the focus of reading should be to gain meaning and pleasure – an activity that requires more than a few minutes and implies reading more deeply than is required to find the correct word in a paragraph that completes a worksheet item. Hunt contends that even students who struggle with reading will readily become absorbed in a difficult book if the topic interests them.

In an attempt to reframe reading instruction to accentuate the positive, meaning making aspects of reading rather than the comparatively negative focus on error rates, Hunt introduced the idea of providing Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) periods as a part of the school day. Hunt was instrumental in positing the idea that reading for sustained periods of time was a fundamental reading *skill* – one that should be practiced and cultivated in the classroom. Skill development, he wrote (alluding here to oral reading proficiency), is not nearly as important as being able to sustain uninterrupted reading for an increasing period of time, leading the student to become a reader who "persists in the pursuit of ideas" (p. 148). Hunt suggested lowering oral reading standards for low achieving students in an effort to capitalize on students' creativity and inventiveness as they work to gain meaning and interest during silent reading. Hunt's assertion was that reading for sustained intervals was a skill that was at least, if not more, important than other skills the student was learning, and that deriving meaning from text takes longer than a few minutes. This aspect of reading for sustained time periods, or

increasing time on text, would be the focus of later comment and research, most notably by Allington (1975, 1977) who drew connections between the amount of time children spend in reading connected text and the development of higher reading skills, especially for struggling readers.

Concurrently, Oliver (1970) highlighted the practice of reading in his recommendations for reading instruction. His program was called HIP, or High Intensity Practice, and was intended to promote an enjoyment of reading as a right that is often denied students. According to Oliver, four essential elements of reading instruction include (a) appropriate skill instruction; (b) time and structured conditions to practice learned skills; (c) readily available and widely varied books, and; (d) opportunities to share what is read. His formula calls for 20% instruction and 80% practice. With this focus on time spent in *practicing* reading, Oliver signals that the control of reading should be returned to the student as they choose their texts and purposes for reading. It is Oliver's assertion that with HIP, students benefit from, and serve as, favorable behavioral models for their peers and are freed from being embarrassed by errors made when reading orally or ridiculed for not comprehending a text. Oliver's model extends Hunt's Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading by introducing Sustained Silent Writing periods (SSW) and Sustained Silent Activities (SSA). During SSW, students may write or copy anything they wish, and during SSA, students are free to engage in any activity that involves an active response to words. The combination of silent reading, writing and other free choice activities is reflected in more recent work by Morrow (1992) on

literature-based programming as well as the work of Cunningham, Cunningham and Allington (2002) and the Four Blocks reading instruction model.

Perhaps to legitimize and standardize the new practice of 'letting kids read', McCracken (1971) detailed rules for implementing what he refers to as the 'drill of silent reading' and urged that these rules be followed rigidly. These include:

1. Everyone reads silently during the prescribed time – no excuses;

2. The teacher is engrossed in adult fare during the SSR period;

3. Students may choose one book, magazine or newspaper from a variety of available materials and cannot change the text they are reading during the SSR period;

4. The SSR period is timed, beginning with a 5 – 10 minute interval and increasing as students are able;

5. There can be no reports or records kept of what or how much students read, nor any evaluation of comprehension; and

6. Larger group sizes are preferable, as when the group size is too small, readers feel the need to comment aloud to each other (p. 521).

According to McCracken, book discussions, writing, and record keeping should develop naturally as SSR becomes a habit, and these activities should be initiated by students.

The 'McCracken Rules' were borne of classroom experience and anecdotal evidence by McCracken and McCracken (1972, 1978). These rules were widely used as the standard of SSR practice in classrooms and in many research studies that followed. Although these rules were perhaps beneficial to teachers in structuring and implementing

SSR in their classrooms, they were unwittingly instrumental in buttressing a disconnect between instruction and practice in reading, denying the teacher a crucial role in drawing explicit associations between strategies taught for decoding and comprehension and providing feedback and support, especially for the struggling reader. When the teacher is reading during SSR and does not interact with students, nor provides opportunities for students to interact with each other about what they are reading, important opportunities to scaffold students in the skill of reading for sustained periods of time could well be lost (Manning & Manning, 1984).

In the decade following the emergence of USSR and HIP, advice to classroom teachers proposed little variation to the McCracken rules, as evidenced by Grubaugh (1986), whose recommendations to teachers included rules such as total class inclusion in reading, teacher modeling, the choice of a wide variety of materials, reading with no interruptions, and daily consistency. Anderson (2000) provides a version of teacher-tested rules which highlight logistical considerations such as finding a comfortable place to read in the classroom, taking care of health issues first, not sitting by friends or enemies, and the recommendation that students make no bodily noise or movement while reading. Throughout the years, however, the consensus in the reading practitioner literature was that SSR should occur daily for increasing time periods of up to 30 – 45 minutes, students should choose materials to read, and students could read without being accountable to the teacher for comprehension or amount read.

It is clear that in the first few decades of implementing SSR, the practical issues were still being negotiated in some classrooms, whereas other classrooms, schools and

districts were experimenting with the practice in more creative and perhaps effective programmatic ways. A sizeable portion of the literature referring to SSR in the past few decades is anecdotal and practitioner oriented, demonstrating the various ways in which reading practice came to be implemented in classrooms, schools, districts, and communities.

Practitioner Advice and Anecdotal Support

Much of what is written about SSR involves reports of programmatic implementation of SSR in various forms and using several names. This anecdotal evidence was collected and reported by practitioners and researchers in an era when research-based support for practices was not the requirement that is the hallmark of the decade surrounding the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001). However, SSR continues in classrooms today, but with much more variation in the manner in which it is implemented and incorporated into newer frameworks of literacy teaching and learning. Although there is evidence in the literature that forms of practice reading are still implemented in classrooms today (Block & Mangieri, 2002; Cantrell, 1999; Nagy, Campenni, Shaw, & Shaw, 2000; Pressley, Rankin & Yokoi, 1996), there is little description of what teachers are actually doing when they say they are offering SSR. While in the early years the McCracken rules reigned, some researchers would soon seek to ameliorate the disconnect engendered by rules that separated the practice of reading from classroom instruction and divorced teacher support for student reading.

Mork's (1972) account of programmatic success with SSR in elementary grades highlights the benefits for struggling readers and encouraging the use of library books.

Interested in developing "children who read rather than children who know how to read but don't" (p. 438), Mork emphasizes providing practice in finding and reading books that children want to read in their out-of-school lives while realizing that the home environment does not always provide the wealth of books and quiet, undistracted time for reading that be provided in the classroom using the school library. Mork also recommends that students and teachers share what they read, therefore drawing attention to meaning making as opposed to decoding print.

Gambrell (1978) describes SSR as "…the component of the reading program that gives students the opportunity to transfer and apply isolated skills in pleasurable, independent reading experience" (p. 328). Gambrell provides McCracken-like rules for SSR, but focuses on the motivational aspects of SSR and its importance as an essential part of a complete reading program. Recommendations for laying the groundwork for SSR by advertising it beforehand and tantalizing students with bits of stories read aloud are essential to gaining students' interest in reading. Gambrell advises that the classroom library be well stocked and book displays are attractive and periodically updated to focus on certain topics and genres of interest. Cozy places for reading should be provided and instruction in choosing books that can be read at an instructional level, such as by using the five-finger or sticky palm rule, are highlighted. The five-finger rule directs the student in choosing appropriately suited books by having them place five fingers on a page of the book. If the words that the fingers touch are difficult for the student to decode, then the book may be too hard for them to read independently. Gambrell recommends beginning the SSR time with a short teacher read aloud, where a book is 'blessed' by virtue of the

teacher's excitement about it, and ending the SSR period with short reports by a few students about what they've read that was interesting. These preludes and conclusions that bracket the independent reading time are designed to increase student motivation to participate in practice reading and to maximize their engagement with text.

In 1984, Levine adds to the recommendations for heightening the effectiveness of SSR by suggesting that teachers make time to conference with students to discuss their performance in reading and to assess how well they are obtaining meaning from what they've read. Levine notes that in the previous decade, students who could decode print well were permitted to spend more time in reading silently, whereas the poorer readers were given more drill sheets to complete. This is viewed in the article as being counterproductive, noting that poor readers require more practice in actual reading, not less. Conferencing regularly with struggling readers allows the teacher to individualize their instruction and provide support for skills that have yet to be perfected. Levine recommends SSR as a necessary component of the reading program in the earliest grades in order to promote the ability to read for sustained periods of time (more than is required to fill in a blank on a worksheet, for instance) and to encourage positive attitudes toward reading in all students regardless of ability. Gardner (2003) adds that teachers should touch base periodically with students following Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time to assess progress and inform skill instruction.

Pyle (1990) extends the focus on personal meaning making when reading by proposing a program known as Sustained Silent Reading and Writing (SSRW). After each SSR period, students are encouraged to write nonstop in a journal for five minutes

about what they've read, reflecting first on the gist of the reading and then evaluating their level of interest and engagement with it. The teacher then reads the journal entries and provides occasional comments, such as "The story is becoming interesting now!" while also gauging the students' comprehension of the text and their interest in that particular genre or topic. This information can then be used in helping to stock the classroom library with interesting and appropriately leveled materials.

Pilgreen (2000) provides a detailing of the essential elements of effective implementation of independent reading periods in her book entitled, *The SSR Handbook: How to Organize and Manage a Sustained Silent Reading Program. Eight Factors for SSR Success.* These factors include that plenty of appealing and appropriate materials be provided for students to read in a comfortable setting for increased periods of time. Also crucial to success are training and involvement of staff and parents in modeling, sharing, and discussing books with students. Although students are not formally assessed on what they've read, follow-up activities are recommended for students to share their reading experiences and to encourage further voluntary reading.

An outreaching version of programmatic SSR is presented in a teaching narrative by Cumming (1997). Here, the popular school-wide version of SSR known as DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), is expanded to support a culture where reading is valued by everyone in an Inuit community in Canada. SSR is included as part of a community emphasis on the value of reading. The program is described as a widely advertised whole-school program of reading where teachers, staff and community members model and share with students the joy of reading. Not wanting to allow the practice to become

rote and stagnant, Cumming describes several creative iterations of DEAR, including DEARAO (Drop Everything And Read All Over), wherein students are given site cards, and upon hearing a fire-drill-like signal, must drop everything and run to the site listed on the card to read for the designated period of time. Student interest in books is enhanced through frequent community-wide book festivals which include book-making activities that encourage the use of cultural elements, materials and themes. This program is an interesting and innovative approach to creating community wide interest in reading and local culture.

This focus on community is also evidenced in the work of Cooter, Mills-House, Marrin, Matthews, Campbell, and Baker (1999), who report similar success with a program called DEAR Dallas which begins annually with a city wide kick off to draw attention to independent reading and to involve community. The Dallas schools follow this with an SSR period of 20 minutes per day for the rest of the school year. Similarly, Gardner's (2003) classroom implementation of SSR recommends thirty minute SSR sessions per day, which includes time for the teacher to touch base with individual students and assesses their progress with an eye toward individualizing instruction. However, the true focus of Gardner's program is on developing a community of readers, and includes lesson plans for training family members, teachers, and classroom volunteers in participating in the independent reading program

As practice reading became incorporated into newer frameworks and models of instruction, Bruneau (1997) describes a downward extension of SSR into the early childhood whole language classroom by including silent reading as part of a reader's

workshop in her Literacy Pyramid model. Bruneau proposes that even at this early stage of literacy learning, students can benefit from spending short periods of time in reading books that are at an appropriately easy level to ensure success. Often, these are familiar stories that have been read aloud to students or used in shared reading activities.

The Four Blocks Literacy model (Cunningham, Cunningham, & Allington, 2002) includes a period of self-selected reading, which is similar to SSR, but alludes to a realization that silence is not always possible or preferable during reading activities. For instance, in the Four Blocks model, students may choose to share a book aloud together instead of reading silently and independently. As an essential element of this balanced reading program, independent reading periods enhance skill instruction by providing students with the opportunity to put into practice what they learn in the other blocks, such as guided reading and word study. The Four Blocks version of SSR begins with a short teacher read aloud and emphasizes the importance of providing a wide selection of books to suit different reading levels as well as topics and genres of interest to students. Weekly conferences with each child during SSR time is recommended in an effort to assist with book selection and encourage the use of strategies presented during instruction. Teachers are encouraged to take anecdotal records of these conferences and to keep an interest inventory – differing from the McCracken method in that teachers are not required to model reading during SSR.

Reporting on implementations at the middle and high school levels, Petre (1971) reviews a successful school-wide implementation of SSR in a secondary school where the faculty, staff and students read silently on a daily basis for 35 minutes. As evidence of the

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program's success, Petre notes that there was a 50% drop in discipline cases in that year in one of the middle schools and that a new student-teacher relationship developed around book exchanges, impromptu book discussions, encouragement and modeling of engaged reading behaviors. Ganz and Theofield (1974) also used SSR at the high school level and attributed the success of the program to the teachers' passion for the practice and their willingness to overcome administrative obstacles in implementing the program school-wide. Gardiner (2001) received letters from former high school students describing how SSR changed their reading habits, their literacy skills, and their attitudes toward reading.

As SSR has been continually adjusted and refitted to suit various instructional purposes throughout the past few decades, the original focus on encouraging a value of reading and as a means of practice has essentially remained. What has changed is the rules of execution. Whereas a strong recommendation for teachers to serve as models for sustained reading once predominated, a trend is evidenced to suggest that the teachers' time is better used in noting student progress and fine-tuning instruction to individual student needs (Cunningham, et al, 2002; Cooter et al., 1999). Maintaining student interest by providing a wide variety of topics and genres in the classroom and school libraries is as essential an element to the success of the program as is guiding the student in finding texts that can be read at a 'just right', or instructional level (Gambrell, 1978). Although SSR is still widely used as a part of reading instruction in many classrooms and is considered to be an essential part of prescribed programs such as the Four Blocks method, the empirical research on the effectiveness of SSR has been less than

convincing. More prevalent in the literature are anecdotal pieces written at the practitioner level.

The reported benefits of including SSR time in reading instruction, as reported in practitioner literature, include an opportunity for students to read more widely and to garner extended background knowledge (Grubaugh, 1986), and the development of more fluent reading (Allington, 1975). Allington (1977) suggests independent reading as a remedy for poor reading fluency, especially for struggling readers. Rather than viewing reading as the completion of a hierarchy of small skills, Allington asserts that it is a poor practice to punish slower readers by forcing them through more skill instruction. Rather, these are the students who would most benefit from practice by reading in context. The act of reading should not take a backseat to reading instruction, but should occur for increasing lengths of time without the interruption of "teaching." Allington suggests the focus of instruction should be on increasing students' exposure to text through teacher read alouds, choral reading, repeated readings, and SSR. These practices allow the student to use developing reading skills in context without embarrassment or focus on errors.

Allington's concerns with student time on text is again the topic of a summary of the extant research by Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson (1985), where it is reported that students actually read for only 7 or 8 minutes of each school day. The researchers assert that this amount of time on text is not sufficient for students to develop reading fluency or to develop vocabulary and comprehension skills. In writing to teacher practitioners about enhancing reading comprehension skills, Pardo (2004) recommends

that independent reading be provided in classrooms on a daily basis. Comprehension is reported to improve with practice in reading a variety of books that are tied to student's developing interests. Teachers can then build upon student exposure to topics by teaching strategies that encourage students to make connections to their lives, their world, and other texts they have read (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997).

Research Involving SSR

Throughout the past thirty years, anecdotal reports from practitioners lent support for SSR as a practice that could be successfully incorporated into reading instruction with subjective reports of benefit to students in developing independent reading skills and positive reading attitudes. The empirical evidence of the effects of SSR on reading, however, is not as prevalent. The lack of an irrefutable body of research linking SSR to positive reading development led the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) to decline support of independent reading. Considering the available research on independent silent reading, they state:

> With regard to the efficacy of having students engage in independent silent reading with minimal guidance or feedback, the Panel was unable to find a positive relationship between programs and instruction that encourage large amounts of independent reading and improvements in reading achievement, including fluency. In other words, even though encouraging students to read more is intuitively appealing, there is still not sufficient research evidence obtained from studies of high methodological quality to support the idea that such efforts reliably increase how much

students read or that such programs result in improved reading skills. Given the extensive use of these techniques, it is important that such research be conducted.

It should be made clear that these findings do not negate the positive influence that independent silent reading may have on reading fluency, nor do the findings negate the possibility that wide independent reading significantly influences vocabulary development and reading comprehension. (NICHD, 2000, pp.12-13).

The publication of this report was followed by a flurry of critical response in the academic literature, with a fair amount of the critique addressed directly to the issue of the contribution of independent reading (Cooper, 2005; Krashen, 2005; Shanahan, 2003; Yatvin, 2002). Although Allington (2005) provided perhaps the most balanced view of the National Reading Panel's concerns regarding the quality and nature of the methodologies used to study SSR, the constraints of the Panel in submitting their report, and the contestation that ensued following the report's release, it still remains that the body of empirical evidence of the effects of SSR on student reading is surprisingly meager for a practice that has been used in schools for the past three decades. The results of the experimental research, usually involving a highly structured form of SSR as per the McCracken model, illuminated more of the constraints of the methodologies used (especially with regard to length of treatment) than the causal relationships between SSR and reading achievement or motivation.

Reported effects on reading achievement. In an early study involving the practice of reading in the classroom, Oliver (1973), the originator of the High Intensity Practice (HIP) model (Oliver, 1970), compared reading practice to direct instruction in an attempt to view the effects on reading comprehension in a one month trial. Of the 48 fourth, fifth and sixth graders involved in the study, students in the HIP group who were involved in SSR and writing and literacy response activities for an hour per day revealed a three-months raw score gain on the Gates McGinitie Reading Test when compared to a two-month gain for the control group. Although the difference was not found to be statistically significant, Oliver concluded that HIP was at least as beneficial as direct instruction. Interestingly, the twenty-eight students in the HIP group were selected from the middle of the ability range of all participants, based on their reading group placement when using the basal reading program in their classrooms. The seven lowest achieving students received intensive direct instruction from one teacher and the remaining thirteen control students received direct instruction from a second teacher during the reading instruction hour. Although Oliver's conclusion that time spent in practicing reading and interacting with text through follow-up SSA (Sustained Selected Activities) and SSW (Sustained Silent Writing) held promise for students in the middle ability group, and would likely not have been detrimental to the higher ability readers in the control group, it is difficult to speculate on the possible effect of the treatment on low ability readers.

In a widely cited study of the effects of SSR, Evans and Towner (1975) compared the reading achievement of two groups of fourth graders. Of the 48 participants in two classrooms, half of the students were randomly assigned to a control group and the other

half to a treatment group. Both groups received one hour of traditional basal instruction per day, which was controlled by having the two teachers meet and plan instruction together. Following the regular lesson, the treatment group was removed for twenty minutes of independent reading with strict adherence to the McCracken rules. The experimental group spent the twenty minute practice period in supplementary practice instruction using a common commercial program that coordinated with the basal reading program. A pre-test using the Metropolitan Achievement Test – Intermediate (MAT-I) revealed no significant differences between groups prior to the treatment period. Following the 10 week intervention, all students took an alternate form of the MAT-I. As no statistically significant treatment or interaction effects were found to exist between the groups, Evans and Towner concluded that the addition of SSR to traditional classroom instruction was no better or worse than direct instruction alone.

Although this research was important in that it utilized rigorous design features on the front end of the study (i.e., random assignment of students to groups, controlled similarity of reading instruction, pre-test comparisons of group equality), it is unfortunate that the only outcome measure used to evaluate effects of reading practice on reading achievement was a standardized achievement test such as the MAT-I, which measures general achievement and may not be sensitive to changes in reading comprehension over a ten week period. The use of additional outcome measures, such as reading level, reading fluency or story retelling would have been feasible with a sample of forty-eight students and may have provided more information on the particular effects of SSR in the actual skill of reading. It is also important to note that a strict adherence to

the McCracken rules was used in the study, which is a model that permits no feedback to students by the teacher, nor does it allow for explicit connections to be made between reading instruction and reading practice.

Reported effects on attitudes toward reading. Sadoski (1980) developed a survey to determine the effects of SSR on attitude toward reading. This action research was conducted to determine the desirability of SSR for use with 10th through 12th grade students in a lower middle class high school. A seven week pilot program of SSR using the McCracken rules was implemented in order to work out the logistics of the program for the school. All students in the school were given a SSR session one period each day. The SSR period rotated throughout the weekly schedule so no one subject area was more affected by the SSR interruption than another. The objectives of the program were to increase the amount of self-selected material students read and to improve students' attitudes toward recreational reading. A qualitative analysis of field notes and observations taken during the study revealed that in general, students asked for more time to read, swapped books and discussed books outside of class. A survey containing five questions to assess attitude trends and program function was given several weeks after the end of the pilot program. The responses of 287 students were recorded, as were the comments of 49% of that group. Findings indicate the honors level students appreciated the program most, perhaps because they were given time to engage in an activity in which they were proficient. Commenting on the finding that students in the lower ability groups gave the lowest ratings of the program, Sadoski stated that students with negative

attitudes toward reading may require a longer period of involvement in SSR in order to reap the benefits.

More recently, Yoon's (2002) meta-analysis of the reading literature on SSR sought to determine the effect of the program on reading attitudes and to determine the moderator variables that influence effect size. Only seven studies of SSR using reading attitude as an outcome variable were found that included sufficient statistical information in their published reports to calculate effect sizes, and of the seven reports, only three were published in journals. The remaining four reports were included in unpublished dissertations and conference presentations.

Despite the constraints of his sample, Yoon reports an average effect of 0.12, which indicates a noticeable, though small, effect of SSR on reading attitude. Grade level was determined to be the leading moderator variable, with a better effect for SSR observed for third grade and lower, and a smaller effect for levels above the fourth grade. Yoon's results suggest that the manner in which SSR is implemented is more influential than the duration of the program and recommends that independent reading for fixed periods of time each day using self-chosen materials appears to have the most influence on reading attitudes. This research also highlights the attitudinal changes toward reading that have been reported to occur in the mid to late elementary years (McKenna & Kear, 1990) and the importance of providing programs to maintain student engagement in reading during those years.

Multivariate studies of SSR. Collins (1980) investigated the effects of SSR on reading comprehension and attitude over a 15 week period with 10 second- through sixth-

grade classrooms. Using a quasi-experimental research design, classrooms were randomly assigned to treatment and control groups, with the students in the treatment group increasing from 10 – 15 minutes of SSR to 25 – 30 minutes each day. The exact procedure for implementing SSR in the treatment classrooms is not described in the study; it is only stated that the students read silently for the SSR period. Both groups spent an equal amount of time each day in reading instruction, and the control group received 10 – 30 minutes of spelling and English instruction while the treatment group was involved in SSR.

Six assessment measures were used to evaluate differences in reading comprehension (Gates-MacGinitie Reading Achievement Test; Iowa Test of Basic Skills; basal reading level placement, and a researcher designed Teacher Individual Pupil Evaluation form) and reading attitudes (Hunt's *How I Feel About Reading* survey and a researcher designed attitude assessment). The findings revealed that the 126 experimental subjects did not differ significantly on measures of vocabulary, comprehension or speed and accuracy of reading from the control subjects; however, the basal reading level of the treatment group exhibited a gain of 0.1 book level when compared to the control group, an increase that was determined to be statistically significant. No differences were found to exist on measures of reading attitude; in fact, both groups exhibited more negative attitudes toward reading on the post-test measures than before the treatment period began.

These results indicating a decline in attitudes for reading were later supported in a national survey of 18,185 students reported in 1995 by McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth. The researchers sought to determine the developmental course of reading attitudes for

students in grades 1 – 6. They also investigated the relationship between recreational and academic reading attitudes and possible relationships with reading ability, gender and ethnicity. Attitude for reading was measured using the Elementary Reading Attitudes Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990) which provides a rating of student attitudes for school and recreational reading. Reading proficiency was determined by teacher ratings of high, medium or low reading ability. The principle findings indicate that reading attitudes are most positive in the first grade but decline as student's progress to the sixth grade. Negative attitudes toward recreational reading were more prevalent and rapidly declining for low ability readers, and this ability gap in attitudes increased with age. As regards attitudes for academic reading, however, the negative trend occurs despite ability.

The Collins (1980) study served to corroborate previous studies that indicated that SSR did no harm with regard to student reading achievement, but indicated that adding independent reading to the school day did not serve to ameliorate the negative decline in attitudes that occurs between the second and sixth grades. The particulars of the treatment conditions used by Collins study are not provided in the report; therefore, it is difficult to draw any pertinent conclusions from the study regarding SSR and reading attitudes.

Using a longer treatment time frame, Langford and Allen (1983) investigated the use of SSR with 131 fifth and sixth graders to determine the effects of SSR on reading attitudes and achievement. Classes were randomly assigned to groups, and the experimental group received daily SSR for 30 minutes over a six month period. During the SSR time, a control group received instruction in health and grooming. Students'

attitudes toward the program were measured using the Heathington Scale (Heathington, 1975) and the Estes Attitude Scale (Estes, 1971), while teachers' observation of student behaviors related to attitudes toward reading were measured using the Scale of Reading Attitude based on Behavior (SRAB) by Rowell (1972). The Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT) was used to test reading achievement. At post-test, attitudes toward reading as reported by students on the Heathington scale were not significantly different, although behaviors reported through teacher observation on the SRAB indicated a positive effect for the treatment group. The SRAB was completed for students by their language arts teachers, not their homeroom teachers, and as students were regrouped for their language arts instruction, their teachers were less likely to be aware of which students were in the experimental group. The achievement test results indicated that students involved in the SSR model exhibited significant gains when compared to the control group (t = 7.94, p<.001). The researchers theorize that these gains in reading achievement may be due to increases in vocabulary development, but as only a comparison of total scores on the SORT were reported, it is difficult to draw clear connections from this study between SSR and vocabulary growth.

A 1982 investigation conducted by Summers and McClelland sought to determine the effects of SSR on the reading achievement (measured using the Metropolitan Achievement Test) and reading attitudes (measured using the Estes Attitude Survey and the Student Reading Rating Scale) of 5th, 6th and 7th grade students. The SSR model was similar to the McCracken model with regard to non-accountability for amount or comprehension of reading, teacher modeling and self-selection of books, but did

include a provision that students should be praised for their efforts in reading. No theoretical base for this addition was offered in the report for this addition to the traditional model. The study compared 612 students in SSR schools to 630 students who were in non-SSR schools. Using ANCOVA procedures, the findings indicated no significant effect for reading achievement or reading attitude was found to exist between groups after a 15 week intervention period. The authors conclude that the SSR program may have failed to show an effect due to an incongruity between the length of the treatment period and sensitivity of the outcome measures and to weak adult models of reading.

With the purpose of determining models of recreational reading that improve reading achievement and attitudes, Manning and Manning (1984) compared four groups: Traditional SSR, SSR followed by peer interaction, SSR followed by teacher-student conferences and a non-SSR control group. Using 415 fourth graders as participants, classrooms were randomly assigned to the three treatment and one control group with a balance of socioeconomic status (by school) and were heterogeneously grouped for ability. All classrooms received a similar one hour of reading instruction per day, followed by a 30 minute SSR period following the McCracken rules for the three treatment groups. Students in the peer interaction treatment group followed the SSR period with small group and paired discussions about their books while the students in the teacher-student conferencing model were involved in weekly conferences with their teacher to discuss what they were reading and to plan for future reading. The conferences took place during the SSR time. Students in the control group received no organized

recreational reading; however, the report does not detail what was occurring in the control classrooms during the SSR period for the treatment groups.

Pre- and post-testing using the reading test portion of the California Achievement Test to note differences in reading achievement and the Manning Reading Attitude Inventory, a newly piloted measure of reading attitudes of fourth graders, both revealed significant differences between groups. On the reading attitude measure, students involved in the peer interaction group evidenced the greatest gain, followed by those involved in teacher-student conferences. The traditional SSR group differed insignificantly from the control group. With regard to reading achievement, the students in the peer interaction group revealed significantly greater gains than did the students in the other three groups. This study proved to be an important challenge to the traditional version of SSR in that the importance of reading with meaning for social interaction began to be seen as integral to the success of reading practice.

Reading Volume and Reading Growth

In 1986, Stanovich introduced the term "Mathew Effect" to indicate that a reciprocal relationship existed between reading experience and reading growth. He theorized that good students are both able and motivated to read more, thus increasing their background knowledge for learning and their self-efficacy for reading. Reports of high ability readers engaging during SSR time provide evidence that this may well be true (Sadoski, 1980). Alternately, poor readers tend to read less, and therefore continue to lag behind their peers in reading ability at an increasing rate: The rich get richer and the poor get poorer. It is for this reason in particular that an instructional model of SSR is

desirable. By connecting reading practice to reading instruction, particularly the development of strategies for decoding words, comprehending connected text, and understanding text structures, the teacher is poised to intervene on the behalf of the struggling reader by highlighting the instrumental use of these skills in the meaning making venture of reading texts of interest to the student.

Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) provide a detailing of pertinent research regarding the reciprocal effects of reading volume and cognitive enhancement in their article entitled "What reading does for the mind". According to their review of the research, ample evidence exists that the more one reads, the greater the increases in decoding skill, vocabulary, and comprehension. Citing their 1997 longitudinal study of students through the eleventh grade, early success in decoding, vocabulary knowledge, and comprehension were predictors of avid reading in the later grades, revealing evidence of the reciprocal effects of reading volume and reading ability. Besides providing a research base to support the understanding of the Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986), these results also highlight the advantages of wide reading for both reading achievement and reading motivation.

With the purpose of investigating the relationship between reading frequency and achievement, Taylor, Frye & Maruyama (1990) conducted a four month study of 195 fifth and sixth graders to investigate the relationship between time spent in silent reading during the reading instructional period and reading achievement. Students learned to keep records of their silent reading during each 50-minute reading period, documenting minutes spent in reading assigned texts as well as self-selected texts read for pleasure.

Students also kept time logs of minutes spent reading at home for school work and for pleasure.

Using the SRA Achievement Series test scores given just prior to the study as a covariate, the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test was used as an outcome measure of student reading ability. Grand means of each student's time spent reading at school and at home were calculated and these were combined in a stepwise multiple regression analysis revealing that the number of minutes spent in reading silently during daily reading classes exerted the most influence on reading ability. Although these results lent support for including silent reading time during the school day for intermediate grade students, the participants were predominately average and above average readers - only two of the classrooms of students were in the below average ability group. Therefore, the success of SSR for students who are already achieving some measure of reading success is enhanced or held constant by practice in reading, while the fate of the struggling reader remains undetermined.

Interested in the long term effects of involvement in SSR efforts, Wiesendanger & Bader (1989) sought to measure the effects of student's reading habits after they had completed an SSR program. The amount of voluntary summer reading was self-reported by 25 students who had been involved in SSR as an instructional practice in the 3rd grade and 29 students who had not. The SSR group reported more reading than the control group – 90 minutes versus 76 minutes per week. While no data analyses were conducted to determine the statistical significance of these differences, a further breakdown of student reading by ability level was illuminating. Students were divided into ability

groups based on their performance on the California Test of Basic Skills that was administered at the end of the previous school year. Above average readers averaged 137 minutes of voluntary summer reading per week, while the average group read for 90 minutes and the below average students read for only 22 minutes. Although the researchers claim this as support for the premise that more reading creates better reading, it would seem just as likely according to the nature of the study that better readers read more. This is supported by their admission that the above average groups were not as affected by the SSR program, as the difference in reading between students who had been involved in SSR and those who had not was only 5 minutes per week.

Previous involvement by students in programmatic SSR was reported to positively affect the average ability group the most, as the SSR students read on average 110 minutes per week when compared to the average ability students who were not exposed to SSR. Differences between SSR and non-SSR experience was almost negligible for low ability readers, revealing a difference of only 2 minutes per week. This research would indicate that practice reading is only beneficial if students have developed at least average reading ability, causing future researchers to consider the efficacy of denying feedback and support during SSR, and to consider the reading level of books read during SSR by low ability readers.

Beyond Traditional SSR

In the 1990s, as a balanced literacy approach was being promoted and strategic and metacognitive elements of instruction were gaining popularity, the research on reading instruction began to focus on combining selected pedagogical elements in order

to serve the needs of students of varying abilities. Researchers and classroom teachers became interested in creating a blend of instructional practices that addressed both the skills based needs of students for decoding and word recognition with the contextual and responsive elements of deriving meaning from text.

Adams (1990) opened the decade with her widely cited book, *Beginning to Read,* which served to describe the contribution of phonics and phonological process instruction in a manner that would bridge the existing divide between educators on both sides of "The Great Debate" – that is, those who were proponents of skills based instruction alone versus those who believed that reading was best taught through a whole language approach. Though charged by a Congressional mandate to provide a report of how phonics could best be used to improve beginning reading instruction, Adams' treatment of the issue places phonics and whole-text reading skills in a model that can be more clearly described as linear and inclusive rather than oppositional. On page 272, she states: "The goal of teaching phonics is to develop students' ability to read connected text independently." She then debates the timing of introducing students to independent reading and concludes that skills instruction and whole text reading need to be carefully combined, as students cannot internalize skill instruction unless the skills are applicable to an authentic reading experience.

Findings from research conducted in the 1980s began to transform philosophies and practices in reading education as well as affect research involving independent silent reading in the classroom during the 1990s. SSR was less frequently viewed as an ancillary or supplemental program, but was expressed as just one of several variables that

were tweaked and combined to create a more balanced literacy program. Although some studies of classroom reading instruction still referred to children's independent reading in the classroom as SSR or DEAR, many came to use the terms *free reading*, *independent reading,* or *self-selected reading* instead. Many of the instructional models did include some provision for students to read on their own; however, the unique contributions of independent reading to reading development become less distinct in the research, further complicating efforts to provide quantitative evidence of the causal or relational effectiveness of sustained silent reading.

The transformation of SSR from a rigid and rule-bound program that served as a supplement to reading instruction into a versatile component of more complex and layered reading instruction models was the hallmark of research in the 1990's that involved independent reading in some form. Anecdotal advice from the classroom, combined with research on related areas of reading instruction and reading motivation, would create opportunities to adjust the previously held rules for conducting SSR (i.e., the McCracken rules) to improve the effectiveness of the practice. However, empirical evidence to test the effectiveness of SSR as a component of these balanced models remained scant. Studies involving reading motivation, strategy instruction and expert practices indicate that a new model of SSR is emerging from practices in the classroom.

SSR and engagement. A series of studies conducted in the past ten years sought to explore and define the elements of literacy instruction that were motivating to students at all grade levels, and each of these studies used their findings to illuminate and refine the recommendations to teachers regarding reading practice in the classroom. In 1995,

Turner and Paris reported on research in twelve classrooms of six-year-olds. Through observations in the classrooms and interviews with students, the researchers found that the reading program in itself was not as influential in engaging students as was the types of tasks that teachers ask children to do. The major themes that emerged from field notes and transcriptions of interviews and literacy lessons were described as the "Six C's": Choice, challenge, control, collaboration, constructive comprehension and consequences. Although these elements refer to general teaching activities, each of these components of engaging literacy instruction can be built into an SSR program. When students are provided with choices regarding reading materials in classroom and school libraries and are taught to control the level of difficulty or challenge posed through learning to find books at a 'just right' level, they will have access to reading materials that will likely engage them as they practice learned skills. Additionally, having opportunities to share what they read with their teachers and other students, they collaborate in constructing meaning from text and as a consequence, build their self-efficacy for continued reading challenges. A well constructed SSR program that utilizes these elements is built around a focus on assisting children in constructing meaning in the pursuit of authentic tasks and sharing of information, supported by teachers and fitted to their individual needs.

A concern expressed by researchers regarding SSR was whether students were actually engaged in reading during the SSR periods. Lee-Daniels and Murray (2000) report that involving second graders in sharing what they've read during planned teacher conferences or in literature discussions with other students improved student on-task behavior and reading amount. A qualitative study by Bryan, Fawson and Reutzel (2003)

found similar results with fourth grade students who were observed to be habitually disengaged during SSR time. Three focal students were involved in occasional literature discussions with the researcher in a multiple baseline, across-subjects design. During the treatment phase where discussion with the researcher was provided, student engagement in reading was observed to increase, presumably so that students would have something to share with the researcher. In particular, the researchers felt they were able to provide support to students who demonstrated weakness in decoding in an attempt to prevent disengagement. Students who are of average or high ability may not need the additional support of adults for conferencing and discussion as was provided for the students in this study, but this type of scaffolding and opportunities to interpret what is read through discussions with others appears to be helpful to lower ability readers who might otherwise opt to disengage during SSR.

Also working with older elementary students, Palmer, Codling, and Gambrell (1994) found similar themes based on questionnaires and interviews with 330 3rd and 5th graders about what motivates them to read. Responses to questions regarding their self-concept as a reader, the value of reading as an activity and their reasons for engaging in reading tasks revealed that prior experiences with books, such as when read to by adults, were seen as valuable to students and positively influenced their motivation to read. Students also valued social interactions about books and often choose books to read after hearing about them from others. The researchers found that students valued access to books and abundant choices when selecting them for independent reading activities. Similar results were reported by Ivey and Broaddus (2001) in a study of 31 middle school

students who reported a high engagement with reading. Many of these students stated that they valued teacher read-alouds and independent reading as well as having a variety of texts from which to choose. The researchers' concerns were that as students move through middle schools, student choice and diversity of available text decreased, whereas student interests become more variable (see Greaney, 1980). The Ivey and Broaddus research echoed the concerns of Worthy, Moorman, and Turner in their 1999 article entitled "What Johnny Likes to Read is Hard to Find in School".

These studies confirm what some practitioners already seemed to know – they had begun to wander away from the rigidity of the McCracken rules and embraced their own versions of SSR that included follow-up activities that included opportunities to respond to or share what was read (Gambrell, 1978; Manning & Manning, 1984; Oliver, 1970). In a similar vein, and with a politically appeasing manner, Leeser (1990) proposed a 'glasnost' by combining USSR (Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading) with USA (Uninterrupted Sharing Activity). Following the silent reading period, students pair up with others and share what they've read in an effort to increase comprehension of texts and to hear about new books. Speaker's (1990) version, called SSR+D, advocates the use of discussion following SSR to add a social interactive dimension to text response and to develop oral discussion skills, allowing students an opportunity to use new vocabulary learned in reading. Teachers may wish to model the discussion by talking for a minute or two about what they've been reading and then allowing students to respond before students begin their discussions with each other.

SSR and strategy instruction. Wishing to incorporate the elements of strategy instruction with reading practice, Block (1993) experimented with 352 students in the second through sixth grades to determine if reading comprehension and critical thinking skills would improve as the result of a literature-based reading program. In her study, the 178 experimental students outperformed the controls on the standardized comprehension measures and exhibited an increased ability to utilize strategies in reading text. Following explicit teaching of comprehension strategies, students were directed to self-select texts for reading practice and then discussed what they read with other students. Although the study did not report on the specific independent reading practices used in the program, the layering of strategic comprehension instruction with reading practice followed by discussion became a theme of future research. Qualitative evidence of the success of literature and strategy-based classroom instruction was reported by Baumann and Ivey (1997). In this year-long naturalistic case study, Baumann served as teacher and researcher in a diverse and low SES second-grade classroom. Baumann and Ivey sought to demonstrate that skill development and literature appreciation were not mutually exclusive goals in a literature and strategy based instructional program as per Block's (1993) model. Using investigator journals, student and parent interviews, videotapes of classroom activities and other artifacts, the researchers observed high growth in reading ability and engagement. In this version of the model, the independent reading component was more clearly described, and included a 20 – 30 minute SSR time four times per week in addition to the self-selected practice of strategies presented during whole class and small group instruction. Important elements of the program included differentiated

strategy instruction, abundant exposure to connected text, authentic purposes for reading and guidance in book selecting to aide students in choosing books at an appropriate level for independent reading.

SSR and classroom teachers

Recently, researchers have expressed an interest in determining the presence and uses of SSR in classrooms. One such study at the middle school level by Nagy, Campenni, Shaw, and Shaw (2000) was carried out to determine if SSR as a supplemental program was still prevalent in classrooms and if the original goals of SSR were being met or altered. Of the 69 teachers surveyed, 67% utilized SSR in their classes, stating a belief that modeling and opportunity for reading were important to increasing vocabulary skills. On average, these teachers included SSR in their reading classes three times per week for 20 minutes, and 80% of teachers read during the SSR period. At the primary level, Block and Mangieri (2002) report the results of a survey of 549 elementary school teachers in four states (Georgia, Missouri, New York and Texas) who were directed to name three activities that encourage voluntary reading in the elementary grades. Kindergarten, first-, third- and fifth-grade teachers placed SSR programs at the top of their lists, whereas independent reading fell behind incentive programs with second grade teachers and was second to book discussions with fourth-grade teachers.

Pressley, Rankin, and Yokoi (1996) conducted a survey of instructional practices of primary teachers nominated by their supervisors as demonstrating effectiveness in promoting literacy. Seventy-three teachers in grades K – 2 were surveyed and reported that SSR was included in their reading periods for an average of 10 minutes per day at the

kindergarten level and increasing to about 20 minutes in the second grade. Cantrell (1999) observed and interviewed four teachers who were successful in implementing reform practices in Kentucky schools and found that each of these high implementing teachers included some form of independent reading in their classes in addition to guided reading instruction and group book discussions; however clear descriptions of how SSR is implemented in classrooms were not provided. The importance of this research is that teachers focused on providing meaningful practice of explicitly taught skills according to individual student needs.

Successful schools and expert opinions

A spate of studies in the past five years has focused on the classroom contexts and instructional practices of schools that have demonstrated successful reading programs. One such report by Mosenthal, Lipson, Torncello, Russ, and Mekkelsen (2004) studied six Vermont schools that exceeded statewide standards in reading in the second through fourth grades. These schools demonstrated long standing literacy programs that provided ample independent and group reading experiences followed by book discussions. Many of these schools incorporated a 30 to 60 minutes of SSR time per day. Reutzel and Smith (2004) note that expert opinion converges on the benefits of combining abundant silent reading practice using a variety of self-selected texts at an appropriate reading level with literature discussion to improve reading development and engagement. Researchers and experts agree that it is important for teachers to provide experiences that nurture a value of reading for pleasure, the habit of reading silently and the ability to derive meaning

from text that can be shared. These beliefs are quite reminiscent of those put forth by Hunt and Oliver in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

A New Model Emerges

Providing students with time to independently read books of their own choosing made intuitive good sense in the 1970s and still does today. In the midst of the skill based frenzy of the 1960s, educators saw a need to return the focus of reading instruction to the actual *act* of reading. While students were completing worksheets, they were missing an opportunity to read connected text for long enough to become hooked on the power of reading for pleasure and for information. In its early iterations, SSR emerged as a rule-bound entity that was promoted as an opportunity to practice skills and was adapted and shaped to complement curricular trends that were borne of constructivist theories and research on metacognition. Although SSR continues to be used in some form in many classrooms, especially those that are deemed to demonstrate best practices according to some experts, the research on SSR has yet to provide conclusive and methodologically sound evidence that it enhances reading ability and engagement.

Interestingly, teachers and researchers have found ways to incorporate the beneficial elements of SSR into their classroom instructional models by picking through the rules – once rigidly followed – and using SSR as the integrated reading practice it was originally intended to be. In 1998, Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, and Duffy-Hester sought to "…obtain a late 1990's perspective on public school elementary teachers' and administrators' beliefs about reading instruction and their current classroom practices and administrative policies" (p. 639). Upon analyzing surveys completed by administrators

and teachers in K-5 settings in 51 school districts, the researchers found that most teachers found ways to blend phonics and holistic instruction compatibly. Teachers were nearly unanimous (94%) in their belief that the goal of reading instruction is to develop independent and motivated readers who choose, appreciate and enjoy literature. Although skills-based instruction is required to develop decoding and fluency skills, especially in the lower grades, teachers feel that students learned reading best by reading. Teachers reported an average 42 minutes per day spent in applying and practicing learned skills through SSR, response groups, and cooperative reading activities. The researchers concluded that while the "reading wars" were raging in academia, "... teachers have long since resolved The Great Debate, instead embracing and implementing a balanced, eclectic philosophy for teaching reading and language arts" (p. 648).

What do we know about sustained silent reading after three decades? This review of literature suggests that researchers and practitioners continue to find value in silent reading as a means of practicing skills and promoting the habit of reading. Clearly, the empirical research SSR has not been rigorous and plentiful enough to satisfy policymakers, nor have we adequately researched all we have come to know about how SSR can combine with other instructional practices to create a positive synergy that affects both reading ability and reading engagement. The report of the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) was correct in stating that SSR, when offered with minimal guidance by the instructor, did not appear to offer any clear effectiveness, and that the studies conducted on SSR presented methodological issues. Their call for continued research to define and substantiate SSR is echoed by literacy educators, as evidenced by

the letters written in response to IRA president Shanahan (Hebert, 2006; Shaw, 2006). As research informs us of the importance of including choice and variety, authentic purposes for reading and time to practice strategies, it becomes apparent that sustained silent reading remains an important element of literacy instruction that supports the goal of nurturing learners who read for pleasure and information. Carefully designed research that investigates the effectiveness of an instructional model of SSR that includes provisions for teacher conferencing, the choosing of "just right" texts, book discussions, and daily independent reading may well help teachers justify what they have come to know through their own experiences. In fact, this proposed instructional model is basically what Duffy was calling for in 1967. As we consider the worth of sustained silent reading, we have truly been there and back again. All we lack is the proof. It is for this reason that the present research is being conducted.

Research Questions

While SSR enjoys theoretical support and a wide intuitive appeal among literacy educators, the empirical evidence to support the practice remains underwhelming. Upon reviewing the literature on SSR over the past thirty-five years, models of SSR that utilized the McCracken rules were found to support the practice only in the sense that it does no harm. The studies do bear out that readers of at least average ability may receive some benefit from involvement in SSR, but less is known about the fate of lower ability readers. While attitudes of students, teachers and administrators have been surveyed, there are no studies that systematically document the experiences of students who are involved in SSR over the treatment period. Research conducted in the past twenty years

that evaluated the effectiveness of discussion in response to reading and the teaching of explicit strategies for decoding and comprehending are also lacking in the literature.

Therefore, the current study proposes a new model of SSR, called Instructional SSR (ISSR), which incorporates this new knowledge into a reading practice model that proposes to create an *instructional* practice of reading, not just a recreational opportunity. A broad view of the research to date would indicate that divorcing the teacher from the reading practice experience eliminates opportunities to teach students how to select texts that are at an appropriate, instructional reading level so that skill practice and meaning making can be maximized.

During weekly conferences with students, teachers provide individualized instruction regarding use of decoding and comprehension strategies suited for particular texts, therefore tying whole and small group instruction to the practice of reading whole texts. While conferencing with students, teachers are able to monitor fluency and comprehension as well as student interests. Based on these assessments, additional reading materials can be obtained from the school library as needed, thereby assuring that students are provided with genre and topics that interest them. Follow-up discussions involving students in pairs, small groups or as a whole class provide students with opportunities to synthesize what they've read and communicate meaning orally, affording them valuable opportunities to hear other viewpoints and expand their understandings of texts.

In order to test the ISSR model and to address questions of current SSR implementation and student experiences of independent reading experiences, the research questions posed in this inquiry are as follows:

1. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading achievement of third and fourth grade students?

2. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading motivation of third and fourth grade students?

3. What are the experiences of students involved in ISSR and SSR models of independent reading, particularly those who are representative of the following typologies: *High Achievement/High Motivation; High Achievement/Low Motivation; Low Achievement/High Motivation,* and; *Low Achievement/Low Motivation*?

A Note Regarding Accelerated Reader™

In the course of design development for this study, and aware of the proliferation of the *Accelerated Reader™* (AR; Renaissance Learning, 2006) program in some of the schools and school districts included in the sampling frame, the question of how to anticipate the potential confounding influence of an existing AR program on the implementation of the treatment phase received considerable deliberation. Although AR is a program that encourages students to independently read trade books during school, its theoretical underpinnings and implementation in the schools reflect potentially confounding differences from the goals of most versions of SSR, and particularly the

experimental (ISSR) and control (traditional SSR) versions that are used in this investigation.

AR was developed by Terrence and Judi Paul in 1986 and has since been subsumed under the auspices of Renaissance Learning Systems (http://www.renlearn.com). According to the website information, AR purports to increase reading motivation and therefore achievement by providing teachers with computerized reports of student progress as they read trade books and complete quizzes using their STAR™ test system.

The quizzes are comprised of 5 – 20 literal comprehension questions, depending upon the length of the book, and student scores are accessible to teachers in the form of individual and classroom level reports. Teachers are to use these reports to guide students in choosing books in their 'reading zone', where literal comprehension is 85% or greater, and to provide feedback regarding progress toward growth goals, determined by quality (average percent correct on quizzes), quantity (measured by number of AR points accrued) and challenge (measured by reading level of books read). The AR program is available at cost to school districts, as is the Renaissance Learning professional development.

In a recent report by one of it's developers (Paul, 2003), AR is described as a "Guided Independent Reading program", or an "independent reading program with feedback." Paul's study is based on the Reading Practice Database compiled by the Renaissance Learning company's Reading Renaissance program and contains the AR records of 50,823 students during the 2001-2002 academic year.

AR was developed to allow students to utilize books in their school libraries for independent reading practice, and to then test their literal knowledge of the text as a formative measure for teachers who would keep track of student progress and intervene when students were struggling with text (as evidenced by low scores on the STAR assessment). The practices that would guide teachers in supporting struggling readers were then developed in 1993 by Reading Renaissance (Paul, 2003, p. 8). Teachers learn these principles of instruction through the Reading Renaissance professional development program through online or locally conducted seminars. Teachers, schools and districts can become certified in Reading Renaissance practices to support their use of the AR program.

According to the Reading Renaissance website, AR is a vehicle to guide students in reading independently during school time that also provides an ongoing assessment of literal comprehension that the teacher can use to guide instruction. In this regard, AR is one of many forms of independent reading programs that is available to schools (albeit a prolific one) and could therefore be considered a form of SSR.

However, it is important to note that some of the tenets and theoretical underpinnings of AR differ from those assumed in the engagement perspective that guides the instructional sustained silent reading model used in this investigation. First, based on the Paul (2003) research, Reading Renaissance recommends that students limit non-fiction reading to 10 – 15% of AR points. In fact, according to their data, they found "on average, at all grade levels, that the higher percent of non-fiction reading the student does, the lower the gain in reading ability" (p. 15). This limitation on book choice by

students runs counter to current reading research literature which indicates that some students, particularly boys and struggling readers may prefer information text (Worthy, Moorman & Turner, 1999), and that practice in reading informational text is important to content area reading growth. Secondly, the focus on assessing literal comprehension as a single measure of reading growth is incongruous with the type of reading engagement that the ISSR model hopes to promote.

In a commentary regarding AR published in *Reading Online*, November 1999, Labbo asks, "[s]houldn't we be raising questions about basalizing and standardizing literature in the name of record keeping, about confirming only that the book was read and understood at a very minimal level? If the key to the AR program is the point system, then what does this say about what it means to comprehend a book?" As opposed to practice in this superficial level reading, the engagement perspective proposes that students become directors of their own learning and read for pleasure as well as to gather information on topics. This level of engagement cannot be assessed through literal comprehension quizzes and the danger exists that students are reading with an eye to what might be asked on the quiz than for a deeper comprehension and enjoyment of the text.

An additional concern is that students read many books quickly in order to accrue AR points, for which there may be extrinsic rewards (tangible or social) and do not practice reading for the intrinsic enjoyment of reading, which would lead to increased recreational reading. Support for the concern that AR increased school reading for good readers and reduced reading self-perceptions for lower achieving boys was provided by

Mallette, Henk, and Melnick (2004), who found that while the public and competitive nature of AR implementations in schools may not influence the self-concept of female students and high achieving males, it was correlated with reduced self-concept with low achieving male students – a population of particular concern to the researchers, and to many teachers. With these concerns for the quality of the reading experience that AR is more likely to promote, the school selected to participate in this study was be asked to suspend their promotion of AR during the treatment period.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this investigation is to advance the knowledge in the field of literacy regarding the effects of instructional and traditional models of sustained silent reading on the reading achievement and reading motivation of third and fourth grade students. In the past three decades, empirical research on the effectiveness of SSR often used a version of the McCracken model (McCracken, 1971) and found little effect over controls (Collins, 1980; Evans & Towner, 1975; Langford & Allen, 1983; NICHD, 2000; Oliver, 1973; Yoon, 2002). However, the potential for SSR to influence reading achievement and reading motivation is supported by bottom-up and top-down theories of literacy development. In addition, recent research on strategy instruction, teacher conferencing, and literacy discussion (Bauman & Ivey, 1997; Block, 1993; Lee-Daniels & Murray, 2000; Manning & Manning, 1984; Turner & Paris, 1995) suggest that integrating these elements in a model of reading practice would enhance the instructional impact of practice reading, Therefore, an *Instructional Sustained Silent Reading* model (ISSR) was developed for the purpose of this investigation and is compared to the traditional, 'McCracken rules' model of SSR.

As the traditional model has not been found to be effective in increasing reading ability in the present review of literature, it could be argued that the traditional SSR group serves as a control for the instructional model. Research on the prevalence of SSR in classrooms (Block & Mangieri, 2002; Nagy, Campenni, Shaw & Shaw, 2000; Pressley, Rankin, & Yokoi, 1996) indicate that forms of independent reading are still common in

many classrooms, although clear descriptions of the implementation of the practice are not currently available in the literature. As independent reading is seen by many teachers as an element of the reading instruction, as is whole group and guided reading, for example, this research did not seek to include a control group where no SSR was offered. The comparison exists only between the instructional model (ISSR) and the traditional version, (SSR), which has been shown to be no better than non-SSR groups in previous research.

The specific research questions that guided this study were:

1. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading achievement of third and fourth grade students?

2. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading motivation of third and fourth grade students?

3. What do students report regarding their experiences of participation in the ISSR and SSR models of independent reading in relation to their perception of valence, instrumentality, and expectancies for reading, particularly students who are representative of the following typologies: *High Achievement/High Motivation; High Achievement/Low Motivation; Low Achievement/High Motivation,* and; *Low Achievement/Low Motivation*?

Quantitative research methods were used to answer questions 1 and 2, and qualitative data were gathered to address questions 1 and 3. The resulting data were integrated in a concurrent nested mixed method design.

This research involved third and fourth grade students for several reasons. Reading initiatives, such as Reading First (NCLB, 2001) propose a goal of having students read on grade level by the time they reach the third grade. By this point, most students should be able to decode print adequately enough to read extended text independently. Students who are not reading well by the third grade are at risk of being left further and further behind as the academic reading requirements increase. For the struggling third grade reader in particular, methods that would serve both to increase the practice of decoding while using interesting, appropriately leveled texts to enhance meaning-making with the support of the teacher may serve to decrease the number of these students that fall victim to the Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986).

In the fourth grade, students are expected to read content area texts, and often, to do so independently. Third and fourth graders are also in the midst of a demonstrated decline in reading motivation, as reported by McKenna and Kear (1990). As academic reading needs are increasing and reading attitudes are decreasing, these two grade levels represent an important crossroad for testing models of instruction that could potentially improve reading ability and motivation.

<center>Treatment Groups</center>

In order to address the research questions, two treatment groups were identified for the purpose of this study: the Instructional Sustained Silent Reading group (ISSR) and the traditional Sustained Silent Reading group (SSR). The traditional SSR group was considered as a control group for comparative purposes in this study, as empirical research reviewed in Chapter 2 provides no convincing empirical evidence that

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traditional SSR using the McCracken rules produces significant changes in reading achievement or attitudes when compared to control groups that did not engage in self-selected reading time during the school day. Participating teachers were also randomly assigned to treatment groups and received professional development regarding the general nature of the research, instruction in administering outcome measures, and specific guidance in implementing the treatment group to which they were assigned. An overview of the professional development for teachers is provided in Appendix A.

Teachers in both groups were not apprised of the 'treatment' versus 'control' status of their groups and were informed only that various models were of interest. Teachers were cautioned against discussing their treatment implementation with other teachers to avoid confounding the results of the study. These measures were designed to ameliorate possible Hawthorne (Franke & Kaul, 1978) or John Henry (Zdep & Irvine, 1970) effects, where observed results are be skewed by teacher perceptions of their participation in the study. Teachers were also cautioned against discussing their group assignment and implementation to guard against possible social interaction threats to internal validity.

All teachers who participated in the study were provided with supplemental books for their classroom libraries courtesy of Scholastic, Inc. The books included a balance of narrative and expository titles and were selected to include grade level texts, as well as an assortment of books that were below and above the grade level. In total, each classroom received approximately 300 books at the beginning of the treatment period. The books

were provided to supplement the classroom libraries and to ensure that each classroom had a sufficient number of quality books for independent reading opportunities.

The Instructional Sustained Silent Reading Group (ISSR)

The essential feature of the ISSR group is that teachers in these classrooms provided instructional support for students during a daily independent reading period. Based on the review of literature in Chapter 2, it is theorized that simply providing students with time to practice reading books of their choosing may not be sufficient to improve reading ability and motivation. The use of VIE theory as a framework for tying instruction to motivation and skill development suggests that expectancies for successful reading can be improved by providing a "clear path" to the skill of reading. When applied to the ISSR model, it is posited that when teachers implement practices that scaffold students during independent reading, such as by explicitly providing strategies that are clearly useful in decoding and comprehending texts used for independent reading, students can achieve increased success in reading for pleasure and for knowledge.

Given time to read books that interest them, students can be guided in choosing text that is read at an instructional level - that is, neither too difficult to be frustrating nor too easy to be deny them opportunities to use their budding skills – and can therefore practice reading in a manner that will reinforce their skills. This reading success may then influence student expectancies for reading and positively affect the value of the activity and their willingness to engage in that activity again.

To test this model, teachers involved in ISSR classrooms received professional development in implementing this *instructional* model of SSR, or ISSR. The essential features of the model that were implemented in ISSR classrooms included:

1. The ISSR period occurs daily and is gradually increased from 10 – 30 minutes per day as students' tolerance for sustained engagement increases (Allington, 1975, 1977; Pardo, 2004; Yoon, 2002).

2. The ISSR period begins with a teacher bookshare that models incorporation of strategies, and to "bless" books while introducing students to a variety of genres. The literature suggests that students are more willing to read a book if it has been recommended by a teacher or a friend (Gambrell, 1996; Palmer, Codling & Gambrell, 1994).

3. Students are encouraged to select books on topics and genres of interest, and are guided in choosing books that can be read at an instructional level (Cunningham, Cunningham & Allington, 2002; Gambrell, 1996).

4. Students are given explicit instruction in incorporating strategies taught in reading instruction (Bauman & Ivey, 1997; Block, 1993) during weekly teacher conferences.

5. The ISSR period is followed by a variety of 3 – 5 minute discussion periods, such as partner sharing or 'book selling' (Anderson, Heibert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985; Gambrell, 1996; Lee-Daniels & Murray, 2000).

6. Teachers conference with each student weekly to guide them in choosing books at an instructional level, to reinforce strategies taught, to monitor reading fluency

and comprehension, and to reinforce positive reading patterns (Lee-Daniels & Murray, 2000; Manning & Manning, 1984; Turner & Paris, 1995).

Description of the ISSR period. At the beginning of the ISSR period, students locate the colored basket for their conference group and choose their book baggie. They then proceed to their 'reading space'. Teachers often assign groups to particular places in the room, such as the reading loft, carpet area, or group of desks and rotate the groups throughout the week. As students settle in to open their baggies, the teacher begins the three-minute bookshare. Presenting one, or several, books that typify a genre or topic, the teacher highlights interesting features of the book(s) with an enthusiasm that will hopefully hook some students into choosing them at some point. The teacher also features a strategy for decoding the types of words found in the text or for comprehending the genre or topic of the books presented. At the end of the bookshare, and to signal the beginning of the silent reading period, the teacher places the books that were shared on a special shelf so that students can easily find the featured books for that week.

As the silent reading portion of the period begins, the teacher sets up to conference with the group of the day. Students are divided into 5 groups – one for each day of the week. The conference group-of-the-day is often situated in an area close to the teacher so that movement through the classroom to meet with the teacher is minimized. Students who are conferencing with the teacher are prepared to share the books in their book baggie, to have selected a short passage to read aloud to their teacher, and to bring a sticky note with questions or comments about what they've read so far.

During the conference, the teacher maintains a conversational and interested tone when discussing the books their students have chosen to read. The student should feel more that they are sharing their interests and receiving individualized guidance from the teacher in pursuit of reading their 'chosen' books rather than sensing that they are being assessed according to the teacher's standards. The teacher has an opportunity to talk to the student about why the books interest them, about how easy or difficult the book feels to the student, and to answer any particular questions the students may have. A critical component of the individual conferences is the opportunity to present, model, and guide students in practicing specific decoding and comprehension strategies that are appropriate to the text and the students presented ability. These conferences should take about five minutes each, although struggling students may require a bit more and higher achieving students a bit less. At the conclusion of the conference, students are free to browse the classroom library for more books to add their baggies. Students are permitted to keep up to five books in their baggies – a book for reading now, a few for reading next, and an easy read. During the conference, the teacher can guide the student in choosing 'just right' books, an easy read, and perhaps one that is challenging.

When the students have been reading silently for 25 – 30 minutes, the teacher asks students to gather for the sharing activity. There are a variety of activities that require only 3 – 5 minutes, including pair-shares, where students spend a minute or two each telling their 'elbow partner' about what they're reading, to more elaborate 'book selling' scenarios. In the book sell, students who have recently finished a book use the teacher's model of booksharing to entice other students to read a book. These books can

also be featured on a special shelf for the week. At the conclusion of the sharing activity, the teacher asks students to return their books and baggies to the colored basket for their group and the ISSR period ends.

Fidelity to the model. Teachers involved in the ISSR model participated in four hours of professional development to learn about, prepare for, and practice the features of the model and to familiarize themselves with record keeping materials. The specific materials used in the professional development workshop for the ISSR teachers are presented in Appendices A, B, and D. In addition to the professional development workshop, teachers involved in ISSR classrooms were provided with printed materials to help them to maintain fidelity during the 12-week treatment period (Appendix C). The teachers were instructed to use these materials and the weekly checksheets that accompanied them as a guide to implementing the model during the treatment period. The teacher checksheet was based on one developed by Abbott, Walton, and Greenwood (2002).

The researcher made monthly unannounced visits to each ISSR classroom during the 12 week period to observe reading instruction and to monitor fidelity to the program (researcher observation sheet is provided in Appendix D). The teachers' observations and reflections regarding the implementation of the ISSR model in their particular classroom contexts during the 12 week treatment period are included in the findings section of this report as formative data, as well as to report on the completeness of the professional development provided.

The Traditional Sustained Silent Reading group (SSR)

The essential feature of traditional SSR group is that teachers provided a daily period of sustained silent reading using the McCracken rules (McCracken, 1971, p. 521). These rules include:

1. Everyone reads silently during the prescribed time – no excuses;

2. The teacher is engrossed in adult fare during the SSR period;

3. Students may choose one book, magazine or newspaper from a variety of available materials and cannot change the text they are reading during the SSR period;

4. The SSR period is timed, beginning with a 10 minute interval and increasing as students are able;

5. There can be no reports or records kept of what or how much students read, nor any evaluation of comprehension.

Description of the SSR period. The traditional model of SSR begins when the teacher instructs the students to get their book baggies from their assigned colored baskets. Students may keep a book in their baggie if they wish to continue reading it during the next SSR period. There is time at the beginning of each class for students to return books and browse for new titles in the classroom library; students are limited in their book exchange opportunities once the class period has begun. When the students have secured a text for reading, the teacher announces that it is silent reading time. The teacher selects a book for reading and begins to read with the students, looking up occasionally to see if any students are distracting other readers. During the first few

weeks of SSR, the teacher should carefully monitor the students and to notice when sustained reading engagement is waning. Students could then be directed to another activity, or to browsing through or arranging the classroom library. The silent reading time is increased gradually until students are able to read for 25 minutes. When the silent reading period is over, the teacher directs the students to return their books to their book baggies or to the classroom library.

Fidelity to the model. Teachers involved in the SSR treatment model participated in four hours of professional development to learn about, prepare for, and practice the features of the model and to familiarize themselves with record keeping materials. The specific materials used in the professional development workshop for the SSR teachers are presented in Appendices A and F. In addition to the professional development workshop, teachers involved in SSR classrooms were provided with printed materials to help them to maintain fidelity during the 12-week treatment period (Appendix G). The teachers were instructed to use these materials and the weekly checksheets that accompanied them as a guide to implementing the model during the treatment period. The teacher checksheet was based on one developed by Abbott, Walton and Greenwood (2002).

The researcher made monthly unannounced visits to each SSR classroom during the 12-week treatment period to observe reading instruction and to monitor fidelity to the program. The researcher observation sheet is provided in Appendix H. The teachers' observations and reflections regarding the implementation of the SSR model in their particular classroom contexts during the treatment period are included in the findings

section of this report as formative data, as well as to inform professional development needs for future research.

<div align="center">Sampling Procedures and Group Assignment</div>

Two classrooms of third grade and three classrooms of fourth grade students, recruited from a school in the Southeastern United States, agreed to participate in the study. Schools were contacted for possible involvement in the study based on student diversity and socioeconomic status in the target grades as indicated by their 2005 school report card, available through the state Department of Education. Schools that were approached for involvement in the study reported 25-30% non-white student population for the third through fifth grade and at least 40% free and reduced lunch participation. The determination to seek a fairly diverse school for the study was made so that generalization of the sample to the state population could be enhanced (as per current census data, retrieved online at http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/45000.html). The principal and teachers of the selected school agreed to the administration of the required outcome measures and to section the reading instructional period to allow for a thirty-minute independent reading period, wherein students from each grade would be randomly assigned to ISSR and SSR groups. They also agreed to suspend their encouragement of student participation in the *Accelerated Reader*™ program during the treatment period in order to avoid a confounding of results based on offering competing independent reading programs.

Student RIT scores (an estimation of overall reading achievement) on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading subtest from the December district-level

administration were used to match students by reading ability within their grade. Once all students in each grade were placed in matched pairs by ability, a computerized random number generator was used to assign one student in each pair to the ISSR group. The other student in each pair was assigned to the SSR group. The matched-pairs randomization was used to ensure that the treatment and control groups were comprised of students of similar ability, and that the assignment after randomization would result in a roughly equal sample size within groups. The school principal randomly assigned the participating teachers to either the ISSR or traditional SSR model using a coin flip.

At an agreed upon 30 minute period of the school day, students either changed rooms or remained in the same room to participate in ISSR or SSR reading groups, according to their random assignment. In this way, differences in quality of teacher instruction during the reading block were minimized and a matched pair randomization of students to treatment and control conditions permitted a balanced grouping of ability within each grade.

With IRB approval from the sponsoring university and the participating school district, parental permission forms were sent home to all students involved in the study. Permission was sought for use of confidential test score information regarding outcome measures to be used, classroom observations, and interviews with focal students on a periodic basis. A total of 115 permission forms were distributed in the third and fourth grades in the two weeks before the treatment period was to begin. By the beginning of the treatment period, 92 parents gave permission for their child to be included in the study, 5 parents declined approval, and 18 parents did not return forms. Students who were

denied permission, or whose parents did not return a form, remained in their homeroom teacher's classroom during the silent reading period. The permissioned students were included in the randomization. The randomization resulted in one SSR classroom per grade, one ISSR classroom in the third grade, and two ISSR classrooms at the fourth grade level. The following table presents the total number of students who were included in the study by grade and group:

Table 3.1. *Participant Distribution by Grade and Group*

Grade	Group	Teacher[1]	N	Mean RIT (Dec)
3	ISSR	Jule	23	195
	SSR	Merwin	22	198.59
4	ISSR	Neubin	15	207.5
	ISSR	Madsen	13	204.23
	SSR	Cojack	19	206

[1]All teachers' names are pseudonyms

Focal Student Sample

Purposeful sampling procedures were used to identify 16 students for repeated focal interviews based on their pre-treatment scores on the Measures of Academic Progress – Reading Test as well as their total score on the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP). The reading achievement scores (total RIT) for the December administration of the MAP test of third grade participants ranged from 169 to 225 and pre-treatment total scores on the MRP ranged from 30 to 80. Fourth grade reading RIT scores ranged from

163 to 226 and MRP scores ranged from 40 to 79. Based on a comparison of these scores, sixteen students were selected for interviews based on the following four typologies; *high achievement/high motivation (HA/HM); high achievement/low motivation (HA/LM); low achievement/high motivation (LA/HM); low achievement/low motivation (LA/LM)* as detailed in the table below:

Table 3.2. *Focal Students*

Grade	ISSR	SSR
	HA/HM (Erika)	HA/HM (Colm)
	HA/LM (Sergi)	HA/LM (Eleanor)
3	LA/HM (Calvin)	LA/HM (DeMario)
	LA/LM (Justin, Beatrice)	
	n = 5	n = 3
	HA/HM (Dennis, Trina)	HA/LM (Darran)
4	HA/LM (Raynaldo)	LA/HM (Joshua, Rachel)
	LA/LM (Grady, Carlos)	
	n = 5	n = 3

Note. All names are pseudonyms

According to Polkinghorne (1983), this sample size of 16 students falls within the recommend number of 5 – 25 participants for phenomenological research. As the students chosen for focal group interviews were selected to purposely sample two students from each typology per grade based on pre-assessment scores alone, the

resulting sample included ten students who participated in the ISSR model and six who were involved in the traditional SSR group. Preference in focal student selection was given to alignment with typology rather than equal distribution between treatment and control groups.

Two research assistants, both junior education majors who were *not* apprised of the students' typology, agreed to interview each focal student three times during the treatment period, occurring at one-month intervals. The assistants participated in six hours of instruction with the researcher to become familiar with procedures for conducting and recording semi-structured interviews with students. The instruction included practice in asking follow-up questions and in re-stating responses to gain clarity and to check for understanding.

The individual interviews were semi-structured and were designed to provide opportunities for the students to comment on their perceptions of valence, instrumentality and expectancy for reading at these four-week intervals. The assistants were asked to use the questions designed for each of the three interviews and to follow up with other questions as needed in order to fully understand the student's response. The research assistants were also instructed to restate the students' comments to check for understanding. The questions that were included in each of the three interviews are provided in Appendix I.

The student interviews took place during the ISSR or SSR period in the conference room or teacher's lounge located in the third/fourth grade hallway. The researcher introduced the assistants to the teachers on the first day of the interviews, and

the teacher then introduced the assistants to each focal student in turn to inform them of the nature of the interviews and to ascertain their willingness to participate. Each of the students identified for participation in the focal student interviews agreed to the process and cooperated willingly with the assistants. The focal student interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder and were later downloaded as digital files and transcribed by the researcher. These transcriptions were used as primary data in a phenomenological analysis of student experiences of independent reading in ISSR and traditional SSR classrooms.   Supplemental data were derived from the researcher's classroom observations during fidelity checks and from the teachers' observations and conference notes to further inform or validate these findings. These data were used to provide an understanding of the context of the treatment model that served as the phenomenon being studied.

<div align="center">Research Design</div>

This investigation used a concurrent mixed methods design with a nested qualitative component to assess the effects of ISSR and traditional SSR on the reading achievement and reading motivation of third and fourth grade students, as well as to explore the experiences of students and teachers who were involved in these models. According to Creswell (2003):

> …a mixed methods approach is one in which the researcher tends to base
> knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds (e.g. consequence-oriented,
> problem-centered, and pluralistic). It employs strategies of inquiry that
> involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best

understand research problems. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information (e.g., on instruments) as well as text information (e.g., on interviews) so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information. (pp.18-19).

The mixed methods approach was selected for this research as it permits a pragmatic investigation of the quantifiable effects of SSR and ISSR on reading achievement and motivation that is balanced and supported by a description of how they are experienced by students and their teachers. For these reasons, the mixed method model is increasingly used in educational research (Grant & Branch, 2005; Ross, Nunnery, Goldfeder, McDonald, Rachor, Hornbeck, & Fleischman, 2004). While quantitative measures were used to compare the effectiveness of the ISSR and traditional SSR models using the MAP and MRP as dependent variables, an informal reading inventory was used to provide a more authentic measure of oral reading fluency and comprehension in the classroom. Qualitative approaches were also used to understand how students of various typologies of interest experience these models of sustained silent reading and how their perceived valence, instrumentality and expectancies for reading change over time in response to these models. Interview data and observations were useful in validating the instructional and motivational effects of SSR and ISSR as well as in providing information that may assist teachers in fine tuning reading instruction for students who represent the various typologies described above.

The following figure illustrates the placement of quantitative and qualitative methods in this concurrent nested mixed methods study:

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│            │      Concurrent Nested Mixed Methods Design   │               │
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│                    ┌────────────────────────────┐                         │
│                    │ Qualitative interviews, teacher │                    │
│                    │  reflections, researcher        │                    │
│                    │      observations               │                    │
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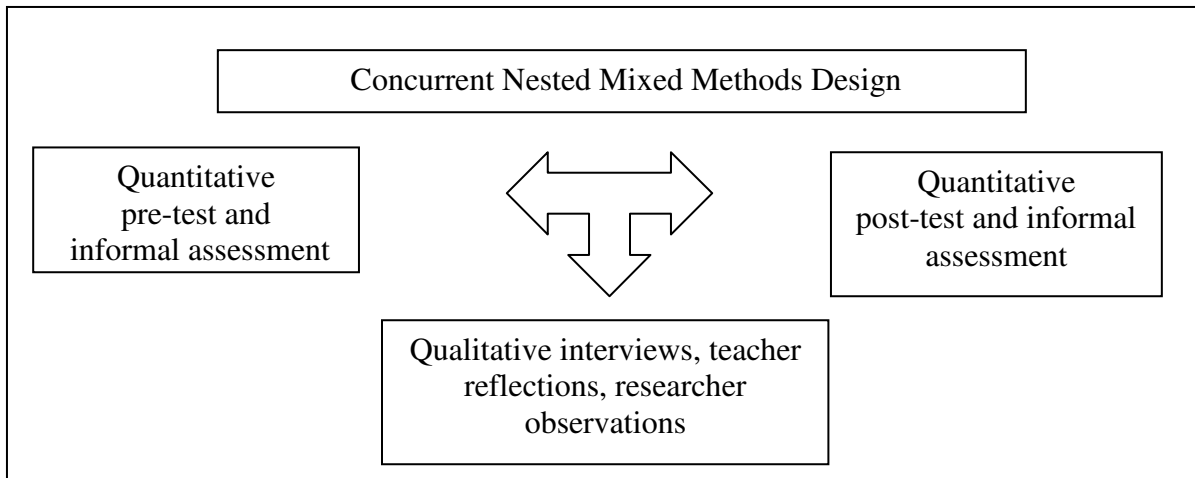
Figure 3.1. Concurrent Nested Mixed Methods Design

Materials

The following outcome measures for reading achievement and motivation were used in this investigation:

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

The *Measures of Academic Progress - Reading Assessment* was developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association as a state-aligned, norm-referenced computerized adaptive assessment that measures general knowledge in reading, language usage and mathematics (NWEA, 2006). The reading portion of the test targets word analysis/vocabulary, reading comprehension, and analysis of text (literary analysis). The MAP also provides a total score (RIT) and a Lexile score and range for each student. MAP tests are administered district-wide in September, December and March of each school year in the county where the data were derived. In this study, the total RIT score reported in from the December administration of the reading test was used to match

students by grade before randomizing students into treatment groups, and was also used for selection of focal students for interviews.

The MAP test adapts the difficulty of item selection to the individual abilities of students and reports scores in Rasch Units, or RIT scores. The NWEA reports a marginal reliability coefficient in the mid-nineties for the MAP – Reading Assessment for the third through fifth grades, based on a normative study of 82,156 third graders, 92,562 fourth graders, and 94,925 fifth graders in the fall and spring of 1999 (NWEA, 2006). A marginal reliability coefficient is a measure of internal consistency that calculates the measurement error at various points on the RIT scale. The measurement error decreases as more test information is provided in the middle of the test, where the student is likely to be able to complete more items correctly and consistently, than at the end of the scale where student performance is marked by greater variability and increased measurement error.

Concurrent validity of the MAP – Reading Assessment and the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (Form K)* is reported to be moderately high with correlation coefficient of $r = .77$ for third graders (n = 1,456) and $r = .84$ for fifth graders (n = 1,473). Reported concurrent validity of the MAP – Reading Assessment with the state-wide achievement test used in the participating school is in the low- to mid-seventies for third through fifth graders as reported in a sample of 1,955 third graders, 1,889 fourth graders and 1,893 fifth graders ($r = .77$, .76 and .70 respectively). The South Carolina State Standards blueprint was used to align content and difficulty of items given and serves to support the content validity of the assessment (NWEA, 2006).

The MAP tests are given in the participating school three times per year: September, late December, and again in March. Score reports were obtained from the schools for all three administrations so that analysis of growth during the fall semester of 2006, when no intervention was occurring, could be compared with growth reported in the spring of 2007, when the 12 week intervention period was conducted. MAP test scores for *word analysis/vocabulary*, *reading comprehension*, and *analysis of text* were used to compare the ISSR and traditional SSR groups, as were Lexile scores (described below).

A measure of text difficulty by reading level was derived using the MAP – Reading Assessment analysis, which is provided in the form a Lexile score range for each student. Lexiles are based on the Lexile Framework® for Reading, developed by MetaMetrix®, Inc. According to information provided on the website, www.lexile.com, "…(t)he Lexile scale is a developmental scale for reading ranging from 200L for beginning readers to above 1700L for advanced text." Lexile scores are derived from an equation that combines measures of semantic difficulty (based on word frequency) and syntactic complexity (based on sentence length) and uses Rasch procedures.

The Lexile Scale was developed to express a range of Lexile scores in which students at various grade levels could read text with 75% comprehension. For example, in the third grade, students would be expected to read text in the 500 – 750 Lexile range with 75% comprehension of material, while in the fourth grade, student should be able to read text in the 620 – 910 Lexile range. For the purposes of this research, the Lexile

score reported on the MAP - Reading Assessment, which indicates the midpoint of the student's Lexile range, was used as a quantitative indicator of reading level.

Motivation to Read Profile (MRP)

The *Motivation to Read Profile* was developed by Gambrell, Palmer, Codling and Mazzoni (1996) and is comprised of two instruments for use in grades two through six. The first is a R*eading Survey* that can be given to students in small groups and the second is a *Conversational Interview* that is conducted by teachers with individual students. The 20-item survey uses a four point rating scale and can be read aloud by the teacher or independently read by students according to the teacher's judgment regarding the students' reading ability. For the purposes of this study, only the survey portion of the MRP was used to measure possible changes in reading motivation.

As the MRP is based on the expectancy-value theory of motivation (Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meece & Midgely, 1983; Wigfield, 1994), the survey items were designed to sample the student's perceived *value of reading* (10 items) and *self-concept as a reader* (10 items). Internal consistencies for the Reading Survey, given to 330 third and fifth graders, resulted in the following reliability estimates using Cronbach's alpha: *Value of Reading* - third grade = .69, fifth grade = .77; *Self Concept as a Reader* - third grade = .70, fifth grade = .74. In addition, consistency between the Conversational Interview and the Reading Survey was reported to be .70, providing validation of survey items with student responses to interview questions (Gambrell et al., 1996).

The Reading Survey portion of the MRP, which includes a sub-scale for *Value for Reading* and one for *Self-Concept for Reading*, was given to all students in the ISSR and SSR treatment groups as a pre- and post-treatment measure of reading motivation. The Reading Survey total score was used to identify focal students, and subtest scores for Value for Reading and Self-Concept as a Reader were used as dependent variables in the statistical analyses. The MRP survey was administered by teachers in their classrooms, or by the researcher, during the second week of the treatment period. The survey took about 20 minutes to administer and questions were read aloud to students to control for differences in reading ability and comprehension. The post-treatment administration of the MRP took place in the two weeks following the end of the treatment period.

Qualitative Reading Inventory-4 (QRI-4)

The *Qualitative Reading Inventory* was developed by Leslie and Caldwell (2006) as an informal reading assessment designed for classroom teachers to evaluate student reading fluency and reading comprehension abilities. As the measure supplies neither normative nor standardized data, it is used for the purposes of this research as a qualitative measure of student reading ability – one that more closely approximates the types of reading activities that are expected in the classroom.

The QRI-4 provides leveled narrative and expository passages from the pre-primer through high school levels that can be used by teachers to determine reading levels, to assess comprehension of texts and reading fluency, and to determine individual student needs regarding word recognition and comprehension strategies. The student reads a selected passage aloud while the teacher records on a separate copy the student's

miscues, or reading errors. The teacher also records the amount of time required for the student to complete the passage. The teacher can then calculate the correct number of words read per minute and analyze the miscues to determine the types of decoding difficulties and, therefore, instructional needs, the student presents. Beyond this determination of speed and accuracy for reading, the teacher asks the student to respond to comprehension questions directly following the reading to determine how well the student comprehends what was read. This is helpful in discriminating between students who read quickly but do not recall what they've read ('word callers') from students who read slowly but have good comprehension ('word crawlers').

For the purposes of this assessment, the researcher administered the QRI-4 to all participating students in the ISSR and SSR groups as a pre- and post-test measure of reading fluency and comprehension. The QRI-4 was administered individually and was completed as a pre-treatment assessment during the first two weeks of the treatment period and as a post-treatment measure in the two weeks following the treatment period. The individual administration took about 5 – 8 minutes per student. Each participating student was asked to read aloud a grade level passage (third or fourth) and then to provide oral responses to 8 comprehension questions; 4 targeting explicit comprehension and 4 targeting implicit comprehension skills. Depending upon the oral reading accuracy and responses provided to the comprehension questions, some students were asked to read a passage that was a grade level higher or lower. However, this was only done when the student read the passage with extreme ease or great difficulty. With the exception of a few very high and very low ability students, the QRI-4 passage chosen for analysis was a

grade level passage. The same passage was then used for the post-treatment administration of the QRI-4 that took place in the two weeks following the treatment period.

<div align="center">Data Collection and Analysis</div>

Quantitative Data Procedures and Analysis

The quantitative portion of the study used a matched pairs experimental pre-test/post-test design to evaluate differences in reading achievement and motivation with 42 third grade and 45 fourth grade students. Student scores for the September and December, 2006 administration of the MAP test were compared with the March, 2007 administration. The instructional coach who served as the gatekeeper for this project intended to place the five classrooms involved in this study near the end of the assessment window for the March MAP administration, which would have permitted the inclusion of seven to eight weeks of the treatment period. Unfortunately, she was unable to follow through on this intention due to a serious illness. Therefore, the March administration of the MAP test occurred in these classrooms five to six weeks after the treatment period had begun, depending upon the classroom. The window for administering the MAP is determined by the NWEA Corporation and the school district. While a five or six week treatment period is not expected to be sufficient to show potential significant effects, the MAP scores obtained for this study were useful in determining the direction of trends in the treatment groups.

Quantitative data analysis used MANOVA procedures to compare the ISSR and SSR treatment groups across six dependent variables for students who were matched by

<div align="center">94</div>

reading ability and then randomly assigned to groups. The dependent variables included: (a) word analysis/vocabulary (MAP subtest); (b) reading comprehension (MAP subtest); (c) analysis of text (MAP subtest); (d) Lexile score (MAP Reading Assessment); (e) Value of Reading (MRP subtest), and; (f) Self-Concept as a Reader (MRP subtest).

As MAP test scores were available for September 2006, which was four months prior to the beginning of the 12-week treatment period, two separate MANOVA comparisons were made. The first was a repeated measure MANOVA using the September and December, 2006 MAP-Reading Assessment scores for word analysis/vocabulary, reading comprehension, analysis of text, and Lexile level. These scores for Time 1 (September to December) were compared with the outcomes on the same four variables derived from the December to March administration (Time 2). It's important to recall, however, that the Time 1 segment included approximately 12 weeks of instruction (before the treatment program), while the Time 2 segment only included five to six weeks of the treatment period due to the district's pre-arranged assessment window.

The second MANOVA involved a repeated measure comparison of groups using the December to March MAP scores, which included only five to six weeks of the treatment period, and the pre- and post-treatment MRP scores, which included 10 – 11 weeks of the treatment period, depending upon the treatment group. The dependent variables in this second analysis included the MAP word analysis/vocabulary, reading comprehension, analysis of text, and Lexile scores, and the value of reading and self-concept scores from the MRP.

Qualitative Data Procedures and Analysis

        Oral reading fluency and passage comprehension. An informal measure of oral reading fluency and comprehension was derived using the *Qualitative Reading Inventory-4*. Estimates of each oral reading fluency were obtained by calculating words read correctly per minute using a leveled reading passage and responses to follow-up explicit and implicit comprehension questions using the administration guidelines provided in Appendix A. Comparisons of oral reading speed and accuracy, and reading comprehension for grade level or independent level passages between treatment and control groups, were made using a variable oriented cross-case analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 173). The variables included in the matrices display include treatment group, and increase, decrease, or stability of oral reading fluency and reading comprehension.

        Focal student experiences. A second qualitative component of this mixed methods investigation involved a nested phenomenological study of students' experiences over time when involved in the SSR and ISSR models. This branch of the phenomenological tradition has its roots in existential phenomenology, which focuses on individual experiences and their meanings as opposed to group experiences. According to Moustakas (1994) the psychological approach seeks to "….determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived, in other words, the essences of structures of the experience" (p. 13). For the purposes of this investigation, the phenomenon to be studied was the

student's experience of a model of sustained silent reading. Specifically, the phenomenological investigation sought to determine whether these models of SSR were reported by focal students to influence their perceived valence (value of reading as an activity and a learning goal), instrumentality (potential of instruction to provide a "clear path" to their goals) and expectancy (anticipation of success or failure in successfully participating in the activity) of reading. In our endeavor to understand how various independent reading opportunities are experienced by students of varying levels of reading ability and reading motivation, we may come to understand how our instructional goals, implementations of literacy practices, and classroom contexts affect students as they move towards becoming independent readers – or, rather, prompt them to disengage from reading activities.

In order to tap the experiences of students representing a variety of abilities and attitudes, a purposeful sample of focal students from each of the four typologies, (*high achievement/high motivation; high achievement/low motivation; low achievement/high motivation;* and, *low achievement/low motivation)* were identified based on pre-test scores on the MAP-Reading Assessment (total score) and MRP – Reading Survey (total RIT). These students were balanced with equal distribution between grades (third and fourth) and were interviewed every four weeks, resulting in three interviews per student and a total of 48 interviews in all.

The topical and sub-questions used for the semi-structured interview used with the focal students were based on recommendations by Creswell (1998) and centered on the experience of reading independently during the school day. Using the grand tour

question, "Tell me what you're reading now?" students were encouraged to describe their experiences of independent reading. Follow-up questions were designed to focus on aspects of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy, as detailed in the interview protocols provided in Appendix I. The interviews were conducted by two research assistants who were not apprised of the treatment model that students were involved with nor the typology the student represented so that any expectation on the part of the interviewer regarding the student's selection for focal interviews would not influence their questioning of the student.

All interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder and later transcribed for analysis. In order for changes over time to be described, the series of three interviews for each student were transcribed and analyzed sequentially so that a single-subject before intersubject analysis could occur. NVivo-7 software (QSR International) was used to code student responses using an abductive coding method (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). An abductive coding procedure allows for both inductive and deductive coding strategies. Deductive coding permitted responses to be placed under the parent tree nodes of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy as per the intent of research question 3, which was based in VIE theory. Inductive coding emerged from the transcribed text as child nodes under these parent nodes, or as free nodes. Analysis of student responses under these nodes revealed consistencies and/or progressions in student perceptions across the three interviews. These data were reduced to create the single-subject findings that then informed the horizontal analyses of typologies within and across grade levels.

The complete journey of a student through the 12 week treatment period constituted the first level of analysis. This initial reduction of data is referred to as the *student portrait* in the findings section of this report, and depicts changes in each student's description of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy for reading across the three interviews. Following the single-subject analyses, a second level, horizontal analysis was conducted to determine meaning statements and meaning clusters that emerged across the data by typology and grade level. In a final pass through the data, meaning clusters that emerged within grades, treatment models, or by achievement or motivation (for example, all high achievers or all students who were in low motivation groups) were considered.

Implementation of treatment models. In order to assess the contextual factors that influence students' independent reading experiences in ISSR and SSR models, the researcher's fidelity check sheets and observations, and the teachers' self-checklists, reflections, and conference notes, were included in a separate qualitative analysis. These data were used to describe how teachers implemented the treatment model they were assigned in order to better understand the student experience of the model in their particular treatment group. These data will also be useful in designing future research and professional development materials.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of traditional and instructional models of sustained silent reading on the reading achievement and reading motivation of third and fourth grade students. To investigate these effects, both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained and analyzed in order to address the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading achievement of third and fourth grade students?

2. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading motivation of third and fourth grade students?

3. What do students report regarding their experiences of participation in the ISSR and SSR models of independent reading in relation to their perception of valence, instrumentality, and expectancies for reading, particularly students who represent the following typologies: *High Achievement/High Motivation; High Achievement/Low Motivation; Low Achievement/High Motivation,* and; *Low Achievement/Low Motivation*?

This chapter will present a description of the implementation of the treatment models first, followed by the findings of the quantitative and qualitative investigations. Further interpretation of these findings and an integration of the quantitative and qualitative results will be presented in Chapter 5: Discussion.

Implementation of Treatment Models

A description of the ways in which the treatment models, SSR and ISSR, were implemented is offered to provide a context for presenting the results of the quantitative and qualitative data. The data collected that inform these descriptions include:

(a) Teacher self-reports from the teacher check sheets, which include time spent in silent reading per day, strategies suggested to students during conferences, reading difficulty of self-selected books, notes and observations regarding student interests and reading behaviors, and titles of books used during the booksharing activity;

(b) Teacher conference notes (ISSR model only);

(c) Teacher daily and weekly reflections;

(d) Researcher fidelity checks;

(e) Researcher observations and field notes, and;

(f) Teacher responses to post-treatment email interview.

Teachers differed in the amount of information they offered on the self-report checksheets and reflections; however, when supplemented by researcher fidelity checks, field notes, and observations, sufficient data were collected to describe the manner in which the treatment models were implemented in the five classrooms.

The ISSR Treatment Model

One third grade classroom (Ms. Jule) and two fourth grade classrooms (Ms. Neubin and Ms. Madsen) implemented the ISSR treatment model. This model is comprised of three essential elements; teacher bookshare, time for sustained silent

reading and conferences, and student sharing. Following a description of the classroom environments during the ISSR period, each of the three essential elements will be addressed in turn. All names of teachers and students are pseudonyms.

Classroom Environment. All three ISSR teachers used colored crates to organize student book baggies, large plastic Ziploc™ bags, by conference groups. Teachers displayed a chart that indicated which conference group was set to meet on each day, distinguishing groups by the color of the crate. In one classroom, Ms. Jule's, the colored crates were placed in various places in the room to cue students where to sit, and these were rotated on each day of the week. Reading spaces included the loft, the carpet, the chairs in the back of the room, and two desk groupings. In the fourth grade ISSR classrooms, students retrieved books from their colored crates as they came into the room from recess, then settled into assigned seats (Neubin) or chose a desk or a spot on the carpet (Madsen). In all classrooms, the researcher observed that students were familiar with the procedure for getting started during the ISSR period, were familiar with procedures for finding and changing books, and maintained an organized system of storing and retrieving their books.

Teacher Bookshares. Teachers were observed to differ somewhat in their presentation of the teacher bookshare. Ms. Jule, the third grade teacher, was observed to present a set of related books and to note strategies or clues that would be useful when addressing standardized test questions, such as the use of text features. Nearly all of the books she presented were of the fiction genre, although several were from the historical fiction or realistic fiction sub-genre. Ms. Neubin discussed author, and illustrator and

provided a varied range genres to students. She read short but enticing bits of text and was expressive and engaging. Ms. Madsen offered long bookshares, reading extended sections of text in an expressive and engaging manner. She also tended to stay with one book, or series of books, for the entire week and presented a greater number of poetry texts than the other two ISSR teachers. Table 4.1 details the genres of text that teachers report presenting during the twelve weeks of the treatment period.

Table 4.1 *ISSR Teacher Self-report: Teacher Bookshare Genres*

Genre	Jule (3rd)	Neubin (4th)	Madsen (4th)
Fiction	26	22	14
Non-fiction	7	15	2
Poetry	1	5	29

Sustained Silent Reading Time. Teachers in the ISSR groups increased their reading time to within the 20 – 25 minute time frame suggested. Ms. Jule and Ms. Madsen began the treatment period spending a greater portion of time in teaching student sharing practices, discussing strategies for choosing books, and teacher bookshares, leaving 5 – 10 minutes for independent reading in the first weeks. Ms. Neubin began the first week with 20 minutes of silent reading and taught the booksharing routines as they were offered. The average number of minutes spent in sustained silent reading each week was reported by teachers as displayed in the following table:

Table 4.2. *ISSR Teacher Self-Report: Average Minutes of Silent Reading*

Week	Jule (3rd)	Neubin (4th)	Madsen (4th)
1	12	20	8
2	16	23	17
3	18	24	Not reported
4	24	25	Not reported
5	23	26	22
6	22	19	22
7	23	15	20
8	24	19	22
9	24	25	Not reported
10	26	24	24
11	22	14	22
12	25	24	Not reported
Grand Average	**22 mins.**	**22 mins.**	**20 mins.**

The researcher visited each ISSR classroom on three occasions throughout the treatment period at approximately 4 week intervals. Using a 30-point fidelity rubric (Appendix D), observations of teacher booksharing, conferencing, student booksharing, time spent reading, and classroom organization were made. The ISSR teachers received fidelity to treatment scores of 93 – 100%, indicating that implementation of the treatment model fell well within acceptable ranges. The researcher also noted the amount of time

spent in sustained silent reading during each of the three observations. These ranged from 15 – 25 minutes.

An additional observation was made regarding student engagement during the sustained silent reading period. Students were judged to be engaged in essential aspects of reading text if they were (a) visually attending to a book, meaning that they were looking directly at the text with an attentive gaze; (b) conferencing with the teacher about what they were reading; (c) choosing a book from the bookshelf; or; (d) talking with another student about the book they were reading, as overheard by the researcher. At five minute intervals during the sustained silent reading period, the researcher made a tally of students who were engaged in a manner described above, or noted what they were doing otherwise. Students who were not engaged were often talking or looking around the room. Some were walking or out of their seats for some purpose, such as answering the door or getting a drink from the fountain. Table 4.3 presents results from the researcher's observations of fidelity for each of the ISSR classrooms at three points in time during the treatment period.

Table 4.3. *Researcher Fidelity Checks - ISSR Groups*

	Jule (3rd)	Neubin (4th)	Madsen (4th)
Rating (percent):			
Time 1	24/24 (100%)[1]	30/30 (100%)	28/30 (93%)
Time 2	24/30 80%)	30/30 (100%)	28/28 (100%)[2]
Time 3	29/30 (97%)	30/30 (100%)	28/30 (93%)
Silent Reading Time:			
Time 1	15 minutes	22 minutes	20 minutes
Time 2	15 minutes	15 minutes[3]	22 minutes
Time 3	25 minutes	21 minutes	15 minutes
Ave. # of students engaged:			
Time 1	18 of 21	19 of 20	18 of 19
Time 2	16 of 20	17 of 20[3]	19 of 21
Time 3	20 of 21	18 of 21	18 of 20

[1] researcher arrived after teacher bookshare

[2] students could not change books because the ISSR period was held in another room

[3] 'throwing up' incident at beginning of ISSR period – students distracted by custodian

Student engagement in reading or reading-related activities was judged to be good during these three observation visits, with the exception of Time 2 in Ms. Jule's class. During this observation, one student, who was sitting on a chair behind the loft and not easily seen by the teacher, was disrupting students in the loft and talking with others who came to select books from the shelf close by. She did not open her book during the first 10 minutes of the period and only did so when she noticed that the researcher was observing her. Ms. Jule's practice of rotating where groups sit may have served to ameliorate this problem in the long term, as the seating area by the loft was the most difficult to see from the teacher's desk where the conferences are held. For the most part, students in ISSR classrooms were observed to be engaged in the silent reading interval and most were able to sustain their engagement throughout a 20 – 25 minute period.

Teacher Conferences. The weekly teacher conference with students is a key element in the ISSR model. This is a time for teachers to connect with what their students are interested in reading, to listen as students read aloud in order to monitor areas of weakness and strength, and to suggest strategies for choosing books at an appropriate level as well as strategies for reading and understanding the chosen texts. In the professional development meetings prior to the treatment period, ISSR teachers were encouraged to maintain a conversational demeanor during the conferences and express their interest in the student's choices, but to also monitor carefully how well the student is able to negotiate the texts. The term 'explicitly instrumental' was used during the discussions with teachers to express the importance of providing a clear path between what the student wants to read for their own purposes by providing the skills they need to

do so. The ISSR period is intended as an oasis in the school day where the students' questions and interests take precedence over teacher-led tasks and assessments.

Teachers in the ISSR groups were provided with conference note sheets to use when meeting with students. This recording sheet is provided in Appendix E, and provides space for teachers to note the title and reading difficulty of the book the student is reading, as well as strategies suggested and comments or observations. Teachers maintained these records in a binder provided by the researcher. While Ms. Jule and Ms. Madsen organized their notes (five per page) chronologically, Ms. Neubin organized hers alphabetically by student's names, so that she could easily review past notes while conferencing. She remarked that she liked being able to see what she had suggested in past conferences so that she could check up on how the student was progressing with that skill. Table 4.4 illustrates the variety and number of strategies suggested to students during the treatment period. Please note that only the data of students who received permission to participate in the study were used in this analysis.

An examination of the table indicates that overall, the fourth grade teachers suggested strategies about 70 more times over the treatment period than Ms. Jule, the third grade ISSR teacher. The three teachers presented between 4 and 8 different strategies for reading words, such as breaking words down into manageable parts (chunking) and using context clues. Ms. Neubin provided more text-specific clues, as when she guided students in using the pronunciation key provided in some expository texts to figure out how to pronounce new vocabulary words, such as 'triceratops' or 'vacillate'. Ms. Madsen used phonics and word family clues to assist students who were

struggling to decode, noting that she had quite a few resource students in her class and knew these strategies to be helpful.

The third and fourth grade ISSR teachers differed most noticeably in the variety and number of comprehension strategies suggested to students during conferences. Ms. Jule presented only 8 different strategies for understanding text, while Ms. Neubin and Ms. Madsen used 14 and 19 different strategies respectively. Ms. Jule made suggestions regarding the features of various genres that would aid students in understanding texts, and made a noticeably large number of suggestions regarding author's purpose. The notes regarding author's purpose all occurred during a two-week period, which may suggest that the strategy was a targeted ELA standard during that time period.

Table 4.4. *ISSR Teacher Self-Report: Strategies Suggested During Conferences*

Strategies for Reading Text	Jule (3rd)	Neubin (4th)	Madsen (4th)
Reading Text:			
Chunking	6	5	4
Context	4	1	7
Fluency/rhythm/expression		8	
Initial sounds		1	
Onomatopoeia	2	2	1
Phonics/word families			3
Pictures	3	2	2
Pronouncing		5	
Rhyme		2	
Total strategies recorded	**15**	**28**	**1**
Strategies for Understanding Text:			
Access prior knowledge	12	1	1
Ask questions		3	4
Author's purpose	1		
Characters/traits			7
Choosing books		1	13
Compare/Contrast			4
Context	5	5	4
Discussion		3	5
Genre features		6	6
Identifying facts		5	
Illustrations/diagrams/charts	1	5	2
Make connections		29	19
Predict	1		2
Print features (italics, caps, quotes)	3		3
Re-read to clarify		9	10
Setting	6	20	
Summarize		1	22
Teacher provides info			22
Text features (captions, headings)	1		11
Theme		11	1
Use other sources (Internet, dictionary, maps)			3
Visualization/Imagery		4	1
Total strategies recorded	**30**	**103**	**104**
Number of Students	**23**	**16**	**12**
Number of Conferences	**180**	**113**	**90**

Ms. Neubin's suggestions were often designed to aid students in understanding and negotiating print features, such as what the author means when words are written in all capital letters or italics, how parenthesis work to embed ideas, or how quotation marks separate lines of dialogue between speakers. She also made reference to text features that would aid understanding, such as headings and sub-headings, captions, illustrations and diagrams. As her students seemed to be reading a greater proportion of expository texts, she often suggested they use the Internet, encyclopedia or other outside resources to research the topic further.

While Ms. Neubin was observed to succeed at being conversational *and* instructive in her conferences with students, Ms. Madsen's conferencing style could best be described as 'enthusiastically interactive'. She was observed to have deep and extended discussions with students, and often remarked that she learned something new or that she wanted to read the book when the student was finished with it. She also managed to present the greatest variety of strategies for understanding text (19 versus 14 and 8), and the greatest number of strategic suggestions per conference (104 for 90 conferences versus 103 for 113 and 30 for 180). She emphasized highly contextualized strategies, such as summarizing, making connections to other texts or the real world, and re-reading to clarify.

Ms. Jule documented fewer strategic suggestions than the fourth grade teachers: however, she did note 4 to 5 times as many observations regarding reading skill and student behavior, such as 'Needs to build self-image' or 'Made a lot of progress since August', than did the other two ISSR teachers. She was observed to be conversational

with students during conferences and to check for understanding, determine interests, and listen to them read aloud. Despite these differences, all of the ISSR teachers made some note of student interests and preferences, such as 'really likes to read mysteries' and 'interested in dancing'. A summary of the number of comments regarding interests and observations by teacher is provided in Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.5. *ISSR Teacher Self-Report: Notes on Interest and Observations*

Notes regarding:	Jule (3rd)	Neubin (4th)	Madsen (4th)
Student Interests	22	14	36
Observations	42	11	15
Examples	Needs to build self-image; Reads well; We share a birthday!	Uses voices when reading dialogue; Knows when he makes a mistake	Self-corrects; Makes sound effects while reading; Struggles to figure out words.

Teacher conferences were also designed to be opportunities to guide students in selecting books to read that were neither too hard to be frustrating nor too easy to practice budding skills. Teachers were requested to note the reading difficulty of the book that the student chose to present during the conferences, and to offer students strategies for choosing books at the 'just right' level. The following charts illustrate the percentage of easy, just right, and hard books that were read by students, as recorded in the teacher's conference notes:
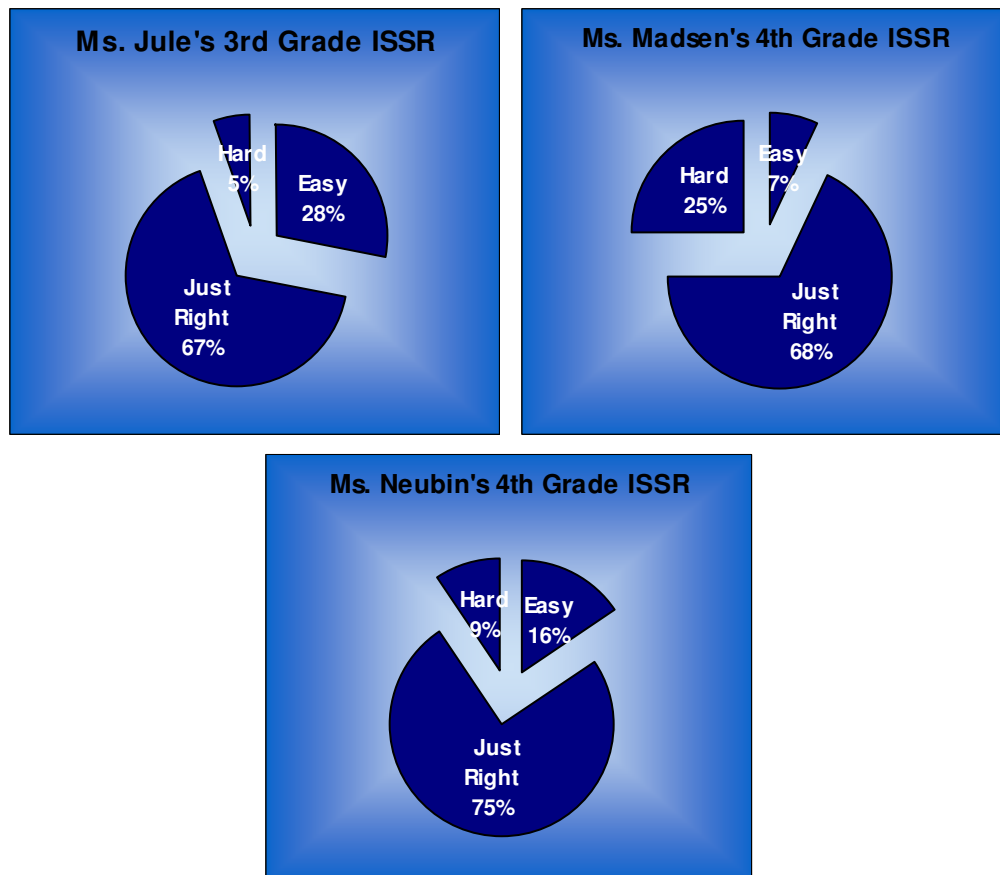
Figure 4.1. ISSR Teacher Self-Report: Difficulty of Books Selected by Students

These pie charts indicate that in all ISSR classrooms, students read a greater percentage of books at the just right level than books that were too easy or too hard. Ms. Jule's and Ms. Madsen's classrooms present a mirror image of hard versus easy books, with Ms. Jule's group choosing more easy books than hard and Ms. Madsen's group choosing the inverse. Ms. Neubin's group presents a closer approximation of balance of hard and easy books. Interestingly, Ms. Madsen made more comments in her notes regarding helping students to find books at a just right level in their interest areas. In ISSR classrooms, teachers were recommended to suggest that students keep an *easy read*

in their baggies for occasions when they want to enjoy text without working quite so hard. The reading of hard books often occurred when students stated (as recorded by teachers) that they wanted a challenge, or that they were interested in the topic and didn't mind the challenge in order to access the information. For example, on one day in the third month of the treatment period, Ms. Neubin made the following entry:

M.M. 4/9/07

Book Title: *The Ghost of Fossil Glenn*

Book Difficulty: Hard

Strategy Suggested: Try to use harder words in daily life

Notes: Wants to challenge herself; Stopped – no interest

The Student Sharing Activity. The student sharing activity is an element of the ISSR model designed to provide students an opportunity to discuss with their peers books they have read. In Ms. Jule's and Ms. Madsen's groups, the teachers reported, and were most often observed, to ask students who had recently finished books to stand and tell the class what the book was about. In their notes, teachers remarked that there were some students who enjoyed sharing their books with the class and others who seldom or never shared their books.

Ms. Neubin made adaptations to the student book share that became so popular, by her report, that students requested it exclusively. In fact, one of the focal students, a boy with low motivation to read, mentioned that this was his favorite part of the ISSR period. The 'book sell' began when Ms. Neubin announced that the silent reading period was over by saying, "Who has a book to sell?" She would them place the 'magic selling

stool' in the front of the room as students who wanted to 'sell' a book waved their hands. Ms. Neubin selected popsicle sticks from a can that had students' names written on them until she chose one of the students whose hand was raised. The seller would sit on the magic stool, and with conspiratory prompts from Ms. Neubin, would carefully relate just the right amount of information about the book to tempt their peers to read it without giving away too many of the details. When the student had concluded their 'sell', Ms. Neubin would ask, "Who wants to buy this book for the mere price of a raised hand?" At this point, students would wave their hands wildly in the air while Ms. Neubin selected the popsicle sticks with their names on them. The 'seller' was asked to close their eyes and choose a popsicle stick. Ms. Neubin would then announce their name and add "You have won yourself a book!" [Researcher observation, 3/12/07]

Teachers' Response to the Treatment Model. At the end of the treatment period, and after all of the post-assessments had been completed, teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire via email that would allow them to articulate their response to the ISSR model and it's potential to effect changes in reading achievement and motivation. The questions were:

1. Do you feel that giving students 25 – 30 minutes to independently read books of their own choosing was an effective investment of time during the school day? How so or why not?

2. Is there anything about the model (SSR or ISSR) that you used in your classroom that you think would help students improve their reading ability?

3. Is there anything about the model (SSR or ISSR) that you used in your classroom that you think would help students to improve their motivation to read?

4. Were there any unexpected changes in students or in the classroom environment that you could attribute to SSR or ISSR?

5. Will you be offering some sort of SSR in your classroom next year? If so, what elements of SSR or ISSR will you keep and which would you change?

Of the three ISSR teachers, Ms. Jule (3rd grade) and Ms. Neubin (4th grade) responded to the questionnaire. The email was sent at the end of the school year, and Ms. Madsen had left for a holiday soon after school ended. Both teachers who returned responses reported that providing time for students to read books of their own choosing was an effective use of school time. Ms Jule indicated that students seldom have opportunities to choose what they read and to do so without being tested on it. Ms. Neubin wrote in her response that students may not be encouraged or given time to read at home.

Both teachers indicated that they felt that ISSR improved or reinforced comprehension. Ms. Jule added that her students looked forward to the one-on-one time and enjoyed sharing their books with her and with the class. Ms. Neubin felt that ISSR would be even more effective if combined with a guided reading group. Regarding the effect of ISSR on motivation, Ms. Neubin stated that she noticed a difference in many children, and attributes this to the opportunity to read books that they choose and enjoy. Ms. Jule commented that the teacher bookshares were instrumental in getting students to

read different books. She added that she would continue to do teacher bookshares next year.

While Ms. Jule did not notice any unexpected changes as a result of ISSR, Ms. Neubin observed that students became more open about what they were reading and proud when they completed a book. Both teachers indicated that they will include some form of ISSR in their classrooms next year. Ms. Jule did not feel she could maintain a schedule of weekly conferences, but felt that meeting with students every other week would be possible. She also intends to continue the student sharing element of ISSR in an attempt to improve expressive language and listening skills. Ms. Neubin is working on a model of ISSR that will be tied to guided reading groups. She stated that she and Ms. Madsen are team teaching next year and have both decided to include the model in their reading block.

The SSR Treatment Model

One third grade teacher, Ms. Merwin, and one fourth grade teacher, Ms. Cojack, implemented the SSR model during the treatment period. The SSR model followed the traditional 'McCracken Rules' for sustained silent reading time. These rules included:

1. Everyone reads silently during the prescribed time – no excuses;

2. The teacher is engrossed in adult fare during the SSR period;

3. Students may choose one book, magazine or newspaper from a variety

   of available materials and cannot change the text they are reading

   during the SSR period;

4. The SSR period is timed, beginning with a 10 minute interval and increasing as students are able;

5. There can be no reports or records kept of what or how much students read, nor any evaluation of comprehension.

Following a description of the classroom environments in which the SSR models were conducted, data will be presented to detail the fidelity of the implementation of the model and the responses of students and teachers to the model. All names are pseudonyms.

Classroom Environment. Both teachers used colored crates for students to organize their book baggies, with groups of five or six students assigned to a crate. In Ms. Merwin's third grade group, some of her homeroom students remained with her for the SSR period, while others moved to Ms. Jule's classroom for an ISSR period. During classroom visits, the researcher observed on several occasions that the students remaining in Ms. Merwin's room were already selecting books or beginning to read before students from Ms. Jule's classroom arrived [Researcher observations: 4/18/07 & 5/2/07]. Ms. Merwin rotated reading spaces for the groups, and designated the loft, the center carpet, the back carpet, and two groupings of desks as reading areas. As the rotation was consistent, students were observed to go to the correct reading area without being reminded. During the second week of the treatment period, students went to their crates, retrieved their book baggies, and settled in to read. On one occasion, Ms. Merwin was overheard as she began the SSR period saying, "Everyone have a spot? Enjoy!" [Researcher note: 4/18/07]

The students in Ms. Cojak's fourth grade SSR group came to her room from recess, after using the restroom and getting a drink of water. Students tended to trickle into the room in pairs and small groups, but by the second week, were going directly to their colored crate and retrieving their book baggie. Students were allowed to sit or lay anywhere in the room so long as they did not talk or disrupt others. She was observed to begin the SSR period with a list of instructions, such as, "Pick somewhere you won't be a problem to your neighbor. Everyone's go their books? Let's get started!" Both Ms. Merwin and Ms. Cojak were observed to get up from their desks to go discretely to students who were being a disruption and talk with them quietly. On some occasions, students were moved closer to the teacher for the remainder of the SSR period.

Selecting books. While the McCracken rules state that students are to choose one book and to read only that book during the SSR period, this rule was variably implemented in the two SSR classrooms. In both groups, students were reminded to change books if necessary during the first five minutes of the period. Students were permitted to keep a book in their book baggie if they wished to continue reading it during the next SSR session. In Ms. Merwin's group, students were not observed to change books once the silent reading period began. Although Ms. Cojak was observed to provide reminders at the beginning of the period, such as, "If you're toward the end of a book, make sure you have one to switch it out with", students would occasionally go up to her desk during the silent reading interval to ask permission to choose another book.

The Teacher Reads. As teachers were also required to read during the SSR period, they were to have materials ready for reading. Ms. Merwin was often observed to

read texts from her Master's in Educational Leadership program, although she also read an *American Girls* chapter book during an observation [Researcher notes: 5/2/07]. Ms. Cojak preferred juvenile and young adult chapter books and would sometimes laugh out loud at humorous passages. She noted in her reflections that the students would ask her later what she was reading and that her homeroom students requested that she read the book aloud to their class as a reward for completing work. Ms. Cojak, in particular, reflected that she enjoyed the quiet reading time. In one reflection at the beginning of the treatment period, she wrote, "I am really enjoying my reading time and the peacefulness. Some days it's the only peace I have!" [Teacher reflection, 2/7/07].

Sustained Silent Reading Time. Ms. Merwin used the first week of the treatment period orienting students to the SSR model by showing them where the crates would be stored and how the classroom books were arranged. She began the first week with 15 minutes of silent reading and ended the week with 20 – 25 minutes. By the second week, students were reading for an average of 25 minutes each day. Ms. Cojak's group began the treatment period with 20 – 25 minutes of reading and within two weeks were reading for 25 - 30 minutes per day. The teachers used self-report checksheets, provided in Appendix G, to monitor their implementation of important elements of the SSR model and to record the reading times for each day during the treatment period. Table 4.6 displays the average number of minutes per week spent in sustained silent reading for the two SSR groups.

Table 4.6. *SSR Teacher Self- Report: Average Minutes of Silent Reading*

Week	Merwin (3rd)	Cojak (4th)
1	23	23
2	23	20
3	24	23
4	26	24
5	25	27
6	27	27
7	24	26
8	27	27
9	26	28
10	27	30
11	24	29
12	26	30
Grand Average	**25 mins.**	**26 mins.**

The two SSR groups were fairly equal in the average number of minutes spent in silent reading each week. As the SSR teachers did not present bookshares or engage students in sharing activities at the end of the silent reading period, they read longer on average than the ISSR groups by as much as 5 minutes per day. A comparative table that

indicates silent reading times across the treatment period for both models is presented

below in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. *Teacher Self-Report of Reading Times across Models*

	Third Grade		Fourth Grade		
	SSR (Merwin)	ISSR (Jule)	SSR (Cojak)	ISSR (Neubin)	ISSR (Madsen)
Total minutes	1210	1082	1247	1206	895
Days reported	50	49	48	52	42
Average	24	22	26	23	21
Range	15 - 25	10 - 25	15 - 30	20 - 27	5 – 30

The teachers frequently noted in their reflections when students were disruptive or

not engaged during the reading period. Ms. Cojak's reflections also included anecdotes

and observations of students' responses to her choice of reading materials and obvious

enjoyment of them. In her reflection during the second week of the treatment period, she

wrote:

> "The kids in my class have been telling me about the books they are
>
> reading. Our lunch conversations today were all about what I was reading
>
> and about what they were reading. They were excited because I was
>
> reading *Because of Winn Dixie* because they had seen the movie. I am
>
> excited to discover the end!" [Teacher reflection: 2/9/07]

Nearer to the end of the treatment period, she reflected, "I enjoyed my book today,

though, because it was really funny. Yesterday was too. Today, though, some of them

saw me laughing as I read and stopped reading their own and laughed with me. It was cute!" [Teacher reflection: 4/19/07]. These observations by Ms. Cojak suggest that the teacher's model of engaged reading may encourage student discussion of books, especially the one the teacher is reading. The import carried by the teacher's model of suggestion of reading books also informs the inclusion of the teacher bookshare in the ISSR groups; but in the case of this SSR group, the teacher simply models engaged reading.

Fidelity to the Model. The researcher visited the SSR classrooms on three occasions throughout the 12-week treatment period at approximately 4 week intervals. The fidelity monitoring rubric is provided in Appendix H and includes elements such as cueing students to have books ready to read, transitions to and from the silent reading period, and monitoring of student engagement to determine when to end the treatment period. As with the ISSR groups, the researcher also noted at five minute intervals during the silent reading period if students were visually engaged with their text or overhead discussing the book with a peer. As students were not guided in choosing books in the SSR model, students were not judged to be engaged in the model if they were out of their seat to change books. Table 4.8 presents the results of the fidelity monitoring at three points in time over the treatment period.

Table 4.8. *Researcher Fidelity Checks: SSR Model*

	Merwin (3rd)	Cojak (4th)
Rating (percent)		
Time 1	13/16 (81%)[1]	16/16 (100%)
Time 2	16/16 (100%)	16/16 (100%)
Time 3	16/16 (100%)	16/16 (100%)
Silent Reading Time		
Time 1	25 minutes	23 minutes
Time 2	25 minutes	25 minutes
Time 3	22 minutes	21 minutes
Ave. # students engaged		
Time 1	17 of 20	16 of 18
Time 2	22 of 24	14 of 19
Time 3	19 of 21	16 of 23

[1] Student teacher in charge

Ms. Merwin and Ms. Cojak received fidelity ratings of 100%. The first visit to Ms. Merwin's class was during the week that a student teacher was in charge of the group. Although he was present to observe Ms. Merwin's model of the implementation during the first two weeks of the treatment period, he was not involved in the professional development. Therefore, his fidelity ratings were noticeably lower than Ms. Merwin's; but, as he was in charge of the group for two weeks during the treatment period, the observation was included.

Teachers' Response to the Treatment Model. The teachers in the SSR classrooms were asked to complete the same email questionnaire as were the ISSR teachers (see pages 117 – 118). These questions provide an opportunity for teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of providing time for self-selected reading during the school day and possible implications for reading achievement and reading motivation.

Both teachers indicated decisively that providing time for students to read books of their own choosing was an effective use of time. Ms. Cojak elaborated that the SSR period was a productive way for students to unwind after lunch and recess. Ms. Merwin echoed Ms. Neubin's observation that their students may not have opportunities or encouragement for reading outside of school, so providing time during the school day was a good use of time. The two SSR teachers agreed that having a choice of reading materials may increase reading ability as students are more likely to find texts that interest them. Ms. Merwin added that students who took advantage of the opportunity to engage with books during the SSR period were reading for an extra 150 minutes per week, which she thought should have some effect on reading ability.

With regard to effects on motivation for reading, Ms. Cojak observed that her model of engaged reading seemed to promote similar behaviors in her students. Ms. Merwin, on the other hand, felt that students would become more motivated to read if they became more confident as independent readers, and that the dedicated time each day for extended reading should promote this. While Ms. Cojak wrote that she did not expect that students would read so quietly during the SSR period, and was therefore pleasantly surprised, Ms. Merwin's observations of changes were related to the Accelerated

Reader™ (AR) program that has been offered in the school since the beginning of the year. She reports that prior to this research, she allowed students to leave the room to take AR tests during the independent reading time that she offered.

As a condition of participation in this research, teachers were instructed *not* to promote AR in their classes or to provide time for AR testing during the SSR or ISSR periods. If students requested to take tests during other free periods of time during they day, they were permitted to do so; however, teachers were to suspend all classroom incentives for participating in AR programs. Findings regarding student participation in the AR program are presented in the following section. Ms. Merwin's observation of changes in the classroom with regard to the AR policy was stated as follows:

> Not allowing students to take AR tests or go to the library proved to really
>
> provide a quiet atmosphere for the students to concentrate. We had very,
>
> very few disruptions. I had always allowed students to go to the library
>
> and test during this time in previous years. This year it was a problem
>
> because I couldn't seem to get the children to focus. They were much
>
> more interested in waiting to test or go to the library than actually reading
>
> until we forbid them to take part in either [Email response: 6/6/07].

Ms. Merwin added that she intended to provide SSR time for her students in the coming year, and that she would be sure to require students to find other times to take AR tests. Ms. Cojak expresses a desire to continue providing SSR time, but worries that with the imminent compartmentalization of the fourth grade in the coming year, she will have difficulty in finding the same amount of time to dedicate to sustained silent reading.

Accelerated Reader™

The Accelerated Reader™ program (AR) is prevalent in the region of the country where this research was conducted. As the sampling frame contained very few schools that did not offer AR, and as those schools were offering other competing programs, such as the 100 Book Challenge (American Reading Company, 2006), the school that was selected for participation, having agreed to all other conditions of the research, also agreed to suspend promotion of AR during the treatment period. Teachers were asked not to discuss or promote involvement in AR or to participate further in classroom incentive programs related to AR. However, as the students had been involved in the program, as well as the accompanying school-wide incentive programs, since the beginning of the year, they were permitted to read AR books and take the STAR tests, but *not* during the SSR or ISSR period. Figure 4.2 below illustrates changes in the number of AR tests taken by students who participated in this study, during the fall semester, which did not include the treatment period, and the spring semester, which did include the treatment period. There was one month of unrestricted AR activity in the spring semester before the treatment period began.
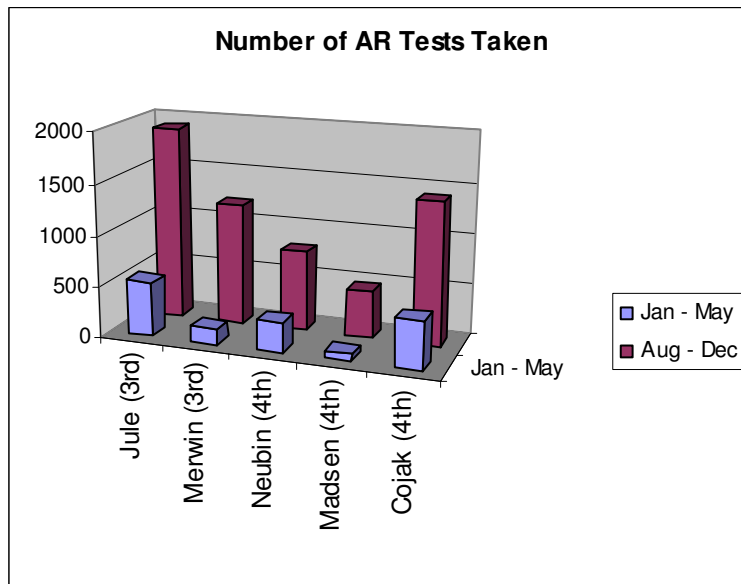
Figure 4.2. Number of AR Tests Taken by Students in Participating Classrooms

The figure illustrates that students in all participating classrooms noticeably reduced their involvement in the AR program, as evidenced by the number of STAR tests taken in the January to May time period when compared to the August to December time period. Forty-five percent of the students took 5 or fewer AR tests in the spring semester, and 58% took 10 or fewer tests. Please note that the spring semester tally includes the month of January, which is prior to the treatment period and the conditions restricting endorsement of the AR program in the participating classrooms. These results indicate that without teacher promotion, students were not as likely to seek time to take the AR tests. It was judged that the amount of student involvement in AR reading was not sufficient to contradict any findings that may be attributed to the SSR and ISSR treatment programs.

Quantitative Results: Reading Achievement and Motivation

This study used a matched pairs experimental pre-test/post-test design to compare the effects of students in the ISSR and SSR groups on measures of reading achievement, using the Measures of Academic Progress – Reading (MAP) and motivation, using the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP). Students were matched by their December MAP RIT (total reading ability) scores and then randomly assigned to groups. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the researcher, the March administration of the MAP test was given at 5-6 weeks following the beginning of the treatment period, depending upon the classroom. The MRP captured 10 – 11 weeks of the treatment period depending upon the classroom testing schedule.

A first repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted using scores derived from the September, December, and March administrations of the MAP – Reading Assessment. Only complete data sets were used, representing the scores of 42 third graders and 45 fourth graders. The dependent variables included reading comprehension, word analysis/vocabulary, analysis of text, and Lexile scores. These scores for Time 1 (September to December) were compared with the outcomes on the same four variables derived for Time 2 (December to March). The results of this MANOVA for the third graders are displayed in the following table:

Table 4.9. *Repeated Measures MANOVA – Third Grade (Wilks' Lamda)*

Variable	Value	F	d.f.	Sig. of F
Intercept	.000	2647031	4	.000
Group	.879	1.278	4	.296
Time	.362	7.256	8	.000
Time * Group	.864	.647	8	**.732**

ά = .05

These results indicate that there were no significant differences in student scores between Time 1 and Time 2 in this multivariate analysis; however, it is important to note that the Time 2 interval included only five weeks of the treatment period due to district scheduling of the March administration of the MAP. When the multivariate results do not show significance, the univariate analyses are not usable. However, the plots of the univariate analyses were examined to determine trends in movement over the four dependent variables in order to inform future research. While these trends are not empirically relevant, they did suggest interesting differences in the two groups across the dependent variables. The plots for the third grade groups follow:
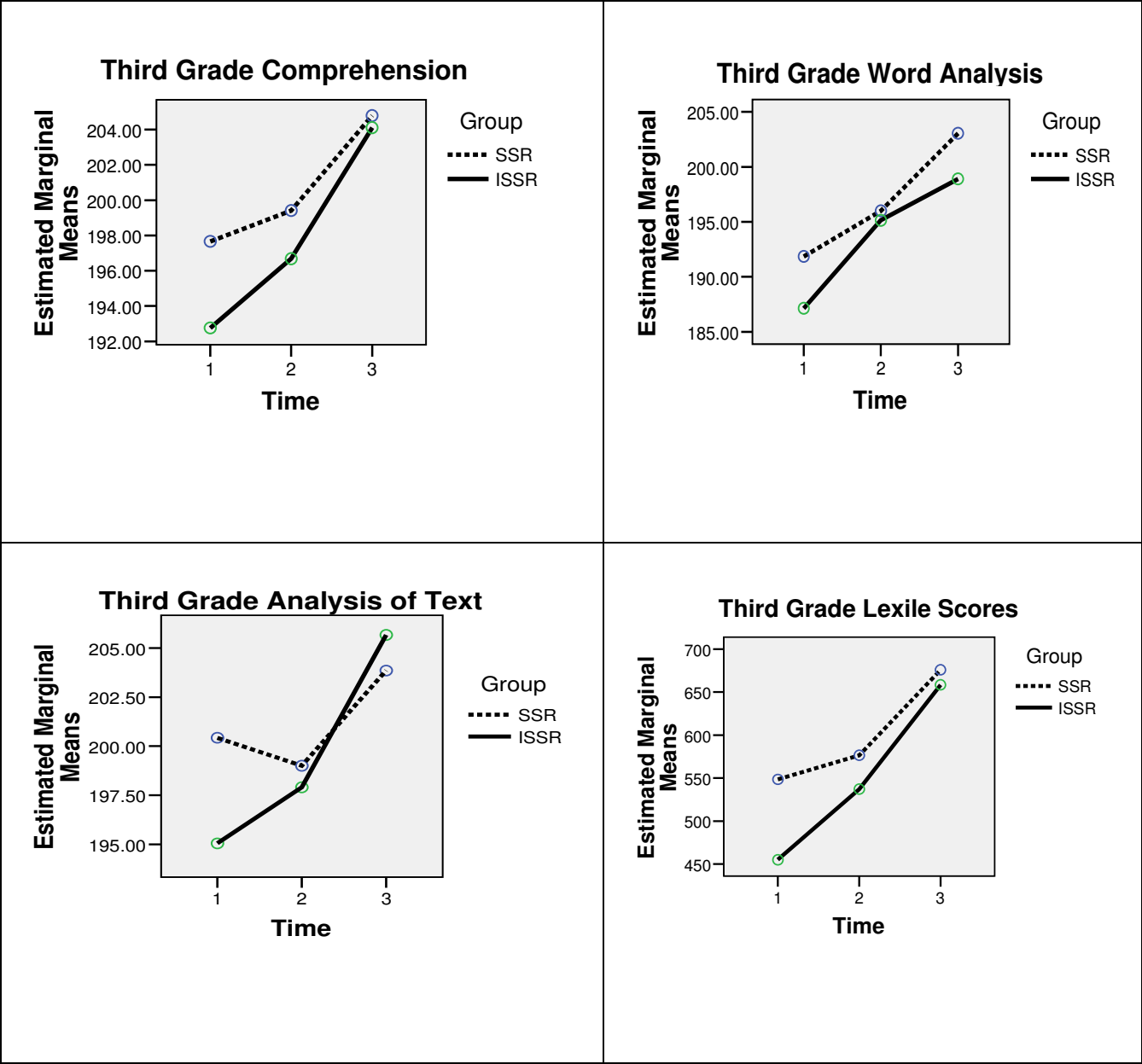
Figure 4.3. Third Grade Trends on Four Dependent Variables for Reading Achievement

The results of this first MANOVA comparing differences between SSR and ISSR reading achievement performance across four dependent variables for fourth graders follows:

Table 4.10. *Repeated Measures MANOVA – Grade 4 (Wilks' Lambda)*

Variable	Value	F	d.f.	Sig. of F
Intercept	.000	3461819	4	.000
Group	.916	.775	4	.549
Time	.481	4.048	8	.002
Time * Group	.899	.420	8	**.900**

$\acute{\alpha} = .05$

These results indicate that there were no significant differences between the SSR and ISSR groups on the four dependent measures. As with the third grade group, the univariate analyses were also unusable; however, an inspection of the plots for the four dependent measures suggested the following trends:
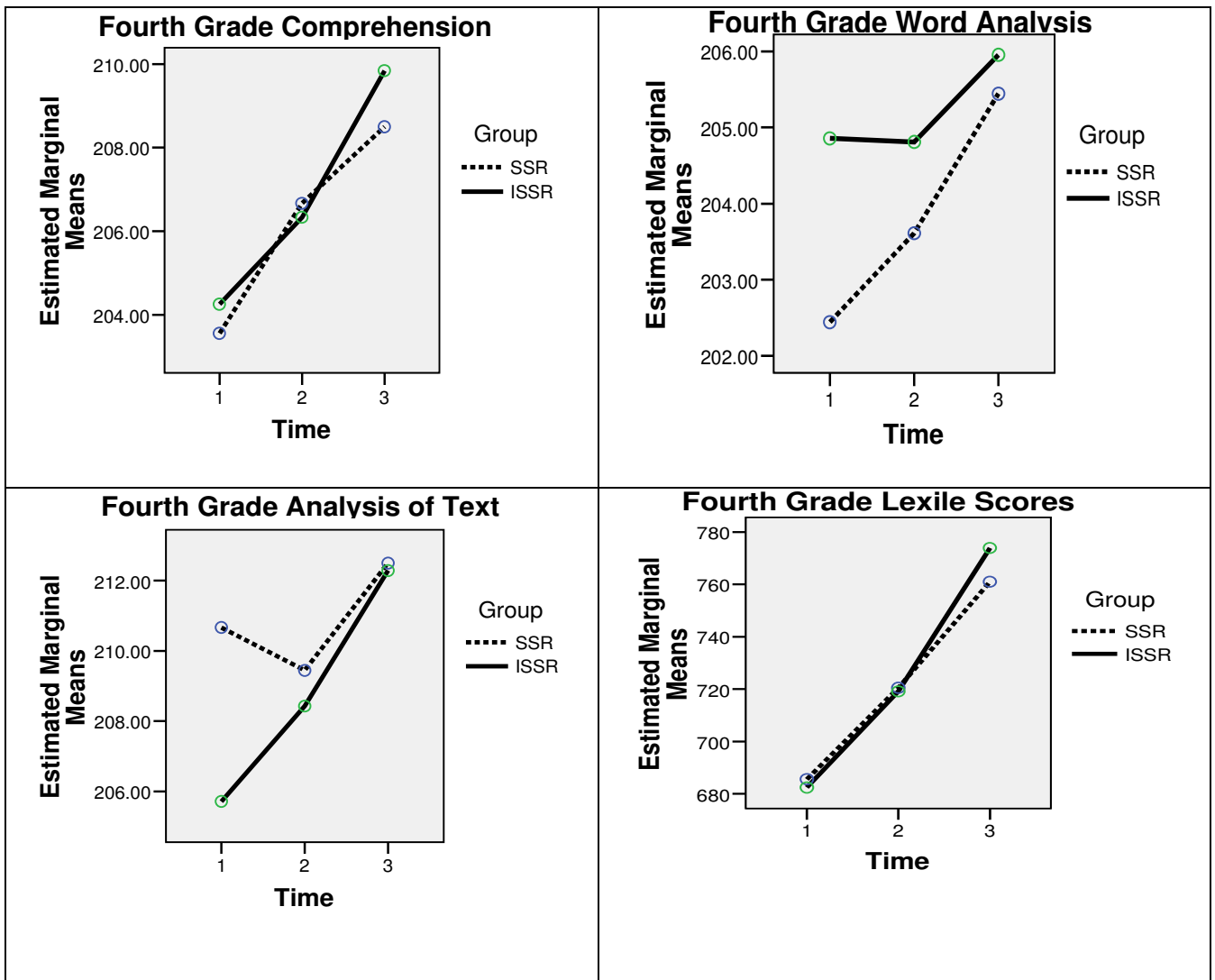
Figure 4.4. Fourth Grade Trends on Four Dependent Variables for Reading Achievement

A second MANOVA involved a repeated measures comparison of groups using the December to March MAP scores, which included only five weeks of the treatment period, and the pre- and post-treatment MRP scores, which included 10 – 11 weeks of the treatment period, depending upon the classroom. The dependent variables in this second analysis included the MAP word analysis/vocabulary, reading comprehension, analysis of

text, and Lexile scores and the value of reading and self-concept scores from the MRP.

The results of this second MANOVA using the six dependent variables for the third grade

groups follow:

Table 4.11. Repeated Measures MANOVA – Third Grade Achievement and Motivation
(Wilks' Lamda)

Variable	Value	F	d.f.	Sig. of F
Intercept	.000	1231850	6	.000
Group	.869	.876	6	.523
Time	.400	6.31	6	.000
Time * Group	.940	.374	6	**.890**

$\acute{\alpha} = .05$

These results indicate that there were no significant differences between the SSR

and ISSR groups on measures of reading achievement and motivation. As the

multivariate tests did not show significance, the univariate analyses were not useful.

However, the plots for the MRP measures of value for reading and self concept for

reading were examined to determine trends between the two treatment groups. These

plots are included in Figure 4.5 below:
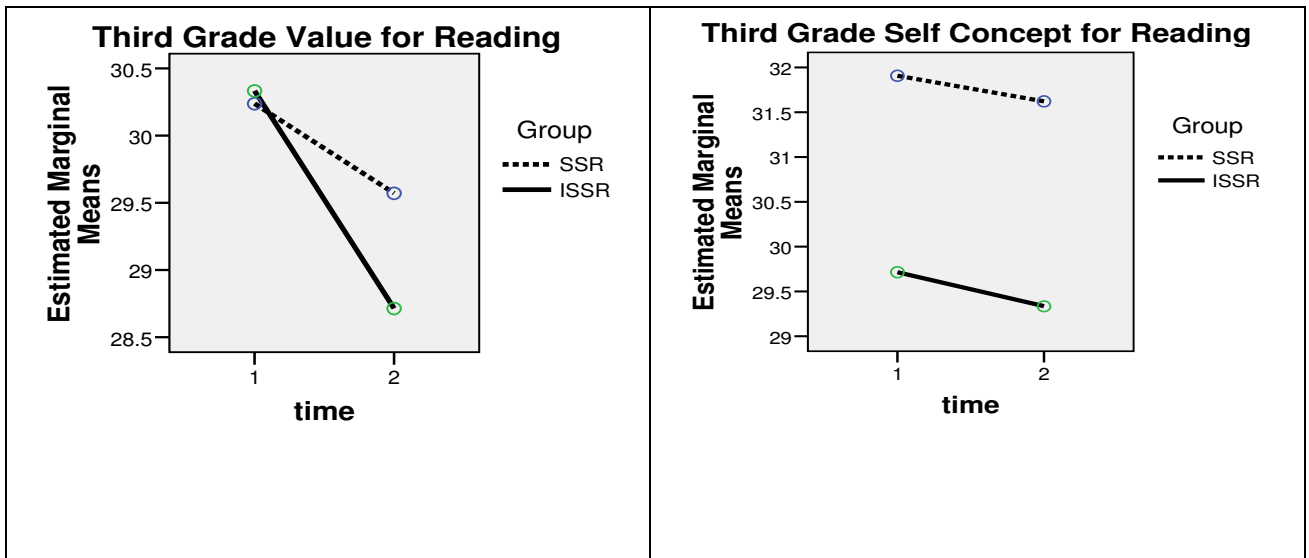
Figure 4.5. Third Grade Trends on Two Dependent Variables of Motivation

The plots indicate that value for reading declined for both groups, but appears to occur on a steeper trajectory in the ISSR group than for the SSR group. Note that there was only one SSR group and one ISSR group in the third grade and that teacher implementation of the models may have influenced the outcome. Self-concept for reading declined in both groups of third graders by one half of a point.

The results of the second MANOVA for the fourth grade group using four measures of reading achievement (MAP) and two measures of reading motivation (MRP) follows:

Table 4.12. *Repeated Measures MANOVA – Fourth Grade Achievement and Motivation (Wilks' Lamda)*

Variable	Value	F	d.f.	Sig. of F
Intercept	.000	1112188	6	.000
Group	.958	.229	6	.964
Time	.769	1.556	6	.193
Time * Group	.886	.662	6	**.681**

These results indicate that no significant differences occurred between the fourth grade SSR and ISSR groups on the six dependent variables. As with the third grade group, an inspection of the plots for the two measures of reading motivation, value for reading and self concept for reading, revealed the following trends.
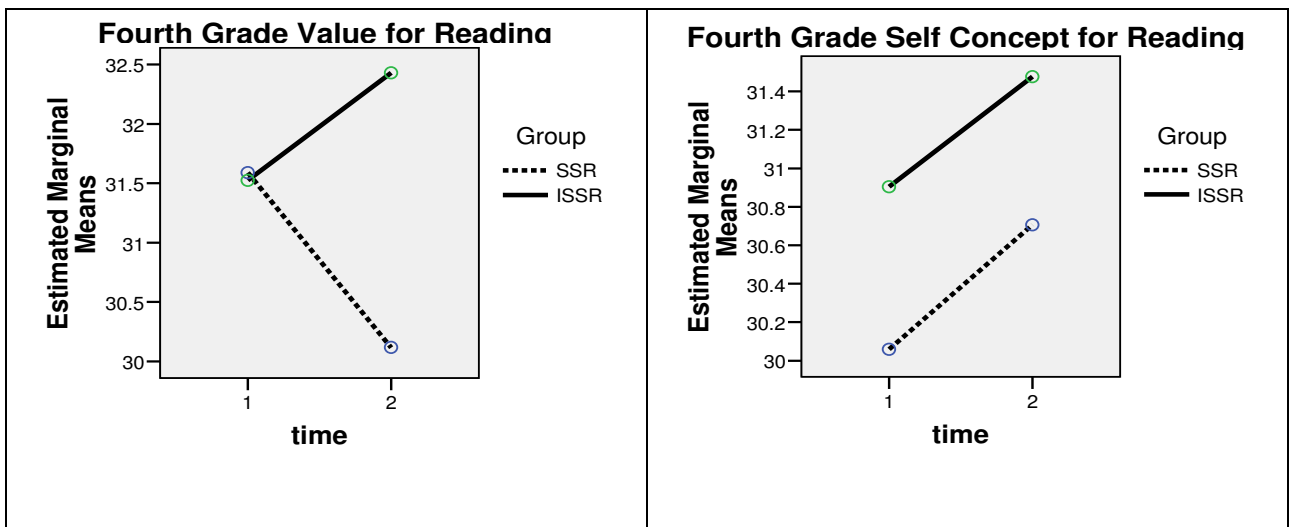
Figure 4.6. Fourth Grade Trends on Two Dependent Variables of Motivation

Unlike the third grade groups, trends in change for value for reading differed in direction in the fourth grade groups. While the scores for the SSR group decreased by an average of 1.5 points, the scores for the ISSR group increased by one. The fourth grade students' scores on the measure of self- concept for reading increased by nearly one point in both groups.

Qualitative Results: Reading Accuracy and Passage Comprehension

The Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI-4) was used in this investigation as a measure of students' pre- and post-treatment reading accuracy and passage comprehension. Students were asked to read a grade level passage at the beginning of the treatment period, and then to read the same passage again after 10 – 11 weeks. The researcher noted the number of words read correctly and the number of seconds that it took the student to read the passage aloud. Students were then asked to respond to 4 explicit and 4 implicit questions. This resulted in a measure of correct words per minute (CWPM) for the reading, as well as a percentage of correct responses to the comprehension questions.

As the goal of reading instruction is to promote fluent reading with good comprehension, attention in the analysis was given to accurate reading speed within the expected range for the students' grade and semester with good comprehension of the passage. Expected reading accuracy ranges were adapted from the work of Hasbrouck and Tindal (1992), who specify oral reading fluency norms for second through fifth graders based on median scores derived from a sample of approximately 9,000 students.

The ranges for oral reading accuracy for third and fourth graders in the winter and spring terms are specified in the below:

Table 4.13. *Correct Words per Minute Norms for Third and Fourth Graders*

Grade	Term	CWPM Range
Third	Winter	70 – 100
	Spring	80 - 110
Fourth	Winter	80 - 120
	Spring	100 - 140

Students whose CWPM scores fell within the expected range for grade and term were determined to have average oral reading rates. Students whose scores exceeded the expected range were categorized as fast readers, whereas students whose scores fell below the expected range were included in the slow reader category. In addition to a determination of reading speed and accuracy, students were further categorized as having adequate or inadequate comprehension for independent reading. The authors of the QRI-4, Leslie and Caldwell (2006), suggest that independent reading requires a comprehension level of 90 – 95%. As there were 8 questions in the comprehension assessment, one incorrect response resulted in a score of 87.5%; therefore, a cut-off score of 87.5% was used to indicate whether students comprehended the passage adequately for independent reading.

A variable oriented cross-case analysis matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 173) was used to display changes in reading accuracy and comprehension within grade and

treatment group (SSR or ISSR). Ideally, students would achieve an average or fast rate of oral reading, as defined in the previous paragraph, demonstrating a level of automaticity for decoding words that would support attempts to comprehend the text. The matrix displays three levels of accurate reading speed along the vertical axis, with 1 indicating slow reading, 2 representing an average rate of accurate reading, and 3 indicating faster reading when compared to the stated norms. However, reading quickly is of no use to independent reading abilities when comprehension does not occur concomitantly. Students may be able to decode words quickly and even read orally with good expression without being able to recall what they've read or retell the story. In this case, the automaticity of decoding words occurs without the cognitive engagement required to make meaning from what is read. Therefore, the matrix includes a variable for comprehension, as measured by the explicit and implicit questions. This variable is displayed along the horizontal axis, with independent level comprehension scores gathered in the left column and comprehension scores that fell below the 87.5% cutoff on the right.

Independent reading skill is here defined as the ability to decode words at an average or fast rate according to the norms suggested by Hasbrouck and Tindal (1992), with good comprehension, as indicated by a score of at least 87.5%. For students who decode words very slowly, word decoding speed would need to increase before changes in comprehension might occur. Alternately, students who read quickly, but with poor comprehension, may need to reduce the speed with which they decode words in order to focus on the meaning of the text. At any rate, comprehension trumps reading speed and

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accuracy, even if it means reading slower than the norm. Therefore, movement from the right columns (comprehension of 75% or less) to the right columns (comprehension of 87.5% or greater) is preferred. However, students who read quickly with poor comprehension may be considered as making some progress toward the goal of reading independently if they move from reading quickly with no comprehension to a slower reading category, with or without good comprehension.

The following four figures display the movement of students across the two variables and are grouped by grade and treatment group. Students who read grade level passages are represented with an "X", while students who were adjusted up or down in level are represented by a number indicating the adjusted reading level. Movement of students from pre- to post-test is indicated by a directional arrow. Students who did not change from pre- to post-test are represented by X's, or numbers, that are underlined with no directional arrows. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 display changes in QRI-4 results for third graders in the SSR and ISSR groups respectively.

CWPM	87.5% or more	Comprehension	75% or less
Fast	<u>**XXX 4th**</u> **XXX**← **X**→	**XXX** **4th** **X**←	**X** **4th 4th**
Ave	**XX**← **X**↘ **XX**	**X** **XX** **XX**	**4th ▾4th** **X**
Slow	**XX** **X** **XX**←	**X** **XX**	**X**↓ **X**

Figure 4.7. Third Grade SSR QRI Change (n = 20)

CWPM	87.5% or more	Comprehension	75% or less
Fast	<u>**X**</u> **XXX**← **XX**↙	**XXX** **X**	<u>**X**</u> <u>**4th 4th**</u>
Ave	**X**↙ **X**←	**XX** **X**	<u>**4th XXX**</u>
Slow	<u>**XX**</u> **XXX**← **X**→	**XXX** **X**	<u>**X**</u>

Figure 4.8. Third Grade ISSR QRI Change (n = 22)

As these figures indicate, movement occurred for both treatment groups from the lower comprehension right column to the independent comprehension level in the left column. In the SSR group, the treatment period began with 13 students not achieving independent levels of passage comprehension and 7 students with scores of 87.5% or better. At post-test, these numbers were reversed, with 13 students comprehending the passage at an independent level and 7 students not achieving the cutoff score. This reflects a positive change of 6 students for this group. In the third grade ISSR group, however, a positive change of 9 students was demonstrated. While only 4 students were reading at an independent level of comprehension before the treatment program began, 13 students had achieved that level at the end of the 11 weeks.

Of the 7 students in the SSR group who demonstrated movement across categories of speed and accuracy, 3 maintained inadequate comprehension levels, 2 read more quickly but decreased in comprehension, and 2 students increased in both CWPM and comprehension. In the ISSR group, only 3 students changed categories for speed and accuracy; one moving from a fast reader to an average reader and two moving from the average reading group to the fast reading group. However, in the ISSR group, all changes in categories of speed and accuracy were accompanied by a move into the independent comprehension category.

Figures 4.9 and 4.10 display changes in QRI-4 results for fourth graders in the SSR and ISSR groups respectively.

CWPM	87.5% or more	Comprehension	75% or less
Fast	X (↑)	X ← X	<u>XXX</u> XX (↓)
Ave	X	XX ← XX X (↘)	XX <u>XX</u> XXX (↓)
Slow		X ← X	XXX (↓) <u>XXX</u> **3rd**

Figure 4.9. Fourth Grade SSR QRI Change (n = 20)

CWPM	87.5% or more	Comprehension	75% or less
Fast	<u>X</u>	X (↓)	XX **3rd** (↓)
Ave	X XXXX	← XXXX XX X	<u>XXXXX</u> XX
Slow	X	X (↙)	XX (↓) <u>XXXX</u> **2nd**

Figure 4.10. Fourth Grade ISSR QRI Change (n = 23)

The most striking feature of the fourth grade matrices is the overwhelming proportion of students who began the treatment period in the right hand column, indicating passage comprehension of 75% or less. The two treatment groups demonstrated an identical positive change in the independent comprehension column by the end of the study, with the SSR group growing from 1 to 6 students and the ISSR group increasing its number from 3 to 8 students. Both SSR and ISSR groups contained a fair number of students who demonstrated no change on either variable during the treatment period (SSR=9; ISSR=10). The groups also had 6 students each who changed categories of reading speed and accuracy, with one student in each treatment group gaining independent reading comprehension in the process.

<center>Qualitative Results: Focal Student Interviews</center>

Focal student interviews were conducted with 16 students representing four typologies across two grades. This nested phenomenological study was conducted in order to address the following research question:

> What do students report regarding their experiences of participation in the
> ISSR and SSR models of independent reading in relation to their
> perceptions of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy for reading,
> particularly students who are representative of the following typologies:
> *High Achievement/High Motivation; High Achievement/Low Motivation;*
> *Low Achievement/High Motivation,* and; *Low Achievement/Low*
> *Motivation*?

As was stated in Chapter 3, the phenomenon of interest in this study was the student's experience of a model of sustained silent reading, particularly with regard to the student's perceived *valence* (value of reading as an activity and a learning goal), *instrumentality* (potential of instruction or other support to provide a 'clear path' to their goals) and *expectancy* (anticipation of success or failure in successfully participating in the activity) of reading. These three elements of VIE theory (Vroom, 1964) served as the conceptual lens that guided all levels of the analyses.

The purposeful sample of 16 students included two from each grade level in each of the four typologies of interest: *high achievement/high motivation; high achievement/ low motivation; low achievement/high motivation;* and, *low achievement/low motivation,* as determined by their pre-test scores on the MAP-Reading Assessment (total RIT) and MRP survey portion (total score). Each student was interviewed every four weeks for a total of three interviews per student and 48 interviews in all. The focal students by grade and typology are presented in Table 3.2, page 84.

The semi-structured interviews included a grand tour question, "Tell me what you're reading now?" followed by questions designed to focus on aspects of valence, instrumentality and expectancy, as detailed in the interview protocols provided in Appendix I. The interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder, and then transcribed and uploaded into NVIVO-7 software for analysis.

Philosophical Stance and Bracketing

This phenomenological approach, as described in Chapter 3, involved a reduction of data through several levels. In the Husserlian tradition, the search for meaning by

reducing data requires a suspension of pre-judgments, known as *bracketing* or *epoche* (Moustakas, 1994). While the constructs of VIE theory, *valence*, *instrumentality*, and *expectancy* served as a conceptual lens and framework for the deductive analyses, my understanding and expectation of how these three constructs might influence each other needed to be bracketed during the phases of the analysis. For example, my hypothesis that certain perceptions of instrumentality would influence valence and expectancy needed to be 'set aside' in order to review the data several times and conclude what was convincingly supported by the evidence.

The interviews were conducted by research assistants who were unaware of students' typologies so that this knowledge would not influence their follow-up questions. As the primary researcher, I withheld transcribing the interviews until all three were completed with each of the 16 focal students. By listening to each student's set of interviews in sequence, changes from one four-week period to the next were more easily detected, and themes that were important for students to express emerged. When listening to each set of recordings (interviews 1, 2, and 3) for the first time for transcribing, I used annotations and memos to report my initial reactions and reflections regarding the student's responses, weighing each statement within the context of the interviewer's posing of the question and the intonation and flow of the response.

These transcriptions were then uploaded into NVIVO7 software so that an abductive coding procedure, which integrates deductive and inductive analyses, as suggested by Morgan (2007), could proceed. The deductive analyses were driven by the three constructs of VIE theory; *valence*, *instrumentality*, and *expectancy*. These

constituted the initial three parent nodes used during the coding of the transcripts. Inductive analyses were used to allow new parent and child nodes to emerge from the data.

During the coding of each set of student transcripts, further annotations and memos were used to record the emergence of themes, to notes changes in student perceptions, to define and refine coding categories, and to clarify understandings of the possible meanings of student responses. It was upon reviewing these notes and memos that other areas in need of bracketing were revealed.

Notes taken while transcribing and coding the data revealed a particular sensitivity for struggling readers and their feelings of frustration, resulting, most likely, from having a son who is a struggling reader. Student comments regarding the expectations of parents and teachers, or their attempts to provide support or encouragement, struck a personal chord that needed to be set aside so that the student's *own* meaning could be heard. It was also necessary to bracket my professional response to what students had to say about classroom practices, or what I felt the conferences could have provided for them but didn't. My *intention* for what teacher monitoring should involve during the ISSR conferences may or may not have occurred in the classrooms; rather, teachers may have neglected to suggest strategies that would help students to maximize their comprehension and enjoyment of texts, or teachers may have focused more on sharing interests with students and building their self-esteem. As research to investigate how best to prepare teachers for the kind of non-assessment monitoring proposed in the ISSR model continues, there is much to be learned regarding

the practice of guiding students toward improved independent reading skills in one-on-one conferences.

One last pre-judgment required bracketing; that of the school's Accelerated Reader™ (AR) program, which occurred freely during the first semester of the school year, but was suppressed during the treatment period in the second semester. As a former teacher, a researcher, and a parent, I feel that the reward based system encourages a performance orientation, whereas I would prefer students to develop a mastery orientation toward reading activities and goals. I also agree with Labbo (1999), who expressed unease that programs such as AR promote shallow reading. I am additionally concerned that the AR program literature recommends that narrative book reading is preferable to expository book reading (Paul, 2003, p. 15).

With a consideration of these bracketed elements, the analysis continued on the following three levels: (a) Level 1: Student portraits; (b) Level 2: Horizontal analysis within typology and grade; (c) Level 3: Vertical analysis by typology, treatment model, grade, or achievement and motivation level.

Level 1: Student Portraits

A portrait of each student's journey through the 12-week treatment period was constructed to depict changes in valence, instrumentality, and expectancy for reading by examining the themes that were repeated as well as those that were in flux over the 12 week period. The portraits summarized consistency or change in the student's perceptions of the three constructs, and included supporting contextual evidence, such as the teacher's comments or notes regarding the student or snapshot of post-treatment

changes in MAP scores, MRP responses, and QRI passage reading. Some of these portraits were selected as critical cases and are detailed below; nonetheless, all 16 student portraits are available in Appendix J.

The cases selected as critical to understanding student experiences in response to the ISSR and SSR models with which they were involved include those that are *confirming*, in that their responses typify their typology; those that are *disconfirming*, as when the responses are incongruent with the typology; those that are *transforming*, meaning that a remarkable change was noted in the key constructs; and those that are *extreme* in some manner.

During this initial analysis of the 16 sets of interviews, coding categories under the construct of valence emerged to represent *mastery* and *performance* orientations for reading. These goal oriented themes that arose from the data are rooted in the study of general achievement motivation, where research came to settle on two broad categories of goals that might be valued by students (Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). These include task, or *mastery* goals, which are described as a desire for personal improvement and mastery of a skill, and ability, or *performance* goals, which are focused on one's performance in relation to others. Urdan and Maehr (1995) proposed yet another area of goal setting – *social* goals. These goals are derived from a student's social context and may stem from a need for adult approval (parents and teachers), the need to express individualism or belongingness (as demonstrated by the portrait of Rose, Appendix J), or a desire to engage in social responsibility.

Suppositions of task, ability and social goals are broadly related to the developing understanding of factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivators can be described as self-generated interest in an activity that brings a pleasure that is inherent in engaging the activity itself. As an extreme example of this personal involvement, Csikszentmihalyi (1978) described the experience of being totally absorbed in an activity as "flow", such as when you are reading a book that is so interesting that you lose your perception of place or time passing, as is demonstrated by Colm and Eleanor, whose portraits are presented in the *confirming* and *disconfirming* sections, respectively.

Students present a *mastery* orientation when they read for their own interests or pleasure. Responses indicate a *performance* orientation when they speak of outside influences on their value for reading, such as parental and teacher expectations or achieving some status based on a reward or recognition, as is seen in Calvin's portrait in the *extreme cases* section of these findings.

An understanding of these goal orientations became increasingly important as the analyses of the data for this research continued. The ISSR model was designed to improve reading motivation and reading achievement by providing individually targeted guidance in the activity of independent reading during the school day. The subtext of this pedagogical goal that became clearer when analyzing the interview data was that students would become more motivated to read books *for their own reasons.* This is perhaps implied in the elements of the ISSR model that prescribe student choice of books for reading and a conversational, non-assessing context for the conferences. The aspect of

this understanding of goal theory that became apparent while analyzing the transcripts is that a *mastery orientation*, where students read for their own learning and entertainment goals, is educationally preferable to a *performance orientation*, where students read to compare favorably with others or to receive reward or recognition. The here-to-fore unspoken reasoning for this preference harkens back to a behaviorist notion that if the reinforcement offered by rewards and recognition are removed, the interest in the activity may decrease or become extinguished (Skinner, 1953). Students who read with a mastery orientation, being *intrinsically* motivated, will likely continue to read in order to follow their interests and pursue lifelong learning and pleasure from reading. Students who are motivated to read with a performance orientation may choose not to read once the extrinsic motivators are removed.

As a result of clarifying these preferences, the instances of students moving from a performance orientation to a mastery orientation during the course of the treatment period were noteworthy. So too were student cases that highlighted instances where the motivation assessment measure was not as sensitive to distinctions between mastery and performance orientations. As is demonstrated in the *disconfirming cases section,* this lack of distinction led to an indication of low motivation for reading, whereas a strong mastery orientation, demonstrated by a pronounced personal involvement with reading, was reported.

The four categories of significant cases and the individual portraits of students who fit these categories are presented in the following sections:

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Confirming Cases

The cases selected to represent confirmation of responses with typology include a male student from each grade, but who experienced different treatment models. Colm is a third grader who represents the high achievement/high motivation typology from the SSR group, and Grayson is a fourth grader of the low achievement/low motivation typology who was involved in an ISSR group. These two students are at extreme ends of the typology continuum, but confirm in their responses the attitudes and perceptions that exemplify their pre-assessment scores on the achievement and motivation measures.

Portrait of Colm: Master and Commander. Colm is a third grader in Ms. Merwin's SSR group. His scores on the pre-assessment measures placed him in the high achievement/high motivation typology.

Colm states that he finds books about sports to be "really exciting and fun" [Interview 1, 2] and that he sometimes gets lost in a book, "…like my mom will be calling my name and I won't even hear her" [Interview 1]. He reiterates this value of being transported by books in Interview 2 when he says, "like it's an adventure like right where you're sitting and you can do anything you want" [also in Interview 3]. He also places an importance on reading for taking tests [Interview 1]. In the second interview, Colm relates that he values the choice of books and the variety [Interviews 2 and 3] offered during the SSR period. This is important to him because "you and another person might like different books ...like you can read whatever you want" [Interview 2].

Colm reports that his teachers helped him to learn to read with "lots of expression" [Interview 1] and to be aware of the soft letters, such as 'g' when pronouncing new words.

In the second interview, he adds that he's learned to read a little slower and not just speed through books as a means of improving retention. This is something his second grade teacher taught him. Other than when he related that Ms. Merwin encouraged reading by telling them "…we wouldn't know anything hardly, and we couldn't be able to do anything" without reading, Colm has a difficult time finding any teacher or classroom practice that has been helpful in this current grade.

Colm describes himself as a "pretty good reader" [Interview 1, 3]. He makes ties between reading and identity when he states, "If we didn't read there's no sense in doing anything…I mean, if you didn't read, you'd just be a whole lotta nothing." He describes himself as a "confident" reader [Interview 3] who is "not afraid to read to anyone" [Interview 2].

Despite his previous responses regarding the importance of reading slower so that you can remember what you read, Colm states in the third interview that "I've gotten better with reading faster. I used to read pretty slow, but now I read fast and with good expression." In his post QRI passage reading, he did increase his CWPM by 27.2 words but answered one less question correctly on the comprehension follow-up than he did in the pre-treatment assessment.

Colm reports that having time to read was a pleasant change from when he was in the second grade. He states:

> …in second grade we didn't have a lot of time to read. We'd just do
>
> workbook pages and our teachers wouldn't challenge us enough. But now,
>
> we get challenged. We get to, uh, experience what we learn. We usually

have a book project and we'll get to read books more than once – uh, the

ones that we like [Interview 3].

Colm is a bright and articulate student with good oral language skills. He presents a predominately mastery orientation to reading. He seems to require very little from the instruction offered in class and reports having good support at home. He was consistent in relating a value of reading because it absorbs/transports him. At his reported level of independent reading, further intervention by the teacher would not seem to be particularly important, although Colm did seem to enjoy sharing his stories with the researcher.

Portrait of Grayson: The Entertainer. Grayson is a fourth grader in Ms. Neubin's ISSR group. He was identified as possessing characteristics of the low achievement/low motivation typology.

Grayson replied to most questions during the three interviews with an offhand sense of humor, making it difficult to accurately determine his perceptions about reading. For example, when asked in Interview 1 what he likes about reading, he quipped, "You can fall asleep, I guess [laughs]." He is clear when he says that that he does not like having a half-hour set aside where he cannot talk or sit with his friends. He suggests in several of his responses that he prefers activities that allow movement or talking, and that silent reading is not one of these.

In the first interview, Grayson relates that learning to read is important "when I'm in school." He elaborates on this by saying, "…[b]ecause you can make good grades. And if I make all A's in middle and high school, by the time I get my license, I get my own car! [sings 'Ta Da']". Initially, he reports not finding books he prefers at school

because he's interested in "war and sinking stuff" – topics that he watches on the Discovery Channel. In the second interview, he reiterates this by stating, "…I like reading stuff about guns and they aren't allowed – the school district doesn't allow it." He also has an interest in books that have been made into movies, such as *Because of Winn Dixie* so that he can "make sure the movie and the story are the same." He also likes to read about and solve mysteries.

While in the first interview Grayson notes that the silent reading time is good for "falling asleep", he remarks in the second interview that the time to read is "good", even though he can't read books about war. A further change is noted in the third interview, when he states that the time to read is "probably just right…because you can learn different stuff about animals and bridges." This interest in reading books about topics of interest does not seem to be tied to a future perspective, however. Grayson states that reading is " a little bit but not a lot" important "because you're probably going to be doing a lot more stuff like math" when you grow up and get a job, "…and there's no way actually you have to read a lot of stuff." His future career choices include being "…a SWAT person or an Army person" [Interview 3].

When asked what he's learned that helps him to read better, Grayson reports that his "IEP" teacher tells him to "break down the words" [Interview 1], a strategy he repeats in Interview 2. He does not mention the ISSR conferences or advice from Ms. Neubin. However, in the third interview, Grayson names the "book sell", a popular version of an ISSR sharing activity that often followed the silent reading period in his classroom, as an activity that gets him excited about reading.

Grayson describes himself as a "pretty good reader" [Interview 1], and in the second interview as, "not the best of readers, but I'm not the worst." He elaborates that he prefers reading 3rd grade level books to 4th grade books. His estimation of his ability is fairly stable through the final interview, where he states that "I don't read the best, but I can read pretty good." Yet, when asked if anything has changed about his reading this year, Grayson responds, "I read better" and that he reads more at school and at home than he did as a third grader.

During the first of three fidelity observations of Ms. Neubin's classroom, Grayson would occasionally turn in his seat during the silent reading time to engage others in conversation or to entertain them by balancing coins on his fingers, for example. When observing in the classroom at the end of the treatment period, Grayson was observed to actively pursue a book of poetry by Robert Frost that the teacher previewed in her bookshare until he got a turn to look through it. Ms. Neubin's conference notes indicate that she worked with Grayson to look at initial sounds of words and to use pictures to assist him in figuring out words in text.

Grayson presents himself as a social and restless character who enjoys entertaining his classmates and the adults with whom he interacts during the day. He appears to be comfortable with his perceptions of his reading ability, and his expectancy seems to suit his valence for reading. He does not see reading as playing an important role in his future career, but has discovered an interest in reading books that give you some information or that have mysteries to solve. In response to the ISSR model, he

appears to have gained some interest in books, a gradual tolerance of sitting still for 25-30 minutes, and an enthusiasm for the final sharing activity in Ms. Neubin's ISSR group, the book sell.

Grayson's scores on the post-assessments increased minimally for the MRP survey and by about 5 points in each sub-category of the MAP-Reading. However, his Lexile standing rose from 47 to 124 and his QRI passage reading score increased by 12 CWPM with an increase in comprehension from 67% to 87.5%. The ISSR involvement may have influenced these changes in his interest for reading (valence) and passage reading skill and level, which is interesting when considering his initial flippancy toward the reading period and the importance of reading books in general. Being an admittedly social creature, Grayson seems to have responded best to the book sharing elements of the ISSR model and found a renewed interest in reading books of his own choosing.

Disconfirming Case

The portrait provided in this section was selected as it points to a need in the way we understand and assess motivation. In this particular case, the MRP was not particularly sensitive in detecting the educationally preferable mastery orientation for reading, allowing the presumption that mastery orientations lead to longer associations with reading than performance orientations, as discussed earlier. In this section, the portrait of Eleanor, a third grader who was included in the high achievement/low motivation, is presented.

Portrait of Eleanor: Totally Absorbed. Eleanor presents an eclectic taste in books. She enjoys ghost stories, mysteries, the *American Girl* series, and Judy Blume books and readily provides title, author and well-rounded summaries of the stories she's read. The most striking feature of Eleanor's interviews is how involved she becomes in the books she reads. She states in each of the interviews that she enjoys reading because "it gives you the feeling where you always want to blurt out how you know what's going to happen in the book" [Interview 1]. Eleanor describes becoming personally absorbed by books: "Whenever I read, it's kind of like I'm in the story. I always picture it as me as that person. So that's kind of what I feel like." [Interview 2]. She reports a value for learning from books, such as with expository texts about how the body works [Interview 1], or when you learn about "…another person's real life", as with the *American Girl* books [Interview 2]. She adds that reading is important to functioning in everyday life as a grown up, such as when using maps [Interview 1, 3].

In the third interview, she expresses a value of being the first to raise her hand in order to answer to a teacher's question about a book. At first, this statement might seem to stem from a performance orientation by desiring to come first in an "answer the teacher's question" competition; however, when viewing her responses across all three interviews, her tendency to be introspective and absorbed in the stories she reads recommends the conclusion that she perceives a personal ownership of the text. She is the character, after all - there can be no greater authority! Therefore, it's important to be the first to raise her hand and to talk about the story.

Eleanor seems to make use of reading support offered to her, whether explicitly or serendipitously. She relates that "some books show and explain how you read - it explains sometimes the certain way you read" [Interview 1]. Having time to read at school is good because "…sometimes I just don't get around to reading much. I mean, sometimes I'd rather play with my friends than read" [Interview 1]. When asked what she learned in the classroom that would help her to read better, she replied that her teacher showed her how quotation marks work because she used to get confused but now knows that it indicates dialogue [Interviews 1,2,3]. She now uses quotation marks in her writing [Interview 2]. Eleanor chooses books to read by looking at the title and the cover [Interviews 2, 3], or by searching for titles or topics using the computer in the media center [Interview 2].

When asked what kind of reader she is, Eleanor consistently presents modality specific expectancies. She reports in each of the interviews that she reads well silently but has trouble when she reads aloud. In interview 2, she says, "[l]ike, I always get the words mixed up when I'm reading a sentence – I put one word before the word I'm about to read, like that", and in interview 3, she relates "…whenever I read it out loud, I make mistakes with my mouth whenever I'm reading." She does practice reading aloud to her parents at home with her school reading books. Eleanor also indicates that reading can help her with vocabulary and writing [Interview 1, 2]

Eleanor was an interesting student to interview. She offered, perhaps, the most eloquent description of "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1978), which would seem to disconfirm her placement in a low motivation typology, as this intimates a strong intrinsic

motivation. An inspection of the MRP survey (Appendix K) reveals that there are no items that would reveal this type of personal involvement in text.

Eleanor did seem to make the most use of strategic support, as evidenced by her reports of teacher suggestions for reading and her voluntary transfer of skills from reading to writing. Eleanor's achievement and motivation scores did not change noticeably on the MAP or MRP measures from the pre- to post-assessments, and she was not available at the end of the year for the post-assessment using he QRI reading passage. However, her strong personal involvement in her reading belies the low motivation scores that she received at both ends of the treatment period.

Transforming Cases

The two following portraits involve third grade boys; one who made a positive transformation with regard to the motivation constructs examined, and one who demonstrates a negative transformation in his perceptions of reading during the course of the treatment period. These differences are particularly interesting when considering the national survey results presented by McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) that indicated a steady decline in attitudes for reading between the first and sixth grade, especially for students with low ability, as are Joseph and DeMario.

Portrait of Joseph: Engagement Transformation. Joseph is a third grader in Ms. Jule's ISSR group with pre-assessment scores that place him in the low achievement/low motivation typology.

In the first interview, Joseph's lack of interest in books is evident in his inability to name the title of the book he is reading, or those he intends to read next, offering little

more as a summary of the current book than "…it's mixed up animals." He describes reading as "really hard, and you gotta work hard and you gotta get your grades up and do well and take tests" [Interview 1] – and that was in response to "Tell me something you *like* about reading." When asked what he doesn't like, he replied, "Reading."

While Joseph may portray reading as something you "gotta do", though not enjoy, he also indicates that reading is important "…so that you can get a good education and get a job" [Interview 1]. He may view this as the 'party line', as his intonation would suggest, but also described himself as a "learning reader", which in later interviews, is clarified when he begins to describe an interest in reading books about history and science. Beyond the aforementioned nod to the importance of reading to getting an education and a job, Joseph's comments in his third interview are revealing of the reading context in which he lives. When asked if learning to read is important, he replies, "No" because "they're just books." The interviewer follows with a question about whether he'll need to do much reading when he's grown, and his response is, "Uh, like if you like work at this place that had like this manual." In further conversation about grown-ups in his environment, he adds that he does not see adults reading at home and that there are no books there, although his mom does read magazines [Interview 3].

It is notable, therefore, in the second and third interviews that he is readily able to name the books he's reading and to provide a fair summary of what they're about. His increasing interest in books that you can learn from is evidenced when he states that he chooses his current books "[b]ecause they have stuff in them that you learn…." He also

states that he enjoys the books he chooses for "the excitement and stuff." He describes an increased interest in choosing books during the second interview, explaining:

"Uh, that if it's a good one and I look at the book and inside of it and I want to read it and I'll look like, wow! Look at what he's doing! Mmmm, it's something crazy!"

Joseph is not specific about what occurs in the classroom that helps him read better or enjoy reading. At his most expansive, he states, "Um from my teacher, she helps us…[long pause]…she shows us books and she helps us with this and that." In his second interview, he is asked, "What happens in your classroom that gets you excited about reading?" Joseph responds that he likes reading and "how you get to learn things from the books, like history and…[trails off]". He adds that he likes it when the teacher reads a book aloud.

Joseph perceives himself to be an average reader. He states that in comparison to his peers, he is "kind of like equal to" and "kinda good" [Interview 2]. In the third interview, he states that his reading has stayed the same over the school year. It seems that Joseph is comfortable with his reading ability, and this perception is well matched to the importance he places on reading as a goal, although the changes in value and self-concept for reading are noticeably improved following the treatment period, as described below.

According to Ms. Jule's conference notes, Joseph was involved in only four conferences during the treatment period. There is no note in her records to indicate whether his school attendance played a part in the reduced number of meetings with him;

however, at least one of his three interviews had to be rescheduled due to his absence from school. The teacher reports that Joseph discussed books that spanned the range of easy to hard. There are no recommendations recorded for strategy use, and only one comment to note that he reads without expression and does not pause for punctuation.

This change regarding his interest in reading books to learn and his ability to name titles and describe the books he's been reading is interesting when considering his typology. The change in his post-assessment performance, especially with regard to motivation, was remarkable. His value for reading increased by 24 points and his self-concept improved by 10 points over the 12 week period. This change is supported by his interview responses, which indicate a dismissal of books at the beginning of the treatment period and an inability to name titles or give summaries. By the second and third interviews, his knowledge of titles and extended summaries are accompanied by statements of his enjoyment of the learning and entertainment provided by books. With regard to reading ability, his MAP scores indicate an increase of 8 to 13 points in every sub-category, and an improved Lexile score of 287 from a pre-treatment level of 157. In addition, his speed of reading accurately increased by 12 CWPM with improved comprehension (50% to 75%).

Portrait of DeMario: Downward Shift. DeMario is a third grader who participated in Ms. Merwin's SSR group. His pre-treatment scores indicated that he fit the low achievement/high motivation group.

DeMario stated in the first interview that "I don't like reading a whole bunch – I like read a few pages each day and everything." DeMario relates across the three

interviews that he enjoys reading about sports and sports figures and hopes to play football someday. He also notes the social value of reading, such as when he shares what he reads with his friends [Interviews 1 and 2] and when he and his friends tell each other about the best sports books to check out [Interview 3]. DeMario also refers to reading/writing connections made during silent reading. He states that if he reads a word that is "good" he might use it in writing a letter [Interview 3].

Aside from this intrinsic interest in reading about sports and learning new words, DeMario also expresses a performance orientation for reading to earn better grades and to do well on the state-wide achievement test. Authority influences on his value for reading in the future perspective include his mom and his teacher, as indicated in the following responses:

> [DeMario]: Because when I was growing up, my momma said if you wouldn't read good you wouldn't be like in college or nowhere so I listen to my momma so I can read better and got to college and get an education and everything [Interview 2].

> [DeMario]:Like she be like telling our whole class, like reading will get you a long way from here, like it get you anywhere that you want to in your life and you have to do good in reading and stuff [Interview 3]

These strong messages from adults in his environment seem to have made an impression on DeMario as he relates them in each interview. He also mentions that his teachers tell him to read more and to read harder books in order to learn to read better. He alludes to buying into this strategy when he states, "It's like, when I read, it's like

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something in my head tellin' me, like, 'keep on reading, keep on reading' because then you'll get to be a better reader" [Interview 2]. Perhaps the best way to describe how DeMario has integrated the 'reading practice' strategy with his value for sharing books came in the third interview where DeMario is asked what happens in his classroom that gets him excited about reading. He replies:

> [DeMario]: I get excited like every time my teacher say like it's time to read. It gets me excited like to read new books, so I can get more informations so I can tell my friends about the best books to read, you know? So you can get 'em fast if you like the book [Interview 3].

In fact, he suggests that 40 minutes might be better than 30 minutes for the silent reading time.

Another reading strategy that he seems to have learned through experience, and is well afforded by the action-oriented sports books he prefers, is to picture the events told in the story so that he can relate them to his friends. DeMario describes that he chooses books first by topic, and then by looking for a label that will tell him the reading level. If he looks through it and cannot tell if it will be too hard for him to read, he states he would ask the teacher or the librarian, demonstrating a dependency on outside sources to determine the readability of texts he chooses. His choices are highly influenced by his friends. DeMario in the second interview talks about how he and his friends share their "good" book titles after they read and try to get to the library and get it before they're gone.

DeMario presents a balanced view of his reading ability by describing it in the first interview as "some good and some kind of bad", but an "ok reader" overall. When asked to reflect on his reading progress this year, he indicates that there was improvement by saying, "I'm uh a great reader 'cause every time I read to my friends, they say 'you getting better' and everything" [Interview 2]. He elaborates by saying that he was an "ok" reader and is now a better reader [Interview 3] and that when he reads, he doesn't stop to look at the words for a long time.

DeMario's responses indicate that he reads for enjoyment with a predominately mastery level orientation. He mentions reading with friends as a rewarding experience and chooses books based on interest first, and then level. He also mentions that reading is important to get ready for the state-wide achievement test. This reference to the end of year state assessment is his only performance oriented response to questions about his value for reading. Most strikingly, DeMario's comments reflect a consistent perception of positive parental and teacher influences on his future perspectives for reading, although explicit and strategic help with his reading is not mentioned. The good strategies that DeMario uses, such as visualizing the sports action or remembering summaries to share with friends, seem to come from his own experiences.

On post-assessment, DeMario revealed a noticeable decline in motivation, as indicated by an 11 point decrease in self-concept for reading and an 8 point drop in value for reading. His MAP scores were essentially unchanged, although his grade level QRI passage reading was 9.1 CWPM faster on post-assessment with accompanying increases in comprehension from 62.5% to 100%. While the increased time for reading books that

interested him may have had some effect on his reading fluency, his involvement in the SSR model was not sufficient to stem a noticeable decline in attitudes toward reading.

Extreme Cases

The following two portraits are included as they present responses sufficiently extreme as to be noteworthy. Both students were included in the third grade ISSR group. While Beatrice's portrait is marked by continuing hope in the face of discouraging odds, Calvin presents an overwhelming dependence on the extrinsic elements of the Accelerated Reader™ program to motivate his reading efforts and maintain status with his mother and in his new school.

Portrait of Beatrice: A Candle in the Wind. Beatrice is a third grade student of the low achievement/low motivation typology who participated in Ms. Jule's ISSR group.

In the initial interview, Beatrice indicated a positive a valence for the activity of reading by describing it as "fun" and "entertaining", and because the stories made her laugh. She also expressed an extrinsic motivation for the goal of reading "because it's a grade on your report card" and its importance to passing the third grade. Throughout the three interviews, Beatrice mentions her concern regarding her chances of being promoted to the fourth grade by relating statements made by others that influence her extrinsic motivation to read:

> [Beatrice]: Mom says, 'Bea, you're going to fail so you better get back on reading.' [Interview 1]

> [Beatrice]: …my mom said if I don't make a good grade I'll fail third grade [Interview 3].

However, Beatrice also specifies a mastery goal for reading when she states that it's important to have time to read at school because "when you read it helps you learn, but when you don't read it can't help you" [Interview 1]. She continues this view in the second interview by stating a value for reading as an activity that will lead her to the goal of reading better. Despite her difficulties with reading, she values the activity in pursuit of the goal.

Beatrice is clear and consistent when she identifies the major barrier to her reading success as difficulty with decoding, or 'sounding out the words'. Her key belief is, "If I can sound it out I can read the whole book" [Interview 1]. She is so convinced that this lone strategy is the key to her reading success that she states that she'll "stop reading until I figure it [the word] out" [Interview 1]. In her pre-treatment reading of the passage for the QRI assessment, Beatrice correctly read 0 Correct Words per Minute (CWPM). Such a score is possible when the number of errors in decoding outweigh the number of words read per minute, meaning a very slow rate of decoding with numerous errors. Although the researcher offered her an opportunity to read a different passage (at a lower level), Beatrice insisted on completing the third grade passage – an example of her determination. Believing that sounding out words is the only strategy she has, even though it continually fails her, she continues to mark it as the path to success when she says, "If I read, if I get it out, and I know it, and I get through with the book, I know I can to that other book if I don't have trouble." In the same interview she states, "I keep trying to sound it out but I can't" [Interview 1].

Despite the dire predictions made by her mother regarding failing the third grade, Beatrice reports a remarkable amount of support for reading at home. She states in the first interview that her parents read to her and then ask her to read back to them. In the third interview, she elaborates on the routine at home as follows:

[Beatrice]: I read to my mom and then I read to my brother and my dad and by myself.

[Researcher]: Wow! That's very good – so then you get four cracks at it. How long does it take you?

[Beatrice]: Probably about two hours or one hour.

Her mom also helps her to understand text when she "shows all the motions to the story when I read it out loud" [Interview 3]. These passages describe a willingness on the part of the family to provide supported practice at home but may also reflect their perception of the desperateness of Beatrice's academic position with regard to reading.

Beatrice describes her approaches to finding books that she can read during the self-selected reading period of the day. In choosing books for reading, she states that she often selects "easy" books, and that she specifically chose the book *Ruby Bridges* because she had seen the video and "I probably know the words" [Interview 1]. This practice of reading 'easy' books is repeated across the interviews, and may be an influence on her identity as a reader. Although she expresses a feeling of accomplishment in reading these types of books, ("And when I leave the book it feels really happy 'cause I can read that", Interview 1), in the second interview, she states, "Well, reading's hard for me 'cause I gotta read a lot of easy books, and when I read easy books it's a lot easier" [Interview 2].

The most heartbreaking statement regarding how her perceptions of reading expectancy influence her developing identity as a person came during the first interview when she was asked, 'What kind of reader are you?'. Beatrice states, "Probably a person that's a hard reader." When requested to elaborate on that description, Beatrice replies, "When I get hard on it, it feels like I'm just a bad person that I can't read."

Beatrice's developing identity as a "bad person" and someone who must read "easy books" may also influence how she perceives others to view her. In describing why learning to read is important to her, she states that learning to read will result in better grades, and then she can tell her friends and her parents [Interview 2]. Her struggles with reading are continually mitigated by a stubborn optimism. In the second interview, for example, she provides a mixed response to a question about her perceptions of reading competence, which juxtaposes her hopefulness with information from an outside source:

[Researcher]: How do you feel about how well you read?

[Beatrice]: Um, probably good.

[Researcher]: Probably good?

[Beatrice]: [No audible response]

[Researcher]: So you think you read pretty good?

[Beatrice]: [long pause] I have no idea. Well, my teacher says I read bad because I'm having a hard time in third grade. [Note: the interviewer did not follow up to find out which teacher Beatrice was referring to, as the third graders have a

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separate reading teacher, homeroom teacher, and may have someone completely different for the MSSR time].

The desire to see herself as someone who is successful in reading was revealed in the third interview when she was asked to remark on the value of reading aside from the focus on grades and passing the third grade,   Beatrice replied: "To get into books so I know that I can read 'cause when you grow up you gotta read stuff."

Beatrice describes participation in the ISSR treatment model as being "fun" and makes statements to indicate that the attention of the teacher is of value to her. She enjoys it when the teacher reads aloud, probably because she can enjoy a story without the complications of trying to decode. She may also appreciate receiving background information on stories that may be helpful to her in decoding and comprehending. She states that by having conferences, "…the teacher knows how we're doing every once in a while." When asked what she liked best about the conferences with her teacher, she stated, "When she says, 'what's the books about' and we get to tell her 'cause I *love* telling her about the books." It is interesting to note that this struggling student, confined as she is to the "easy" books and confounded by decoding text, still enjoys the experience of sharing what she reads with her teacher during the conference.

Ms. Jule's conference notes indicate that Beatrice met with her nine times during the treatment period. During these conferences, the teacher notes that the texts included five hard books, three just right, and one that was easy. This differs somewhat with Beatrice's contention that she only reads 'easy' books. Perhaps she is referring to the grade level, because in Interview 1, she describes the books as "between 1.3 and 2.3'.

However, to the teacher, these books may have still been difficult for her to read. Ms. Jule reports that she suggested the following strategies during these nine conferences: breaking words between double letters (mat/ter), breaking words into smaller parts, using rhyming words to help in decoding, and summarizing text. She also notes that she engaged Beatrice in genre discussions of biography and autobiography. In her reflections, Ms. Jule noted that Beatrice's progress was probably not sufficient to pass the state-wide assessment or to be promoted to the fourth grade. Ms. Jule reflected in her notes that she had talked to Beatrice's mother about the possibility of retaining Beatrice in the third grade due to slow progress in school this year.

Beatrice maintains an intrinsic value for learning to read, and an enjoyment of reading and sharing stories throughout the treatment period – despite the fact that that it is quite difficult for her to read many of the texts available for her. It is difficult for her to avoid the outside pressures of learning to read that move her focus to grades and the possibility of retention in the third grade, given comments made to her by her parents and at least one of her teachers. Nonetheless, with the determination of a candle in the wind, Beatrice manages to maintain a glimmer of hope that she will eventually turn the tide, as evidenced in this exchange during the third and final interview:

[Researcher]: Has you're reading changed throughout the year?

[Beatrice]: The teacher says every time she conferences with me, she says

I've been doing a little bit better.

Later in the same interview, when asked if she's noticed any improvement over the year at all, Beatrice states, "Hmm…I'm not sure. I think it's really easy now. I mean, I like to get started reading the book."

While the 12 weeks of involvement in the ISSR model did not correct a long-standing difficulty with decoding text, Beatrice did manage to maintain a value for reading and for the support offered her by her parents and the exchanges with her ISSR teacher. Beatrice evidenced little progress over the course of the year and was most likely not promoted to the fourth grade. Through transcribing her interviews, it is apparent to this former Speech/Language Pathologist that there may well be a complicating receptive and expressive language delay, as her vocabulary, semantic, and syntactic structures appear to be underdeveloped when compared the transcriptions of other students in her grade. However, the one-on-one involvement with her ISSR teacher provided an avenue for discussing texts that were entertaining to her and hopefully provided some impetus to continue reading in the face of great difficulty.

Beatrice revealed a small gain in her post-treatment QRI assessment, completing the third grade passage with 4 correct words per minute compared to her pre-treatment score of 0. While her self-concept for reading score on the MRP decreased from 24 to 19, her value for reading increased from 26 to 30.

Portrait of Calvin: AR Driven. Calvin is a third grader who presented low achievement/high motivation on the pre-treatment assessments. He participated in Ms. Jule's ISSR group during the treatment period. Calvin speaks with an articulation impairment that made his speech difficult to understand. The interviewers were therefore

asked to repeat what they thought his responses were back to him in a conversational manner and to look for his assent before continuing with the interview.

Calvin describes reading as a fun activity when the books are interesting, and notes that reading is personally important to him because he wants to "be smart." Reading is important because reading well leads to better grades, and not reading can lead to failure [Interview 1]. Interestingly, in the third interview, he states that learning to read is important because "…if you don't learn to read, you'll end up like, like African Americans like when they were the slaves that couldn't read or write."

Aside from these nods to the importance of reading, it quickly becomes apparent that Calvin's motivations for reading are significantly influenced by his involvement with the Accelerated Reader™ (AR) program. Even though the teachers involved in this research did not encourage AR participation or permit AR testing during the ISSR or SSR time, Calvin mentioned AR as being the reason for his reading and book selections in 17 of 22 responses. It is not until the second interview that the possible impetus for the AR obsession is revealed. In response to "What makes you want to read?", Calvin answers, "'Cause my mom said if I don't read, I just, she said if I don't get 50 AR points by the end of the year, then, she says I'm grounded." Calvin notes that the ISSR period at school is important because he would not likely get much reading done at home [Interviews 1,2 and 3]. If he tries to read at home, his mom reminds him to do his chores, and there doesn't seem to be much time left for reading. The ISSR period presents enough time to read enough AR books to reach his goals.

Calvin's devotion to AR has a consistent effect on the books he chooses to read during the ISSR period. When asked why he preferred the *Magic Treehouse* series, Calvin states that "Just, well, reading *Magic Treehouse* will get you a lot of AR points every time." Later, he states that "I read one of them and I got interested in 'm, and then I read a lot of 'em." By the end of the treatment period, he had completed the entire *Magic Treehouse* series [Interview 3], having found a goldmine of books that were both interesting and profitable in terms of AR points.

Calvin expressed a belief that AR provides the clear path to achieving reading success and academic status. Calvin is a new student at this school and by his own account, did not read at all at this old school. But when he arrived to this elementary school, he was introduced to AR and now wants to get "caught up with the other kids, with AR points" [Interview 1]. Perhaps this dedication to AR is a strategy for fitting into a new environment, and his involvement is resolute. The most striking effect of his dogged belief in AR is that his responses to instrumentality questions always involve the quest to earn points. For example, when asked "What have you learned that helps you read better?" his response was "I want to get a reading award" [Interview 1]. Throughout all three interviews, he seems to be unable to report on any instructional practice or teacher strategy that helps him to read better – only AR. In the third interview, when Calvin is asked what gets him excited about reading, he answers, "It's that…about the AR points." He elaborates by saying that you receive prizes for earning a certain number of points. For example, when he earned 10 points he received a pencil, and for 25 points he was given a pencil sharpener.

Calvin's self-identity as a reader also seems to be tied to the AR program. Note the following exchange from Interview 1:

[Researcher]: What kind of reader are you?

[Calvin]: About a 3.4 to a 2.4

[Researcher]: And what does that mean?

[Calvin]: That's the books you can read.

Calvin describes himself as a 'good' reader based on his AR level of reading. When asked the same question in the second interview, he stated that "I read pretty good" because he's only 10 points behind his sister, and she's a fifth grader! Considering his performance driven orientation to reading and predominance of extrinsic motivations for reading, it is interesting to note that in the third interview, Calvin offers the following:

[Researcher]: What makes you want to read?

[Calvin]: 'Cause sometimes when you get into a book, you just can't stop reading it.

But the AR influence has not quite faded to black: When asked to name the best book he's ever read, Calvin replies, "*Magic Treehouse Lions at Lunchtime*. I got a hundred on that one!" [Interview 3].

Calvin is an interesting student; he is very motivated by AR, and perceives his identity as a reader as being tied to his AR performance. This is probably highly influenced by his mom's threat to ground him if he doesn't receive 50 AR points by the end of the term, as well as his strategy for fitting in at a new school. He can spout out numbers and reading levels and test scores, as well as strategies for taking AR tests. He

does not give very detailed summaries of stories, but then the speech impairment is a barrier to understanding his complete interview.

Calvin appears to be exclusively motivated by extrinsic factors, but has also mentioned several times that reading will "make you smarter" and "you'll know more." In the post-assessments, Calvin revealed a 7 point drop in his total motivation score, resulting from a 3 point decline in self-concept for reading and a 4 point decrease in value for reading. His total RIT score improved from 190 points to 212, and his Lexile level changed from 413 to 815. He continued to take AR tests, even though there were fewer opportunities to do so. In the fall semester, he completed 68 STAR tests, while in the spring, he took 61 tests. His reading speed and accuracy was essentially unchanged (109.5 – 105.5 CWPM) while his comprehension of the passage increased from 62.5% to 100%. It is not surprising that Calvin's speed of reading the passage was unchanged as the articulation disorder he presents limits his rate of speech. While he evidenced noticeable improvements in his reading ability over the treatment period, his motivation followed the all-too-typical decline of many third graders.

Level 2: Horizontal Analysis

Following the single-subject analysis, a second level, horizontal analysis was conducted to determine meaning statements and meaning clusters that emerged across the data according to typologies within grades. This level of the analysis involved a comparison of two students per grade in each typology. As assignment to typology was based solely on student scores on the pre-assessment administrations of the MAP test of reading ability and the MRP survey total score, students were not equally distributed

across treatment groups. Please refer the focal student grid provided in Table 3.2 on page 84 to view all student names, grades, typologies and treatment group assignments.

High achievement/high motivation

Third grade students of this typology read for excitement, fun, and to learn and both students reported a value of choice and variety of books in their independent reading. While Colm was consistent in describing a mastery orientation to reading, Erika initially presented a performance orientation, but began to report an increasingly mastery oriented valence by the third interview. Neither student reported specifics of current reading instruction that helped them, although Erika, having participated in an ISSR group, stated that she enjoyed the book sharing time. Colm was in the SSR group and was not exposed to the book sharing activities. Both students considered themselves to be 'fast' readers and felt good about their abilities.

In the fourth grade, Dennis and Trinka, both participants of the same ISSR class, reported a mastery orientation for reading to learn, with specific mention of expository texts, and real world applications for learning to read well. Their conferences with the teacher were rich with discussion and assistance in sounding out scientific words, as befitted their reading preferences. They also spent time in discussing the features of expository text and discussing important concepts. Both students felt they read well and that their reading ability remained stable throughout the school year.

High achievement/low motivation

Third graders of this typology differed in their valences for reading as well as in their expectancies. Eleanor presented responses that were disconfirming of her typology,

as her responses to interview questions revealed that she became personally involved in stories and valued her reading time. However, this element of reading motivation was not recognized by the reading assessment measure used to assign students to typology. Her motivation to read was reportedly higher than her scores on the pre- or post-assessments would indicate. Sergi, on the other hand, reported a valence and expectancy for reading that was more typical of the typology. Sergi began the treatment period stating that he didn't like to read. By the end of the 12 weeks, he was reporting a greater interest in expository texts and humorous books. Both of these students were able to relate a few elements of teacher instruction or guidance that they felt were helpful to them, even though they were in different treatment groups: Eleanor was in the SSR classroom, while Sergi participated in the ISSR group.

Darren and Raynauldo, the fourth grade students representing this typology, revealed differing reasons for their reduced valences for reading. Darren was simply not interested in reading as an activity, but became more interested in reading books in his SSR group as a reported result of the choice and variety of books offered. Raynauldo, on the other hand, began the treatment period with a value of reading as a school-related task but began to enjoy reading science books for his own enjoyment by the end of his participation in the ISSR group. For both of these students, the freedom to choose books that interested them seems to have important in changing their value for reading by the end of the treatment period. Both students indicated that they were comfortable with how well they read.

Low achievement/high motivation

Of the two third graders in this typology, Calvin presented an almost complete reliance on the Accelerated Reader™ program to motivate him to read, while DeMario, who participated in an SSR group, read mainly to share sports stories with his friends. DeMario and Calvin report very different motivators for reading, but both are supported by extrinsic factors, such as getting AR points or reading to live up to the expectations of family members or the teacher. Although they both reported an enjoyment of stories specific to their particular interests, neither student demonstrated a growth in repertoire of genre or topic during the treatment period. In addition, both Calvin and DeMario reported strong outside influences on their expectancies for reading.

The fourth graders, Joshua and Rose, presented strong motivations for reading. Joshua, a student recovering from severe brain trauma, is well supported by teachers and parents and presented a mastery orientation for reading to learn more about sports and to improve as a reader. This value of the goal of reading better differs somewhat from Rose, who also participated in the SSR group. While Rose did not seem to place a value on becoming a better reader, she did value the activity of reading as something she could share with her close friend, Hillary. Joshua and Rose related a value of choosing books from a variety of books, and both further indicated an enjoyment of reading to learn about sports (Joshua) and animals (Rose). Both students presented fairly stable and non-expansive perceptions of their expectancies for reading, relating that they read well enough. Essentially, these two students evidenced little change over the treatment period.

Low achievement/low motivation

The third grade students of this typology both participated in the same ISSR classroom. They presented a similar value for reading better as a goal so that they could improve their test grades. While Beatrice was feeling the added pressure of passing the third grade, Joseph saw reading as a difficult school activity that he was expected to endure. Beatrice's portrait was included as an extreme case in the single-subject, level one analysis, as she had come to internalize her difficulties with reading as an expression of her worth as a person. Joseph, whose home environment seems to place a lesser value on reading, simply felt that reading was something he had to deal with at school, but did not affect his out-of-school activities or future perspective. Joseph responded to the ISSR model by developing an increased interest in reading for pleasure instead of just for school, and Beatrice found enjoyment in sharing what she read in her conferences with the teacher.

The fourth grade students who represented this typology were also participating in the ISSR treatment model. Both of these students expressed a value for reading on their own terms, seemingly as if accepting the fact that they are not great readers and therefore expect very little of themselves. While Grayson indicates that reading is important to school learning, Carlos is simply interested in reading for his own edification, which specifically involves learning more about cars and how to build them. Both of these students present a personal agency for reading, reading what interests them and not worrying about goals or tests or reading scores.

Level 3: Vertical Analysis

In a third level of analysis, meaning clusters that emerged within treatment models, grades, or achievement and motivation levels were considered. At this level of data reduction, the responses of six to eight students were considered, depending upon the grouping.

Treatment Models

Focal students who participated in the SSR treatment group were not representative of all four typologies. Students were selected for participation in the focal students interviews based solely on their pre-assessment scores on the MAP and MRP. The students who participated in the SSR model represented high ability/high motivation (n=1); high ability/low motivation (n=2); and, low ability/high motivation (n=3).

From this limited set of data, it can be safely stated that students involved in the SSR group who are high ability readers report that they enjoy independent reading time and appreciate choosing from a variety of books. Students in the SSR group who presented low reading ability exhibited decreased scores on the motivation assessment at the end of the treatment period (DeMario, -19 and Joshua, -12), while Rose's remained unchanged. Students presenting high ability remained essentially unchanged, with the exception of Darren, who gained 9 points on the post-treatment administration of the MRP. Darren was one of three students in the SSR group who mentioned choice and variety of books as a positive element of the independent reading period. Darren's responses indicated a change in his perception of reading as a school activity to one of personal interest. In general, students who read well tend to make good use of time set

aside for reading from a variety of interesting books. Students who present low reading ability may not have been provided sufficient support to maintain motivation levels, especially in the face of the predicted decline that occurs during the elementary years, as noted by McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth (1995).

The focal students who comprised the ISSR treatment groups represented the following typologies: high achievement/high motivation (n=3); high achievement/low motivation (n=3); low achievement/ high motivation (n=1); and, low achievement/low motivation (n=4). Some students in the ISSR groups demonstrated changes in the way they viewed reading as an activity. While Raynauldo and Joseph initially held a perception of reading as a teacher-controlled school activity only, they began to view reading as a personal activity they could enjoy. In a similar change in reading interests, Grayson and Beatrice began to value the social elements of reading, such in the book sharing events or talking about books with the teacher. Several of the students in this treatment group cited the choice and variety of texts as positive elements of the reading period, a response that was in common with some SSR group students. For some students, such as Sergi and Grayson, the booksharing activities were cited as influencing an expansion of their personal repertoire of topics and genres and their awareness of book titles and series.

Changes were also noted for the high ability fourth grade students. According to the teacher's conference notes, Trinka and Dennis were involved in higher level discussions that involved theorizing and concept development, as well as a strategic focus on decoding difficult words in expository texts. They evidenced increases in word

analysis, demonstrating increases of 8 and 35 points respectively on the MAP sub-test. There were two interesting outliers with regard to quantifiable changes in motivation over the treatment period: Joseph, a low ability, low motivated student, revealed remarkable increases in motivation (34 points) on the MRP, while Dennis, a high ability student with good motivation decreased 19 points on the MRP.

Grade

Focal student responses to the interview questions differed according to grade in several ways. First, the fourth graders across all four typologies revealed an attitude of acceptance regarding their reading ability. This was exposed in responses to questions about their expectancies for reading when fourth grade focal students frequently remarked that they weren't concerned with how well they read or how quickly. While this might imply a disinterest in how successful they perceive themselves as readers, it may also be further support for research that points to the establishment of a domain specific estimation of competency that develops in the later grades (Eccles, Wigfield, Harold, & Blumenfeld, 1993; Harter & Connel, 1984; Harter & Pike, 1982). The fourth grade focal students in this study seem to project an attitude that their abilities as readers are set in stone, and that they have accepted themselves as they are. For some, this resulted in a projection of personal agency, such as with Carlos, Rose, and Darren.

Fourth grade students also indicated by their responses a stronger preference for expository text (5 of 8 students), and nearly all of them responded to questions regarding valences for reading with some version of reading to learn more about school and recreational topics.

Third graders also indicated an enjoyment of non-fiction texts, but additionally mentioned fiction, humorous books and poetry as preferred reading choices. As a group, the third graders were more likely to mention outside influences on their reading performance and involvement, such as pressure from parents or teachers to do well (Calvin, Beatrice, and DeMario in particular). Third graders revealed in their responses a great perception of pressure and stress in terms of reading achievement than did their fourth grader counterparts.

Achievement Level

Looking across grade levels, students in the high achievement/high motivation typology described both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for reading. In this particular research, three of the students of this typology reported a mastery orientation for reading, while the fourth student began the treatment period with a performance orientation, but was beginning to reveal a transformation from reading for status to reading for enjoyment by the end of the treatment period. While Colm, Dennis, and Trinka revealed high expectancies for reading, Trinka placed more emphasis on reading "faster" and reading "harder" books, revealing a more comparative stance in her statements of self-efficacy than the others.

Students who are high achieving reveal that they feel free to choose books by interest instead of by reading level (Colm, Dennis, Trinka). For high ability students in general, the opportunity to choose books that are of interest, instead of those assigned by the teacher, appears to have made a difference in perceptions of the independent reading activity, despite their initial level of motivation. High achieving students were also the

only ones who mentioned the experience of 'flow' (Colm and Eleanor) or to develop theories about what they've read (Dennis), demonstrating levels of involvement with text that may be exclusive to high ability readers. It makes intuitive sense that the experience of flow would be related to more highly developed cognitive abilities. High achievers also demonstrated well developed oral language skills in their responses and were more likely to have developed a mastery orientation for reading.

Low achieving students tended to choose books by familiarity, such as when they'd seen the movie or previously heard the story (Grayson, Beatrice, and Carlos). Low ability students also limited themselves in book choice by noting the reading level of books first in order to find a text that was on a manageable reading level (DeMario, Beatrice, Grayson, and Calvin). Their language skills were clearly not as well developed as the higher ability students, revealing an expected relationship between oral and print-based language skill (Beatrice, DeMario).

Motivation Level

The responses of students to the SSR and ISSR treatment models provide interesting insights in terms of how we think about motivation for independent reading, how we assess the construct of motivation, and the possible interactions of the three sub-constructs; valence, instrumentality, and expectancy.

As the Level 1 analysis progressed, a notable theme that emerged from the interview data concerned the nature of the valence described by students. For some, reading was valued because it led to rewards, such as the promise of a car after middle school, or the avoidance of a threatened punishment, such as being grounded or held back

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in school. Other students reported a mastery orientation to reading, where the value of the activity was in the personal pleasure of reading for enjoyment, or tied to curiosity and a thirst for information about topics of interest. For one student, Erika, who presented a high motivation for reading upon the pre-assessment measure, initial interview responses indicated a value for reading well according to school measures, such as reading higher level books with harder words, which would suggest the presence of a performance orientation by comparison to an outside measure. However, Erika's orientation changed through the course of her involvement with the 3rd grade ISSR group. By the last interview, Erika was describing a greater interest in reading books for her own enjoyment and referring less to levels of reading. While the initial investigation sought to discover changes in the strength or degree of motivation as an effect of involvement in models of sustained silent reading, this focal student was one of several who indicated that the quality of the motivation as also an interesting consideration.

This interest in the distinction between mastery and performance goals for reading, or orientations for the activity of reading, leads to an interesting observation: the measure used for the assessment of motivation for this investigation, the MRP, is not designed to distinguish between mastery and performance orientations. In the case of Eleanor, the measure did not pick up well on the type of motivation she expressed for reading. While Eleanor described a strong personal involvement with reading, her responses on the motivation pre-test placed her in a low motivation sub-category. Eleanor's strong identification with the characters of stories would seem to indicate a level of engagement with text that would register differentially on a motivation measure

if reliable and valid items were included to tap that nuance of a value for reading. A discussion of why these distinctions regarding goal orientations and personal engagement with text might be important to include in future versions of motivation assessments will be addressed in Chapter 5.

During the first interview, 10 of the 16 focal students provided responses to questions that indicated a performance goal orientation for reading. When looking across the 20 interviews for the treatment period that were coded under this parent node, the words 'grade(s)' or 'test(s)' appeared 34 times.   Of the 10 students expressing a performance orientation in the first interview, 6 students moved from a predominantly performance orientation to a mastery orientation by the second or third interview; five of these students participated in the ISSR group.

Students who indicated a negative valence for reading stated that reading was boring (Carlos, Grayson, and Raynauldo, Interview 2) or difficult (Beatrice and Joseph, Interview 1). Calvin indicated that the books were sometimes not interesting, (Interviews 1 and 3), as did Carlos (Interview 2) and Darren (Interview 1). Recall that Calvin was the student who chose books solely on the basis of the AR points that would be attributed him if he passed the Star test associated with the book. In his quest to increase his AR points, he seems to have chosen books on perceived likelihood of receiving points rather than interest.

Students across both treatment groups reported that they valued the choice of texts to read and the variety of texts offered in both the SSR and the ISSR groups. Colm, a highly motivated third grader in the SSR group remarked on this as did Sergi, a third

grader reporting lower motivation in the ISSR group. The addition of choice and variety

had the added effect of influencing changes in the perception of reading as an activity for

students such as Joseph, Erika, and Grayson. These three students in particular entered

the treatment period with a view of reading as a school task, but whose responses in the

later interviews indicated an appreciation of reading as a personally rewarding activity.

A few of the focal students indicated that they do not often have time for personally

selected reading at home, agreeing with the presumptions of Ms. Merwin and Ms. Neubin

in their post-treatment interviews.

Students were asked during each of the three interviews what books they were

reading and why they chose them. Students in both treatment groups, having been

provided with 20 – 30 minutes to independently read books of their own choosing from

an interesting influx of books into their classroom libraries, resoundingly described

choices in books that reflected their personal interests. Students read to explore topics

such as insects or cars, or to learn more about sports figures or science topics. Students

in the ISSR groups often reflected on new-found interests in reading humorous books or

poetry, books that were presented by the teacher during the bookshares. They read

narrative texts in order to solve mysteries or enjoy ghost stories (Eleanor, Interviews 1

and 2; Grayson, Interview 2) or because they're "funny" (Darren, Interviews 1 and 2).

Overwhelmingly, the focal students' responses indicated that they were *reading to

learn* in their independent reading time. They were interested in math, science, spelling,

and how people lived.   As Dennis stated in Interview 2, "I know I don't know

everything", the students choose books that would quench their thirst for learning more

about the things that interested them. In fact, of the 47 interviews that were included under the parent node titled 'mastery orientation', the word 'learn' appeared 48 times. Students from both treatment groups and representing every typology chose books that would tell them what they wanted to know about the world.

With regard to genre choices, ten of the sixteen focal students mentioned a preference for non-fiction titles and an existing or increasing value in reading to learn. This occurred across treatment groups, as all classrooms involved in the study received a similar allotment of new books, with an equal assortment of fiction and non-fiction titles. In the ISSR groups, several students reported an increase in their reading repertoire by sharing new genres with their teachers that had been presented by teachers at the beginning of the ISSR period during the teacher bookshare. For example, Sergi and Joseph, members of the third grade ISSR group, began to read humorous stories and poetry, genres introduced by Ms. Jules during the teacher bookshares.

Students in both groups indicated that they valued sharing books with their peers and with the teacher. Of the 7 focal students who reported a value of discussing books with their peers, two were SSR students who held this value through all three interviews and who reported that they discussed books with their friends at recess or at home. The remaining 5 students were from the ISSR group who all indicated this value in their third interviews, but not in the others. While the 2 SSR students may have been social readers prior to the beginning of the treatment period, the ISSR students seem to have developed a valence for the social aspects of reading during their participation in the ISSR model. The 6 students who indicated a value for teacher read-alouds and bookshares were also

from the ISSR group. This includes mention of the teacher read-alouds that occur outside of the SSR/ISSR period, such as those conducted by the homeroom teacher during the reading block or by the librarian during media center time.

While the focal students were fairly forthcoming regarding their interests and values for reading, it was comparatively more difficult to elicit from them their perceptions of what the teacher did to help them learn to read better, or their instrumentality. A classroom teacher might assume that a high achieving student, such as Colm, a third grader, would not be seeking much from the teacher in terms of a 'clear path' to reading better. According to his interview responses, Colm, who participated in the SSR group, learned what he needed to know in the earlier grades and was not able to identify anything his current teachers did that helped him in his reading, besides ask him to read with more expression. It was interesting, therefore, that Dennis and Trinka, both high achieving fourth graders who participated in the same ISSR group, mentioned that their teacher helped them to decode and pronounce difficult words in their expository texts. Their teacher's conference notes indicate that she discussed concepts with these two students as they arose in the books that they shared during their one-on-one time each week. Help with decoding and defining new words in text was cited by 8 of the 10 ISSR group focal students. Of the 6 SSR students, only Carlos, Darren, and DeMario were able to mention a strategy that a teacher had taught them that would help to make them a better reader.

All of the focal students were able to mention something that a teacher told them that would help them read better. Differences were apparent in the types of strategies

reported by the students in the two treatment models. ISSR students were each able to name a specific strategy, such as breaking words into chunks or using key words to decode, using sticky notes to write down confusing words, or using the pictures and diagrams to help understand the text. Of the 6 SSR students, three named a specific strategy, but all of them noted broad strategies, such as read slower or read more books. While making connections between reading and instruction did not appear to come easily to any of these students, the ISSR students who received individual guidance from teacher in reading books did recall specific strategies for making sense of what they read.

The focal students were also fairly optimistic about their expectancies for reading. Of the 16 students interviewed, only Beatrice was consistent in expressing a negative expectancy for reading, although she also made mention of some hopeful trends in her reading expectations, as described in her Level 1 portrait presented earlier. All of the other students were either positive about their perceptions of reading efficacy, or indifferent. The two students who responded that they didn't care how well they read were both fourth graders – Dennis, a high achieving student with a strong mastery orientation and Rose, a fourth grader who was a predominately social reader. Of the 8 students who claimed that that they were average readers, or "not the best but not the worst either" [Grayson, Interview 1], 5 were fourth graders. The third graders who reported a perception of being average readers were, Joseph and DeMario, both struggling readers, and Eleanor.

All students mentioned some positive expectancy for reading in at least one of their interviews, and frequently included qualifiers of their self-efficacy such as *good* or

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pretty good. Upon examining the distribution of interviews coded under the child node titled *positive expectancy*, it was found that 27 interviews of ISSR students were included (14 third grade and 13 fourth grade), while the SSR student interviews were only represented 8 times (4 interviews for each grade). Three of the third grade interviews that contained references to positive expectancies belonged to Colm of the high achievement/high motivation typology. The rest of the SSR student interviews included under the positive expectancy node were from Interviews 1 and 2 only, not the 3rd, whereas all of the students in the ISSR group reported positive expectancies in the final interview, with the exception of Dennis.

In the third interview, students were asked if they noted any changes in their reading over the school year. Only six of the students in the focal group were able to identify changes in their reading. Five ISSR students noted that they were able to read better (Erika and Grayson), to get started reading more easily (Beatrice), or to read more at home or at school (Calvin and Dennis). Rose, a fourth grader in the SSR group, noted that she read more at home now than she did in the previous school year.

The 16 focal students included in the embedded phenomenological component for this study for represents only 17% of the entire sample of 92 students who were received permission to participate. However, the data that were analyzed from their interviews are rich with indications for future instruction, assessment and practice. An integration of the qualitative and quantitative data, as well as a discussion of the significance of these findings, is included in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the investigation and a discussion of the conclusions that can be drawn from the findings. In addition, the limitations of the study and recommendations for researchers and practitioners are offered.

Summary of the Investigation

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effects of traditional and instructional models of sustained silent reading (SSR) on the reading achievement and motivation of third and fourth grade students. Offering students time to read books of their own choosing for extended periods of time during the school day (SSR) is supported by both bottom-up and top-down theories of reading acquisition. According to skills-based approaches such as automaticity theory (LaBerge and Samuels, 1974; Samuels, 1994; Samuels, Ediger, Willicutt, & Palumbo, 2005), certain reading skills are roughly pre-requisite to others. As word recognition becomes an increasingly automatic process, the reader can build sufficient fluency to support comprehension of text, and hopefully metacognitive awarenesses. Therefore, any instructional practice that permits sufficient time-on-text to build up to this level of automaticity would seem to be beneficial. When considering psycholinguistic and sociopsycho-linguistic approaches to how reading is acquired (Goodman, 1969, 1994), providing opportunities to read whole texts for extended periods of time is an essential instructional practice if students are to gain the ability to make meaning from contextual clues and other structures provided in the text, and in their interaction with the text. Despite these apparent theoretical bases to the

practice of sustained silent reading, the evidentiary support is lacking in the research literature.

Focusing on third and fourth graders, students who are instructionally crossing the divide between 'learning to read' and 'reading to learn', this investigation sought to determine the effects of offering two models of SSR on a daily basis to students for a twelve week treatment period. The study included both achievement and motivation related dependent variables as well as quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a multilevel view of traditional SSR and the instructional version, ISSR, as it was experienced by the participating students. In particular, this concurrent nested mixed methods design addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading achievement of third and fourth grade students?

2. What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading motivation of third and fourth grade students?

3. What do students report regarding their experiences of participation in the ISSR and SSR models of independent reading in relation to their perception of valence, instrumentality, and expectancies for reading, particularly students who are representative of the following typologies: *High Achievement/High Motivation; High Achievement/Low Motivation; Low Achievement/High Motivation,* and; *Low Achievement/Low Motivation*?

The two models of reading practice that were used include a traditional version of SSR, where the teacher reads as the students read but does not provide instructional support,

and an instructional version, ISSR, where the teacher provides support to students in the form of teacher booksharing, weekly conversational conferences, and student booksharing activities. The two models held in common the choice and variety of texts that students could read as well as a requirement of no accountability, meaning that the student's reading was not graded or assessed formally. Both models were provided daily for 30 minute periods while suppressing student participation in the school wide program, Accelerated Reader™, a potentially confounding program.

The quantitative data involved the Measures of Academic Progress – Reading (MAP; NWEA, 2006), administered according to the school district schedule, and the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling and Mazzoni, 1996), which was given to students in the participating classrooms as a pre- and post-treatment measure. An informal assessment of reading ability was provided by administering the Qualitative Reading Inventory – 4 (Leslie & Caldwell, 2006) before and after the treatment period, and an in-depth view of 16 focal students provided essential data regarding changes in motivation over time while participating in the two treatment models using VIE theory as a lens for analysis. While results of these various analyses are provided in Chapter 4: Results, the remainder of this chapter will provide a discussion of these findings, the limitations of the study, and the implications for researchers and practitioners as a result of this work.

Discussion of the Findings

The discussion of the findings resulting from this investigation is presented on two levels. A general discussion of how the treatment models were implemented is presented first as context for presenting a discussion of how the findings answered each of the three research questions. These discussions involve an integration of quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a multilevel view of the findings, beginning with general group results and percolating through to individual student perceptions of the treatment models.

Implementation of the Treatment Models.

Across grades and treatment groups, all of the teachers reported, and were observed, to be successful in implementing their assigned treatment model according to the professional development provided. However, differences in how the ISSR teachers conducted various elements of the model did expose some differences that will be important to consider in future professional development and research endeavors.

While all three ISSR teachers conducted bookshares to begin the treatment period, Ms. Madsen's (4th grade) was observed to present books as a read-aloud rather than a book share. This was further observed to impinge on the amount of time left for independent reading and conferencing with students, and may have limited the amount of student sharing that occurred at the end of the treatment period. Ms. Jule (3rd grade) presented a variety of fiction, poetry, and humorous books that seemed to be well received by students, as indicated by the book titles noted on her conference sheets, while Ms. Neubin's (4th grade) bookshares provided a balance of narrative and expository texts

that seemed be well-suited to the reading interests indicated by students in her conference notes.

Students in all five classrooms sustained an average of 25 – 30 minutes of reading by the second week of the treatment period. The students in the SSR group read five minutes more on average than did the ISSR students, as the students in the ISSR group were also exposed to teacher and student booksharing activities during the same 30 minute period. When looking at all students across the treatment groups, the ISSR students in both grades were observed to be more engaged during the independent reading time than were the SSR students (ISSR=89%; SSR=83%). This observation is based on the researcher fidelity checks, which occurred at three times for each classroom during the treatment period. During these fidelity checks, the researcher made note of the number of students engaged with text at five minute intervals during the independent reading phase of the period. The difference in engagement was particularly striking in the fourth grade groups (ISSR=90%; SSR=76%).

The conferences that occurred in the ISSR groups during the independent reading portion of the period were also somewhat variable between grades in terms of the amount and type of strategies provided. The fourth grade teachers reported a greater number of strategies that were shared with students during conferences than did Ms. Jule in her third grade ISSR group.   The fourth grade teachers were also distinguished by the personalization of these strategies to students and texts than was Ms. Jule. Conference notes in Ms. Jule's class most often included observations of student oral reading ability, and for a two week period, mentioned a common strategy for all students – that of

considering the author's purpose. Although not explicitly stated by the teacher, this repetition of strategy in all student conferences may indicate that Ms. Jule used the conferences to extend the instruction of standards from the English Language Arts curriculum into the ISSR conference framework – an alteration of the model that was not foreseen and therefore, not discussed in the professional development provided. These observations of how the three teachers implemented a model following the same professional development will inform future iterations of the model as well as the information and development provided to teachers.

In general, the ISSR teachers conducted their conferences with students in the conversational manner that was demonstrated for them in the professional development sessions. They all asked students about what they were reading and listened with interest as students read aloud selected passages from their books. Differences were most apparent in the degree to which the strategies suggested were explicitly instrumental to helping students to read and comprehend the specific texts presented to them during the conferences. The fourth grade teachers, in particular, provided the type of monitoring of student decoding and comprehension, and provided strategies for negotiating texts, in a manner that was commensurate with intended ISSR design.

Looking at all three ISSR groups, Ms. Neubin's version exemplified what ISSR was intended to be. She shared a variety of books with students by providing only the information essential to provide topic, genre, and enough of a hook to interest students, and carried out her conferences in a manner that honored student interests and thirst for knowledge while providing explicitly instrumental guidance to read the chosen texts. In

addition, her "book sell" activity at the end of the ISSR period was an unqualified hit with her students; exciting to observe and regarded highly by focal students interviewed.

Focal students in all of the ISSR groups across grades reported a value of the booksharing elements presented by teachers and students. It is perhaps the sharing of books within the ISSR period that accounts for the increasing variety of book choices noted in the ISSR groups as the treatment period continued. Students remarked on a new-found interest in poetry or humorous books following teacher bookshares of these types of texts.

It was interesting to discover through Ms. Cojak's reflections that her fourth grade SSR group was showing signs of an emerging social community around book reading. She indicated that students, when hearing her laughter while reading her own book during the silent reading period, would ask her about the title or beg her to share it with them. According to her notes, some of the students that were in her SSR group and also in her homeroom group would talk about the books they were reading during lunchtime and recess. This is an interesting element of the fourth grade SSR group that was not reported in the third grade SSR group.

Teachers from both treatment groups were positive in their responses to post-investigation questions regarding the value of providing sustained silent reading periods for their students. They were impressed that their students would sit and read quietly for 25 to 30 minutes, especially as they were not interrupted by taking AR tests (Ms. Merwin, post-treatment survey, 6/6/07). The teachers also attribute the positive changes they noted in attitudes toward reading to the choice and variety of texts offered by both

models, and some intimated that personal reading time outside of school might be limited. The ISSR teachers remarked that they enjoyed the one-on-one time with their students, as well as discovering, then discussing, the books that interested them. While each of the teachers enjoyed the quiet reading time as a part of their school day, the ISSR teachers indicated that they felt they got to know their students better through the weekly conferences.

Research Question 1: What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading achievement of third and fourth grade students?

The primary quantitative measure used to evaluate the effects of SSR and ISSR on the reading achievement of the third and fourth grade students was the Measures of Academic Progress – Reading assessment, which is administered by the school district for the school in which this research was conducted. The test is given in the fall, winter, and spring, occurring at roughly three month intervals. As the researcher was not able to secure the school for participation until January of the second school term, there were only five to six weeks remaining to contain the treatment period before the final MAP assessment for the year was to be given. Whereas the instructional coach had intended for the MAP to given as late as possible in the administration window for the participating classes, she was unable to secure the later dates due an illness that caused her to remain at home and in treatment for the remainder of the school year. Therefore, the results obtained on this measure were not helpful in illuminating differences between the ISSR and SSR groups, as a longer treatment period would be required to effect changes in achievement. Not surprisingly then, no differences were found to exist

between the two groups upon post-testing using MANOVA procedures; however, the plots of the univariate analyses, which focused on the sub-skills of reading such as word analysis, analysis of text, comprehension, and Lexile rankings, were examined to determine the trends that might indicate variables of interests in future research.

The univariate plots, though statistically invalid due to the MANOVA results, did indicate some differences in the trajectories of the two groups in terms of the sub-skills for reading measured. In the third grade ISSR class, an increase in the projected slope was indicated for the sub-skills of comprehension and analysis of text when compared to the semester previous to the treatment period. In the fourth grade sample, a similar increase was noted for the skills of comprehension and word analysis. While the length of the treatment period contained within the time 2 MAP testing interval was not sufficient to detect any significant changes, the trend data may be useful in indicating the value of assessing the three variables – word analysis, analysis of text, and comprehension – to future research projects that include a longer treatment period.

The results of the informal measure of reading achievement, the Qualitative Reading Inventory – 4 (QRI), reveal that the SSR and ISSR groups both demonstrated increases in reading speed and accuracy as well as passage comprehension over the treatment period. The QRI was given at the beginning, and again at the end, of the 12 week period and was used to provide a more authentic and formative assessment of changes in independent reading ability. Positive changes were realized when students were able to move from the less-than-optimal category for independent comprehension, determined by a score of 75% or less on the eight comprehension questions provided, to

the independent comprehension category, determined by a score of 87.5% or better. The students who participated in the third grade ISSR group revealed a slightly better movement towards independent reading skill, as 9 students moved into the independent reading category as opposed to 6 students in the SSR group.

In the fourth grade group, very few of the students began the treatment period with performances in the independent reading category, a marker of the "fourth grade slump" that is detailed in the literature Chall & Jacobs, 2003; Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1991). According to Chall and her colleagues, fourth graders demonstrate an observable decline in reading abilities, which is likely due to the differences in cognitive complexity of the material they are expected to comprehend. In both of the fourth grade treatment groups, an identical movement of 5 students to the independent comprehender group was realized for each treatment group. The differences between the third and fourth grade findings may indicate that the ISSR model is more likely to be associated with positive changes in passage comprehension for younger readers in a 12 week period than for older readers whose comprehension of independently read passages has declined. As many third graders are still grappling with word recognition issues leading to insufficient fluency for comprehension, the daily reading of self-selected texts for extended periods of time may provide the practice needed to become better word decoders in pursuit of comprehending materials that are of personal interest, especially when supported by teacher monitoring. For these particular fourth graders, whose independent comprehension levels were noticeably lacking at the beginning of the treatment period in comparison to the third graders, extended time-on-text alone may have been helpful in

moving students to the independent comprehender category, with or without teacher monitoring.

Research Question 2:   What is the effect of ISSR and traditional SSR models on the reading motivation of third and fourth grade students?

As with the first research question, two types of data were used to answer research question 2 regarding the effects of the treatment models on reading motivation; in this case, motivation survey results and interviews with focal students.

The survey measure, the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP), was given to students at the beginning and end of the treatment period and included 10 – 11 weeks of the treatment period, depending upon the classroom testing schedule. The measure uses a four-point scale that when combined for the sub-construct scores of *Value for Reading* and *Self-Concept for Reading,* comprised continuous variable estimations of these elements of motivation, and therefore, were included in the MANOVA analysis for Time 2 (second semester). While no differences were found to exist between groups on the MANOVA results, differences were found to exist on the univariate plots for these two variables by group and by grade.

In the third grade ISSR group, value for reading decreased by nearly two points over the treatment period, while in the SSR group, a decrease of less than one point was indicated. In terms of self-concept, both groups declined by approximately one point. In agreement with previous research on reading motivation trends in the elementary grades, most notably the research conducted by McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995), the predicted decline in motivation was observed for the third grade students in this study.

However, the difference noted in value for reading between the ISSR and SSR group was interesting, and may be an indicator of the manner in which ISSR was implemented by the third grade teacher when compared to the implementation of the two fourth grade teachers.

In Ms. Jule's class, the observed book shares and her conference notes were distinctly different from the other two ISSR groups as ties to standardized assessments and standards for the English Language Arts curriculum were apparent in the third grade group. A direct connection was observed in the teacher bookshare during one of the researchers' fidelity observations (researcher fidelity observation, 4/24/07) wherein Ms. Jule stated that certain genres would appear on the state-wide assessment. Further, a string of conference notes recorded during a two-week interval of the treatment period reveals that a discussion of the author's purpose for the book was discussed. As the conference was intended for the teacher to support the student in negotiating self-selected texts using specific strategies suited to the student and the text, not for extending instruction of targeted standards in general, the reading that occurred in this particular ISSR group may have been perceived as a school task rather than a personal reading activity. As was seen in the analysis of other data in this investigation, this distinction is important, and may have led to the differences observed between the ISSR and SSR groups for the third grade students. The third grade SSR group was observed to be implemented without any ties to standardized testing or curricular goals.

In the fourth grade groups, trends increased for self-concept for reading in both groups, which is a heartening result considering the continued decline in attitudes toward

reading predicted in other research (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). Differences between groups were most striking for the sub-construct of value for reading in the fourth grade, with the ISSR trend line moving upward, while the SSR slope indicated a decrease. By the end of the treatment period, the ISSR students had gained a point in measured reading value while the SSR group decreased by 1.5, on a 40 point subscale.

Once again, the qualitative data from the focal student interviews are helpful in shedding some light on these differences. According to student interview responses, the choice and variety of books seems to have opened up a world of personal reading possibilities for some students who may have viewed reading as a school-related task only. In addition, fourth grade ISSR students were able to note the strategies that teachers provided to help them read the texts that interested them. The social elements of sharing books with each other at the end of the ISSR period were well-received by fourth graders as well. It is interesting to note that these differences between grades are at variance with those reported by Yoon (2002), who found a small effect for 3rd graders in reading attitude when involved in SSR and a smaller effect for fourth graders. However, the Yoon meta-analysis did not include studies that incorporated an instructional model of SSR.

Research Question 3: What do students report regarding their experiences of participation in the ISSR and SSR models of independent reading in relation to their perception of valence, instrumentality, and expectancies for reading, particularly students who are representative of the following typologies: High Achievement/High

Motivation; High Achievement/Low Motivation; Low Achievement/High Motivation, and;

Low Achievement/Low Motivation?

The focal student interview data involved only 16 of the participants, 8 from each grade level, but provide a vivid detailing of the perceptions of students regarding motivations to read that enlighten the conclusions we can draw from the quantitative results. In particular, the inclusion of students from four essential typologies, *high achievement/high motivation; high achievement/low motivation; low achievement/high motivation;* and, *low achievement/low motivation*, broaden the understanding of the variable effects of the treatment models on students who present differing pre-treatment constellations of reading ability and reading motivation. Their responses to the structured interviews provide perhaps the richest data source for understanding how students use independent reading time when it is provided, and what could be achieved when the models work well. By integrating these qualitative data with the quantitative results, a clearer picture of the effects of the treatment models can be observed, particularly when using VIE theory as the conceptual lens for the analysis. In so doing, a more targeted view of the effects of the treatment models on the perceived valences, instrumentalities, and expectancies for reading is possible.

The 16 students were selected for involvement in the semi-structured interviews according to their pre –treatment total RIT scores on the MAP-Reading assessment, as well as their responses to the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP). As individual scores on assessments were paramount when assigning students to typologies, equal assignment to

treatment groups was not considered. Therefore, 10 of the focal students participated in the ISSR groups and 6 were involved in the SSR model.

Interviews were conducted by research assistants once every four weeks after the beginning of the treatment period, resulting in three interviews per student and a total of 48 interviews in all. The transcribed interviews were coded using NVIVO-7 software and coded deductively using the components of VIE theory (valence, instrumentality, and expectancy) as primary nodes, and inductively as themes emerged from the data. Three levels of analysis are detailed in Chapter 4, which present individual level portraits over time, and horizontal then vertical group analyses. The assertions that can be made when considering these findings follow:

Assertion 1: Choice and variety of texts is an important factor across treatment groups. The two treatment groups, SSR and ISSR, offered students a choice of texts for reading and a plethora of new books from which to choose. Each classroom that participated in the study received over 300 books, courtesy of *Scholastic Books* (www2.scholastic.com). The books included a balance of narrative and expository text as well as books of poetry. Focal students involved in both the SSR and ISSR classrooms reported that being able to *choose* a book for reading, rather then reading only what the teacher provides, is important to them. In his Level 1 portrait, Colm, a high achieving, highly motivated third grader noted wryly that the teacher too often chooses "girl" books for read-alouds. Being able to choose from a variety of topics was valued by him, as it was by other students.

Beyond having choice, the influx of interesting books into the classroom provided unique growth opportunities for the ISSR students. While some of the SSR students indicated that they enjoyed sharing the books they read with others (Rose and DeMario), the ISSR students were exposed to more titles and genres through the teacher bookshares and the student sharing activities at the end of the period. The ISSR students revealed through their responses that they were expanding the types of books that they chose for reading, a finding that was corroborated by their teachers' conference notes which list titles and genres of books read. Third and fourth grade students who had previously exhibited a preference for expository texts were beginning to read humorous books and poetry (Sergie and Grayson). However, *true* choice of books was a luxury afforded the higher achieving students. Students who struggled with reading indicated that they chose books by reading level or other measure of difficulty, as well as books that had familiar characters, topics, or were based on movies or TV shows.

Assertion #2: Students across groups value time set aside for personal reading during the school day. Students in both groups reported that having time to read books of their own choosing during the school day was important to them. Some students indicated that they have little time for reading at home, and others simply valued the time to pursue their own interests, whether this was sports, science, history, or a book series. For several students, the time to read for personal interests rather than to complete school tasks permitted a whole new perception of reading as an activity, such as with Raynauldo, Sergi, and Joseph. Even for students who enjoyed reading, the time to read for personal interests at school was a novel and welcome idea. As Eleanor shared:

"Um mostly when I choose my own books I try to read them a lot. I try to read them but mostly the only time I get to read them is after school or when I go home, because I really don't have time to read them in class, but I really want to. But I used to never to, but if the teacher gives me a book for me to read, she mostly lets us read it in class, but I f I choose it from the library or something, I mostly have to take them home and read it."

An added effect of having time to read books that are of personal interest is the value implied by teachers who provide the time in the busy school day. During SSR and ISSR periods, teachers allow students to follow their own interests, and in the ISSR model, ideally, support them in doing so.

The newfound interest in reading as a personal pursuit as opposed to a teacher-designed task may have influenced a change in goal orientation for several students. The case of Joseph, a third grade low achieving, low motivated student, is a particular instance of how reading without accountability can transform a reluctant reader into an engaged one. Other struggling readers, such as Beatrice, found sustenance for continued enjoyment of books, though the task continued to be difficult for her. Even Erika, whose high ability and high motivation were initially marked by a performance orientation, was moving toward a mastery orientation for reading by the end of the treatment period.

Assertion 3: Third and fourth graders value reading to learn. When allowed to read books that reflect their personal interests, students involved in both treatment groups expressed a preference for texts that help them learn about their world. Students

welcomed the influx of expository texts to their classroom libraries and reported an interest in reading as many books on a particular topic of interest as they could manage in the time allotted.   This finding is particularly poignant when recalling the roots of SSR as a practice: C. Lyman Hunt, often credited with originating sustained silent reading as an instructional practice, sought to create a reader who "persists in the pursuit of ideas" (1970, p. 148). In this research, it was found that when students are permitted the time to choose from a variety of books, they will certainly pursue their interests, and value the opportunity to do so.

In the fourth grade ISSR groups in particular, students who read to learn had opportunities to discuss difficult concepts, and to learn to recognize and pronounce new vocabulary, as a part of their weekly teacher conferences. Whereas students in the SSR groups could also follow their interests through the choice and variety of texts offered, ISSR students received support as they sought to turn their reading into knowledge.

Assertion 4: Third and fourth graders differ qualitatively in their reading needs as well as their reading motivations. According to teacher conference notes and focal student reports, third graders require more assistance in decoding and deciphering print and text features, whereas fourth graders value assistance with understanding concepts, decoding multisyllabic, often scientific, terms and making real world connections. The one-on-one teacher conferences afford opportunities to address these needs as they relate to specific texts and can be tailored to the unique needs of the learner. This is the type of explicit instrumentality that provides a clear path for students between what they want to know and the text that provides the knowledge.

Third and fourth graders also differ in the degree to which their perceptions of value for reading and self-concept are established. Third graders may perceive an expectancy for reading that belies their ability, and are often influenced by the values for reading that are expressed by their teachers, parents, and peers. Fourth graders, on the other hand, are more likely to describe a valence and expectancy that are more aligned with each other, and provide responses that suggest a level of comfort with their reading status, whether they view themselves as good readers or just average. Their self-identity as a reader appears to be more 'set in stone' by the fourth grade, a reality that made it harder to distinguish students in the fourth grade that fit the cross-variable typologies (high achievement/low motivation and low achievement/high motivation) than students in the third grade. This finding is in accordance with research reported by Eccles, Wigfield, Harold, and Blumenfeld, (1993), Harter and Connel (1984) and Harter and Pike (1983) who found a similar domain specific estimation of ability in the later grades. For some, this resulted in a projection of personal agency, such as with Carlos, Rose, and Darren. These students reported that they did not care what others thought about how they read – they read when they want to and otherwise not.

Assertion 5: The goal orientations of students involved in independent reading activities are amenable to change. An interesting aspect of valence that emerged from the interview data involved the differing goal orientations for reading expressed by focal students. Whereas the motivation survey used in this research did not distinguish between mastery and performance goal orientations, these differences became apparent

upon analyzing student interviews and oblige researchers and practitioners alike to consider the importance of the distinction.

In a review of the differences between students who demonstrate a performance orientation versus a mastery orientation, Eggan and Kauchak (1997, p. 361) describe performance goals as being focused on "high ability and avoiding failure." Performance oriented students are less likely than mastery oriented students to embrace challenge or to continue an interest in a topic once the instruction has concluded, as these situations threaten their high ability status or feelings of success. Alternately, students who express a mastery orientation are free from worry about comparisons with others and will continue to explore topics, even if they become challenging, in order to master the task. Students who are mastery oriented are also more likely to engage in the use of strategies and deep processing to achieve their learning goals.

While this discussion of the two goal orientations would seem to make the preference clear for researchers and practitioners, it is difficult to see how mastery goal orientations can be nourished when considering the myriad performance-oriented pressures that flourish unchecked in elementary classrooms. The third grade focal students in particular were quick to mention the tests that must be passed, the threat of retention, the expectations of teachers and parents, and comparisons to peers when considering their reading abilities and the importance of reading as a learning goal. By the fourth grade, many students begin to incorporate their reading status into their identities as comfortably as an old pair of jeans, perhaps as a result of viewing reading as

a school related task that is tested and evaluated *ad nauseam*. In this sense, reading becomes a goal that they neither value nor control.

It is interesting to note, therefore, that changes from a predominantly performance goal orientation to one of a mastery orientation was found to occur in 6 of the 10 students who expressed a performance orientation in the first interview. Of these 6 students, 5 participated in the ISSR group. Of the remaining four students whose performance orientation remained strong during the treatment period, two were included in the ISSR group; Beatrice, whose anxiety about failing the third grade was palpable, and Calvin, whose reliance on AR as a motivation for reading was unwavering. The other two students were members of the SSR treatment group. While both groups offered choice and variety of texts and opportunities to read on a daily basis without accountability, the change in goal orientation during a twelve-week period was well afforded in the ISSR model, perhaps influenced by teacher interests in student reading, or due to increased sharing by teachers and students regarding the reading of texts that had nothing to do with other school-related tasks or assessments.

Assertion 7: The ISSR model demonstrates a potential for positively effecting at least two subconstructs of motivation for third and fourth grade students; valence and instrumentality. In the research conducted in these particular third and fourth grade classrooms, changes in valence were observed, for better or worse, across a twelve week span, as evidenced in both the group data and the reports of individual students. Focal students in the ISSR group responded to the model with increasing interest in a variety of texts, an appreciation of reading as a personal activity, and a value for social interactions

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about the books they read. In the third grade ISSR group, however, the overall value of reading for students decreased over the treatment period, and effect that may be related to the manner in which the teacher incorporated the curriculum and preparation for high stakes testing into the model. By noting in the bookshares that students would encounter the highlighted genres in the upcoming state-wide achievement testing, and by focusing on curricular standards in the conferences, students may have viewed the ISSR period as an extension of the typical reading instruction instead of support for reading as a personal activity.

Most focal students in the SSR groups maintained a fairly stable perception of reading, or declining valences, although their value for choice, variety, and time to read was similar to students in the ISSR groups. While the booksharing by teachers and students may set the stage for added interest in the social aspects of being a reader in a roomful of readers, the value that is implied by teachers who provide time for reading according to personal interests was not lost on these students.

When the onus of reading for school tasks is removed for a brief but protected portion of the day, students are more likely to adopt a mastery goal orientation toward reading, therefore enhancing their valence for reading in a way that encourages them to use the strategies provided to read meaningfully. In this way, changes in valence create a motivational environment where the 'clear path' provided by teachers, who provide individualized strategic assistance in weekly conferences, is welcomed. Students who are supported in the pursuit of their ideas in a classroom where the endeavor is valued by their teachers are likely to persist in them.

The one-on-one time offered by teachers to share in reading interests and to provide assistance in negotiating preferred texts provides a rare opportunity for teachers to meet students instructionally where they are. Research at the intermediate grade level has shown that greater achievement was possible for struggling readers when their tutors provided instruction that was at their reading level rather than their grade level (O'Connor, Bell, Harty, Larkin, Sackor, & Zigmond, 2002). If the goal is to encourage independent comprehension of extended text, the weekly conferences that are a part of the ISSR model afford an excellent opportunity for teachers to support students within their zone of proximal development, embodying the construct of instrumentality. Even Shanahan, who cautioned teachers to "...jealously safeguard instructional time...and follow the research carefully" (2006a, p. 12), would agree that the individualized and differentiated instruction that the ISSR model permits is a worthy use of a half-hour of a school day. In this investigation, the teachers agreed.

The third motivational subconstruct of VIE theory, expectancy, was both hard to meaningfully elicit from students and harder to change, at least in a 12 –week time period. Students' self-efficacies and identities as readers are formed over several years of pursuing the goal and engaging in the activity (Eccles et al, 1993; Harter & Connel, 1984; Harter & Pike, 1983). Initial success or failure in the early grades can be highly influential as the journey progresses, and receiving the appropriate instructional support and resources at the right time can make all the difference. A longer investigation, preferably a longitudinal one, might shed light on the potential for instructional models of SSR to effect changes in students' expectancies for reading.

Significance of the Findings

The significance of the findings of this research can be seen in what was gained and what was lost in introducing the two treatment models, traditional SSR and the instructional version, ISSR, in five classrooms of third and fourth grade students. All of the students benefited from teachers setting aside time for them to choose from a variety of books in an activity that centered on their personal interests, rather than on a graded school task. For some of these students, this created a change in their goal orientations, with a newfound perception of reading as a personally engaging activity rather than a school subject. The SSR/ISSR time may also have been their sole opportunity for personal reading between the school and home environment. However, students in the SSR group who struggled to read did not receive individualized support for reading, nor did they have the opportunity to share in the reading interests of their teachers and peers. At both the third and fourth grade levels, the reading motivation for these two students declined noticeably (DeMario, -19 points; Joshua, -12 points on an 80 point scale). Students with higher reading abilities or strong social motivators for reading presented MRP post-test scores that were essentially unchanged (Rose and Eleanor; change of 0 and 2 points respectively on an 80 point scale).

For students who value the social aspects of reading, the ISSR model permits an ecological change through teacher and student booksharing activities that likens the group to a community of readers who share their interests and preferences. In Ms. Cojak's 4th grade SSR group, discussion about books was spontaneously occurring at lunch time and at recess, although not provided in the SSR period. Where this sharing is

in not valued by the teacher by providing time for students to discuss what they read during the structured parts of the school day, it may not be as likely to flourish, and a true community of readers may not develop. In the case of Ms. Cojack's SSR group, it existed outside of the classroom only.

In her invited address to the Motivation in Education Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association, Nolen (2008) discusses the increased focus in the field of educational psychology on situated theories of motivation which place greater importance on activity systems – the complex social organizations containing learners, teachers, materials, and activities that occur in classrooms. Layered upon activity systems are "figured worlds" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998), in which the meaning systems created by the actions, words, ideas, relationships and identities either pull students into the center of the activity system or push them to the fringes. In the ISSR model, students who would remain at the fringes of a literate community are drawn in through texts that interest them, choices offered them, and time to discuss their reading interests with the teacher and their peers. Becoming aware of various topics and genres through teacher bookshares, and of other students as they share their favorite books, encourages participation in reading as a jointly held activity. The sharing with non-accountability offered by teachers who engage the ISSR model in their classrooms plants the assumption that everyone can contribute to the literate community.

The research conducted in the present study is unique in its use of VIE theory as a lens for analyzing and understanding the changing perceptions of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy during implementations of models for independent

reading. The addition of instrumentality as a sub-construct provides a means to ideate and observe factors that students perceive that can help them to achieve their learning goals. In this research, it is apparent that students have difficulty in naming aspects of classroom instruction that connect to their reading ability, although ISSR students were able to name more specific strategies for reading than did their SSR peers. While teachers may assume that the instruction they provide should be recognized by students as pertaining to their personal reading as well as their school-related reading activities, the connection appears to occur infrequently. The weekly teacher conferences present a prime opportunity for connections between instruction and reading to be made explicitly and with specific reference to a students chosen text.

Further, ISSR reveals a potential to move reading instruction from the sociocognitive to the sociocognitive/situative by creating a community of *practice*. The benefits of the situated approach include the ability to develop a sense of the relationships between the individual and the social context in which motivations develop. A learners' motivation depends upon the resources and cultural tools that are made available in their environment and the points of entry afforded or denied in that activity system and in their community of practice. The addition of instrumentality as a subconstruct of interest in this research highlights the ways in which teachers can be instrumental in effecting changes in individuals, both by valuing student interests and by providing the instructional resources that are most useful to the individual learner. Further research efforts spent in developing the various elements of the ISSR model, and developing teachers who can implement it, hold promise for enhancing the quality and strength of

reading motivation and achievement for individual students and the classroom communities in which they learn.

Limitations

In its attempts to provide empirical rigor to examine the effects of traditional and instructional models of SSR in third and fourth grade classrooms, this research has encountered several obstacles that limit the generalizability and statistical significance of the results. A major limitation occurred when the post-test administration of the MAP-Reading test was given earlier than planned by the school district and therefore restricted the portion of the treatment period that could be measured. Constructs such as achievement and motivation are slow to change, and even the 12 week period that was available for the motivation measure (MRP) and Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) assessments was not ample enough to reveal changes; however, the late start in securing a school for this research willing to suspend involvement in AR and also allow students to be randomized into treatment groups prevented the possibility for a 16 or 20 week trial.

While the measures used to assess the dependent variables were suitable, future research that includes statistical analysis may want to include an achievement measure that provides greater variability and range of scores. The MAP-Reading measure uses an adaptive measurement scale and reports results in Rasch Units that may provide sufficient information for teachers to tailor instruction, but do not provide a sensitive range for statistical analysis. The expected growth on the total RIT score over the course of the third and fourth grade years is only 4 – 8 points. The MAP tests are provided by the school districts in this region of the country, and as they occur at three time points during

the school year, present good reliability and validity, and provide results that are important to local stakeholders, the MAP continues to be an assessment that should be incorporated into research on reading achievement in school that provide it. Future researchers may want to supplement this assessment with other commercially available measures if funding is available.

While the sample size for third and fourth grades students was minimally adequate for group analysis, the possibility of performing post-hoc analyses to determine differences between groups of high, average, and low achieving students was not supported by the numbers of students who participated. In future research, a large enough sample that would permit a comparison of students by ability with sufficient statistical power is preferable, as researchers and teachers would be interested in noting whether the effects of the treatment model occur variably to students who present different reading ability levels at the outset of the study.

<div align="center">Implications for Future Research</div>

This investigation provides ample fodder for future research. While an instructional model of sustained silent reading was successfully, though somewhat variably, implemented in three classrooms, this investigation highlights several elements of the intervention that require further development. To this end, this research should be extended by conducting a series of formative experiments that explore the ways in which teachers can provide booksharing, conferencing, and student sharing activities in their classrooms. Formative and design experiments (Reinking & Bradley, 2008), provide an optimal method for determining the factors that enhance and inhibit a nascent

interventions, such as ISSR, in achieving its pedagogical goal of promoting increases in reading achievement and motivation, resulting in a better idea of the *sine qua non* of the intervention – that is, the elements of ISSR that must exist or be avoided in order for the model to be effective. Formative and design experiments also permit a detailing of the modifications that are required to adapt the model to various school and classroom contexts, thus providing the sort of information that practitioners require when considering a new intervention that may or may not suit their teaching style and curricular requirements. As these investigations are preferably conducted in a variety of distinct classroom settings, reports of formative experiments highlight the context-independent essentials of an intervention while noting the ways in which it can be fine-tuned to suit a variety of classroom contexts.

As formative experiments are carried out with a greater degree of openness and collaboration between researchers and teachers than traditional experiments, information that will inform how the model can best be shared with other teachers can be acquired. This will serve to inform the design of future professional development, as well as the written forms for disseminating information to teachers who wish to implement ISSR in their own classrooms, such as journal articles and books.

In particular, the research should focus on the preparation and skills required for teachers to provide explicitly instrumental instruction to students during the weekly conferences in a manner that is conversational and based on student interests and needs, rather than on curricular goals and high-stakes testing. In addition, development techniques for successfully projecting the essence of the various booksharing activities to

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teachers as an opportunity to expand students' reading repertoire and build community around personal reading interests should be explored.

Researchers interested in the measurement of motivational constructs with elementary students may want to consider the value of including items that would distinguish between mastery and performance goal orientations, and expanding the understanding and measurement of the social and situative aspects of reading and their potential to effect motivation and engagement. In order to evaluate the motivational effects of providing explicitly instrumental support for students to read, and endeavors to encourage the co-construction of classrooms as literate communities, items to assess progress in these ventures will be required.

Implications for Practitioners

Classroom teachers, instructional coaches, and school administrators at every level are experiencing ever increasing pressure to improve the reading, writing, and learning abilities of the students they serve. In pursuit of this goal, a focus on testing and other evidentiary reports of learning have come to overshadow the mission as stated by many of our schools, which usually includes loftier objectives such as meeting the needs of every student and preparing future citizens of a democratic society. These are basic principles of education that inspire us to become teachers, administrators, and researchers; goals that are ill-served by imposing curricula that are heavily scripted and paced, and high-stakes tests that ignore the growth of individuals in favor of the degree to which groups exceed preset cutoff scores.

The instructional model that is emerging from this research has the potential to provide explicit and differentiated instruction in exchange for the commitment of one half-hour of each school day, and, according to the report of the teachers and students who participated in the study, can enhance the value and community of reading activities. While the statistical evidence has not yet been established, as with previous attempts to evaluate models of sustain silent reading, it can be safely stated that it does no harm (Collins, 1980; Evans & Towner, 1975; Oliver, 1973; Yoon, 2002) with regard to reading achievement or motivation. In fact, qualitative evidence triangulated through teacher reports, student interviews, and researcher observations provide support for the supposition that ISSR can increase values for reading, influence changes in goal orientations, and assist in creating classroom communities that embrace the sharing of texts and interests.

Although the current thrust of educational research by policymakers is one that continues to embrace the 'gold standard' of statistically significant and causality oriented research, the epistemology that drives this research remains stubbornly pragmatic. The complexities of literacy instruction, and the manner in which it is embedded in elementary level curriculum, will make it difficult to supply the type of research-based evidence that is recognized by government supported bodies, such as the National Reading Panel or the *What Works Clearinghouse*, a U. S. Department of Education resource for scientifically based educational research (please refer to the WWC Web site at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/overview/). As long as the traditional experimental model is revered, and until such evidence can be supplied, teachers are left with a lack of guidance

regarding how best to implement a practice that is both theoretically grounded and intuitively appealing; that is, providing students the time to read texts of their own choosing during the school day. This research addresses that issue directly by providing a multilayered view of how two models of SSR were implemented in five classrooms, and by presenting the findings gleaned through assessment, interview, observation, and report.

Dillon, O'Brien and Heilman (2000) were invited to contribute an article in the top-tier research journal *Reading Research Quarterly* at the beginning of the new millennium to provide a commentary on the upcoming trends in literacy research. In evaluating the available paradigms for conducting literacy research, they conclude:

> Technical expertise and theoretical and methodological purity have been
> the hallmarks of quality in paradigmatically driven research. Researchers
> believe that if they attend to these elements, more credible findings will
> result. By contrast, a pragmatic stance values communities engaged in
> literacy research who focus on solving problems; the selection of the
> theoretical frameworks and methodologies are tailored to the complexity
> of the problem and the promise of useful findings rather than discrete
> technical standards" (2000, pp. 23-24).

In this investigation, the problem of justifying the use of school time to allow students to independently read texts of their own choosing has been addressed by presenting an alternative to the traditional SSR model. In the ISSR version, teachers *are* providing targeted and explicit instruction to students, while also encouraging discussions and

interactions involving texts. The report of the research details the benefits of participating in ISSR by teachers and students, as well as the elements of the model that require further research to fine-tune and develop. However, the results and conclusions drawn provide a baseline of knowledge that could be used by teachers to supplement and enhance the reading curriculum they currently provide in their classrooms. With the optimism of Dillon and her colleagues, this investigation provides evidence that "[p]ragmatic research for the new millennium can be a practical and hopeful inquiry, which avoids the arrogance of modernist empiricism and the angst of postmodern deconstructions. We can accomplish this goal" (Dillon et al, 2000, p. 25).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Outline of Professional Development

Outline of Professional Development

Part A: SSR and ISSR Teachers

I. Introduce general purpose of the study: To evaluate different types of independent reading programs (any reference to experimental and control versions will be avoided to control for Hawthorne and John Henry effects).

II. Overview of research method

A. Setting up the 30 minute independent reading block each day. Reading block will begin with 20 minutes and increase to 30 minutes within the first 4 weeks of the treatment period.

B. Overview student randomization and reasons for randomizing.

C. Overview of randomization of teachers to treatment model and importance of maintaining fidelity. Also impress on teachers the importance of not sharing information with other teachers until the treatment period is ended, when all teachers can be debriefed.

D. Overview of outcome measures to be used and which tests they will be taught to administer.

E. Discussion of focal students and how interview times can be negotiated.

F. Discussion of purpose of observers in classroom to monitor fidelity and answer questions.

G. General overview of fidelity checksheets that they will be asked to complete. Specific instructions will be provided during treatment group instructions.

III. Test Administration Instruction

A. Motivation to Read Profile (MRP)

1. Present overview of the survey portion of the MRP.

2. The survey can be administered in small groups during the reading period at the beginning and at the end of the treatment period (early January and late April)

3. Read through the instructions to students and each survey item.

4. Model administration of the survey and allow them to take on the role of their students.

5. Discuss the importance of explaining the response scale to students and encouraging them to provide honest answers.

6. Discuss ways in which students can respond without others seeing their answers (i.e., provide tri-fold test blinds)

7. Answer questions regarding test administration

8. Provide all teachers with sufficient test forms and printed instructions.

B. Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)

1. Present overview of QRIs: for the purposes of this study, QRI will be used to assess student's instructional reading level, oral reading fluency and reading comprehension for extended passages.

2. Discuss options for providing time for these individually administered assessments in early January and late April, or if teachers need researcher to administer.

3. Review instructions and leveled passages with teachers.

4. Present administration guidelines as follows:

    a. Teacher selects the grade level narrative passage and asks student to read the passage aloud. Inform student that they will be asked to answer some questions after reading the passage.

    b. As student reads, teacher marks miscues on a separate copy of the passage and uses a stopwatch or second hand to record the number of seconds required for the student to complete the passage.

    c. If the student reads the grade level passage easily with good comprehension and expression, ask the student to read the narrative passage that is one grade level higher. If the student struggles to complete the reading of the passage and is willing to try another, ask them to read the narrative passage that is one grade level lower.

    d. Scoring: *Oral reading accuracy* is determined by subtracting the number of words read incorrectly

from the total number of words. This number is then divided by the number of seconds required by the student to complete the passage. This results in correct words per second. To report correct words per minute (CWPM), simply multiply the words/sec by 60.

    e. The teacher will then ask the student to answer the explicit and implicit questions about the passage that are included with the passage. Record student answers on form provided.

2. Model administering the assessment using one or two teachers as students.

3. Answer any questions regarding administration of QRIs

4. Teachers practice administering QRIs to each other.

IV.   Instruction in Implementing Independent Reading Treatment Model

[Note: At this point, teachers who have been randomly selected to implement the ISSR model will be instructed separately from those teachers who will be implementing the SSR model.]

Part II: Overview of the Two Models

    A. Implementing the ISSR Model

        1. Overview of the model:

            a. ISSR has three essential parts: a teacher bookshare; time for silent reading with teacher feedback and support; follow-up activities that highlight discussion and sharing.

        2. Overview the organizational structure required for ISSR:

            a. Attractive arrangement of books with room to highlight those books that have been read-aloud.

            b. Ways to help students organize their independent reading selections: individual book boxes, buckets or bags can be used to keep books that students select on hand during the silent reading period and will be clearly marked with student's names. Organizational supplies will be provided for teachers as needed.

            c. Placement of students into five conference groups – one for each day the week, with struggling readers equally distributed across groups.

            d. Teachers should determine the groups and post the names and days of conferencing so that students are aware of which day they will meet with the teacher during the ISSR period.

3. Discuss the importance of the Teacher Bookshare: Present and model the process of selecting books for a 3-5 minute book share at the beginning of the ISSR period.

    a. Teachers should select books that, through the course of the treatment period, highlight various topics and genres that will be of interest to students and will highlight word recognition and/or comprehension strategies that have been taught in class.

    b. The bookshare should include a brief overview of the book and include a short passage that is sufficiently interesting or intriguing that the student might choose to read the book in its entirety. This process is known as a 'book blessing', as the teacher's model of interest in the book is often seen as a motivator for encouraging students to read books they otherwise would not choose (Gambrell, 1996).

4. Discuss the importance of practicing with students the transition from the bookshare to the silent reading portion of the ISSR period and use of eliciting stimuli to cue the transition.

    a. Following the bookshare, students should find a 'reading space' and take their book box with them. Their box may contain books, magazines, newspapers or other reading materials available from the classroom library.

b. Students may read silently for the independent reading period, which may begin with 10 minutes, and increase to 25 minutes in five minutes increments as they are able to sustain engagement in the task.

5. Present a format for conducting daily conferences with individual students while the rest of the class reads silently.

a. Students should be aware of which day of the week is their conference day and choose an interesting passage from their book to read to their teacher.

b. Teachers should quietly move to the students where they are reading and ask them to come back to the conference area when it is their turn. Teachers should select the struggling readers of the group to conference first so that time does not run short for conferencing with these students.

c. The conference can begin with a brief discussion of the student's interest in the book. The student then reads aloud a favorite passage to the teacher, and the teacher notes reading fluency and whether the book seems to be too easy, too hard or at a 'just right' level.

d. If the book is either too easy or too hard, the teacher can guide the student, using the 'five finger' rule, in selecting interesting books that the student can read at an instructional level.

e. The teacher then engages the student in a discussion of the text using a comprehension strategy that is known to the student and appropriate to the text, such as questioning the author, taking a "text walk" of the headings provided in expository text, or predicting and making inferences. The teacher should be explicit in drawing ties between the strategy and how it makes the book more accessible to them as they discuss the book.

f. The teacher can then suggest to students other books that might be of interest to them and would be at an instructional reading level. Allow students to preview books in the classroom library after their conference time and to add a book or two to their book box.

g. Teacher notes on student conference sheet the title and genre of the book the student is reading, whether the book was at an instructional level for the student, too easy or too hard, and other comments regarding the students interest and comprehension of the book as well as notes that will inform read-alouds and book suggestions for students.

6. Discuss with teachers the importance of practicing the transition between the silent reading period and the follow-up discussion time. Provide suggestions for eliciting stimuli that will provide the cue to pack up their book boxes and wait for instructions regarding the follow-up activity.

7. Present various options for a 3 – 10 minute follow-up activity. Encourage teachers to brainstorm regarding other ways to encourage students to discuss what they've read with each other in pairs, small groups, or in presentations to the whole class. Suggestions include:

   a. Pair-share: Students select and "elbow partner" and in pairs, spend one minute each talking about what they are currently reading while the teacher keeps time. The student then have three minutes to ask their partner questions about the book, what they think will happen next, what they learned that was new, and so forth.

   b. Book sell: Students who have finished books that week may choose to 'sell' the book by talking about what they liked, what they did not like, what they learned, and whether they recommend the book for others to read.

8. Provide checksheets for self-monitoring of the ISSR period (Appendix C).

9. Discuss procedures for completing the checksheets and turning them in to the researcher on a monthly basis.

10. Answer any questions regarding the research, their participation in the research, and the implementation of the treatment model as needed.

B. Implementing the Traditional SSR Model

1. Overview of the model:

   a. SSR, as per the McCracken Rules, has three essential parts: The students read books of their own choosing, the silent reading period is increased

gradually as students are able to sustain reading, and the teacher models independent silent reading during the period.

2. Review and discuss the McCracken Rules, which are as follows (McCracken, 1971, p. 521)

   a. Everyone reads silently during the prescribed time – no excuses;

   b. The teacher is engrossed in adult fare during the SSR period;

   c. Students may choose one book, magazine or newspaper from a variety of available materials and cannot change the text they are reading during the SSR period;

   d. The SSR period is timed, beginning with a 10 minute interval and increasing as students are able to maintain engagement;

   e. There can be no reports or records kept of what or how much students read, nor any evaluation of comprehension.

3. Overview of the Organizational Structure of the SSR period:

   a. The classroom library should be well organized with books attractively displayed.

   b. Students will be given five minutes at the beginning of the SSR period to select a book, magazine or newspaper to read.

   c. Begin silent reading period by cuing students to select a 'reading place' and to begin reading silently until the teacher indicates that the period has ended.

   d. Teacher reads adult fare during the silent reading period.

e. The reading period begins with 10 – 15 minutes of silent reading and increases to 30 minutes in 5 minute increments, based on student engagement.

f. Direct students to keep books they wish to keep reading in their book baggies and to return books to the classroom library if they have finished with them. Colored baskets and individual baggies will be provided to teachers for their students.

g. If time remains in the treatment block after the silent reading period has ended, direct students to activities such as looking through the classroom library or completing other work until it is time to proceed to the next class.

4. Provide checksheets for self-monitoring of the SSR period (Appendix F). Discuss procedures for completing the checksheets and turning them in to the researcher on a monthly basis.

5. Answer any questions regarding the research, their participation in the research, and the implementation of the treatment model as needed.

APPENDIX B

The Essentials of Instructional Sustained Silent Reading

The Essentials of Instructional Sustained Silent Reading

Instructional Sustained Silent Reading, or ISSR, is a model of independent reading that integrates research-based practices of literacy instruction into independent reading practice to increase reading skill and motivation. ISSR encourages teacher intervention in student reading practice through the careful design of the classroom contexts for independent reading, weekly conferences to scaffold and monitor students, and integration of strategies taught during reading instruction. The following elements of ISSR are essential:

Frequency: The ISSR period occurs daily. At the beginning of the year, students may only be able to sustain reading for10 minutes. As students exhibit an increased ability to maintain engagement during independent reading, the ISSR period can be increased to a maximum of 30 minutes (using 5 minute increments).

Bookshare: The ISSR period begins with a short bookshare by the teacher. The teacher introduces one, or a few, books that are available in the classroom library for students to read. The bookshare need only be a few minutes in length, but should highlight a topics or genres that may interest students. The bookshare is also an opportunity for the teacher to model using particular word recognition or comprehension strategies that were taught during reading instruction.

Conferencing: The teacher should group students into five groups – one for each day of the week, with the struggling readers equally distributed across the groups. Each day, the teacher will spend the independent reading portion of ISSR in conferences with the students assigned to that day. Select the struggling readers near

the top of the order, so that time never runs short for conferencing with the students most in need of teacher support! In a conversational manner, use the conference to:

(a) Talk with students about the book they are currently reading. Show them the five finger rule for assessing the appropriateness of the reading level. If they place their hand on a page of the book and can read the five words that are under each finger, then the text is probably at a reading level that is not too challenging. If the book is too challenging, help the student to find another book on the topic that is at an instructional level. Alternately, if the student is typically choosing books that are too easy to offer realistic opportunities to practice new reading skills, then guide them to books on their topic or genre of interest that may challenge them a bit.

(b) Ask the students to tell you what is interesting about the book. Have them read a favorite passage to you and make a note of miscues and fluency.

(c) Remind the student of particular strategies that would assist in word recognition or comprehension of the particular text.

(d) Close with a comment regarding how interesting the story or topic is. Tell them how much you enjoyed hearing them read a passage from their book, focusing on their enjoyment and comprehension of the text and not on their oral reading skill.

Sharing: When the allotted time for silent reading is completed, choose a follow-up activity that will allow students to share what they've read with others. Some suggestions are:

(a) Buddy Share: Turn to a buddy and talk about what you've read for one minute. When the teacher calls time, switch and let your buddy tell you what you're reading. Take another minute or two to ask each other questions about the stories or information (if expository).

(b) Popsicle Share: The teacher can place the names of students on Popsicle sticks and put the sticks in a jar. The teacher chooses a stick from the jar and reads the name of a student. That student then has a minute or two to talk about what they've been reading. This can be repeated with one or two more students.

(c) Book Sell: When a student has completed a book, they can take a few minutes to talk about what they liked, or didn't like, about the book and other students can ask questions. This is a great way for students to hear about books that might interest them!

Book Buckets: A bucket or baggie should be clearly labeled for each student so that they can keep track of books they're reading, books they want to re-read, and books they want to read next. Teachers can keep an ear out for student interests and may select additional books from the school library that would be of particular interest and appropriately leveled. The teacher may want to surprise students by putting 'book prezzies' in their buckets or may choose to look at the suggested book with students during conferences.

Classroom Library: The books available for silent reading should be neatly and attractively arranged, so that students can find books that interest them easily.

Teachers may want to highlight books used during the daily read-aloud "book blessing" by placing them in a special display so that students can read them if they wish.

APPENDIX C

ISSR Checksheet

ISSR Checksheet for week beginning_____

Teacher: _____ **Grade:** _____

Please place a check (or a number) in the box for each day of the week to indicate that you implemented each of the following elements of ISSR. If you were unable to do so, please note in the comments section provided at the bottom of the page. Thank you!

	M	**T**	**W**	**Th**	**F**
I shared a book at beginning of the period					
Number of students conferences completed today					
I suggested strategies for decoding and comprehension during student conferences.					
I engaged students in a short follow-up activity to give them a chance to share what they've read.					
Total number of minutes spent in silent reading today:					
Please list books used in Read Aloud this week: Please list comments, observations or problems on the back of this form. Remember to include the date!					

APPENDIX D

Fidelity of Implementation Checklist:

ISSR GROUP

Fidelity of Implementation Checklist: ISSR Group

Date: _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

Observer: _____

	Does not do	Does on a limited basis	Fully implements
1. Book buckets are organized and ready for students to use.	0	1	2
2. Classroom library is well organized.	0	1	2
3. Opens with read-aloud	0	1	2
a. passage "sells" book, topic or genre	0	1	2
b. read aloud highlights a strategy	0	1	2
4. Effective eliciting stimulus to begin silent reading time.	0	1	2
5. Conferences with students according to group schedule.	0	1	2
a. Begins with struggling student	0	1	2
b. Discusses level of text	0	1	2
c. Elicits student retelling/discussion	0	1	2
d. Monitors short oral read and notes level, interests, miscues, use of strategies.	0	1	2
e. Suggests strategies (WR or C)	0	1	2
f. Conversational and interested	0	1	2
6. Engages students in follow-up discussion activity of at least five minutes.	0	1	2
Total _____ / __28__ _____% Total amount of time spent in silent reading _____ mins.			

Teacher Questions recorded on back of form:

APPENDIX E

ISSR Student Conference Notes

Student Conference Notes

Teacher: _____

Student name:_____

Date:_____

NOW book:

_____

This book is: (Circle one)   EASY   JUST RIGHT   HARD

Strategy suggestion?

_____

Other:

Student name:_____

Date:_____

NOW book:

_____

This book is: (Circle one)   EASY   JUST RIGHT   HARD

Strategy suggestion?

_____

Other:

APPENDIX F

The Essentials of Sustained Silent Reading

The Essentials of Sustained Silent Reading

Sustained Silent Reading, or SSR, is a model of independent reading that is used to provide time each day for students to read books of their own choosing. Proponents of SSR believe that students will enjoy reading more if they are given time to read books that interest them on a daily basis, and without teacher intervention regarding their reading progress. The following elements of SSR are essential:

Frequency: The SSR period occurs daily. At the beginning of the year, students may only be able to sustain reading for 10 minutes. As students exhibit an increased ability to maintain engagement during independent reading, the SSR period can be increased to a maximum of 30 minutes (using 5 minutes increments).

Teacher modeling: During the SSR period, the teacher models engaged reading by reading silent a book of his or her own choosing – not schoolwork or a children's book.

Non-accountability: The SSR period is designed as a recreational reading time, when students can read books of their own choosing for extended periods of time without teacher intervention. No reading logs are kept regarding pages read, nor do teachers test students on what they read.

Book Buckets: A bucket or baggie should be clearly labeled for each student so that they can reserve a book they are reading and continue reading it during the next SSR opportunity. Otherwise, students can return books to the classroom library at the end of the period.

Classroom Library: The books available for silent reading should be neatly and attractively arranged, so that students can find books that interest them easily. Time will be provided at the beginning of the SSR period for students to select books for reading. Once they have chosen the book, they need to keep that book for the silent reading period on that day. They may change books the next day if they wish.

APPENDIX G

SSR Checksheet

SSR Checksheet for week beginning:_____

Teacher: _____ **Grade:** _____

Please place a check (or a number) in the box for each day of the week to indicate that you implemented each of the following elements of SSR. If you were unable to do so, please note in the comments section provided at the bottom of the page. Thank you!

	M	T	W	Th	F
I provided student with 5 minutes at the beginning of the SSR period to select a book or other text for reading.					
I cued students to find their "reading place" and begin reading					
I read non-work related materials during the silent reading period.					
I noticed when student engagement with silent reading was waning.					
I signaled students to conclude the silent reading period.					
I directed students to return books to the classroom library or to reserve books in their book boxes.					
I directed students in other activities until the SSR block was concluded.					
Total number of minutes spent in silent reading today:					
Please list activities students engaged in this week after the silent reading period ended and before change of classes.					

Please list comments, observations or problems on the back of this form. Remember to include the date!

APPENDIX H

SSR Fidelity of Implementation Checksheet

Fidelity of Implementation Checklist: SSR Group

Date: _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

Observer: _____

	Does not do	Does on a limited basis	Fully implements
1. Book buckets are organized and ready for students to use.	0	1	2
2. Classroom library is well organized.	0	1	2
3. Signals students to select books for SSR	0	1	2
4. Signals students to find reading place and begin reading	0	1	2
5. Teacher reads during silent reading period	0	1	2
6. Notices when students are no longer engaged	0	1	2
7. Signals end of SSR period.	0	1	2
8. Directs students to return books to library or box.	0	1	2
9. Directs students to alternative activities until reading block is ended.	0	1	2
Total _____ / __18__ _____% Total amount of time spent in silent reading _____ mins.			

Types of activities students participate in after silent reading period:

Teacher Questions recorded on back of form:

APPENDIX I

Focal Student Interviews

Interview 1 of 3 - February

Student Initials:_____Teacher:_____Date:_____
Interviewer Initials:_____ Begin Time:_____ End
Time:_____

Introduction: My name is _____and I wanted to talk to you about what you're reading. I'm studying to be a teacher and I'm very interested in **why** kids read and **what** they like to read. I'm going to ask you a few questions and you just tell me what you think. There are no right or wrong answers here, and anything you can tell ma about your reading will be very helpful. Would you be willing to help me? [*pause*] Good!

I'd like to remember what we talk about so I'm going to use this voice recorder to remember our conversation. That way, I don't have to stop and write everything down. Is that okay with you?
[*pause*] Great! [*turn voice recorder on and place it between you and the student – say student initials and teacher name into the voice recorder for identification purposes*].

1. Tell me about what you're reading **now**.

2. Tell me something you **like** about reading.
    Anything you don't like?

3. What have you learned that helps you read better?
    Where did you learn that?

4. Is learning to read important to you? Why?

5. Tell me about some of the books you're going to read next.
    Why did you choose those ones? (If they know) OR
    What kind of books would you like to read? (If they don't know)

6. What kind of reader are you?

7. Do you think it's important to have time to read at school?

Conclusion: Thanks so much for talking with me about your reading. It really helped a lot – I learn so much from talking with you! Let's get back to your reading class now.
[*turn recorder off*]

Student Initials:_____ Folder:____ Teacher:_____ Date:_____
Interviewer Initials:_____ Begin Time:_____ End
Time:_____

Introduction: My name is _____and I wanted to talk to you about what you're reading. I'm going to ask you a few questions and you just tell me what you think. There are no right or wrong answers here, and anything you can tell me about your reading will be very helpful. Would you be willing to help me? [*pause*] Good!

I'd like to remember what we talk about so I'm going to use this voice recorder to remember our conversation. That way, I don't have to stop and write everything down. Is that okay with you?
[*pause*] Great! [*turn voice recorder on and place it between you and the student – say student initials and teacher name into the voice recorder for identification purposes*].

1. Tell me about what you're reading **now**.

2. Tell me how you feel about reading.
    What makes it (fun/boring)?

3. What have you learned that helps you read better?
    Where did you learn that?

4. How do you feel about having time to read books you choose at school?

5. Do you have enough books to choose from in the classroom library?

6. Tell me about some of the books you're going to read next.
    (If they know, ask) Why did you choose those ones? OR
    (If they don't know, ask) What kind of books would you like to read?

7. How do you feel about how well you read?

8. What makes you want to read?

Conclusion: Thanks so much for talking with me about your reading. It really helped a lot – I learn so much from talking with you! Let's get back to your reading class now. [*turn recorder off*]

Student Initials:_____ Folder:_____Teacher:_____Date:_____
Interviewer Initials:_____   Begin Time:_____   End Time:_____

Introduction: My name is _____and I wanted to talk to you about what you're reading. I'm studying to be a teacher and I'm very interested in **why** kids read and **what** they like to read. I'm going to ask you a few questions and you just tell me what you think. There are no right or wrong answers here, and anything you can tell ma about your reading will be very helpful. Would you be willing to help me? [*pause*] Good!

I'd like to remember what we talk about so I'm going to use this voice recorder to remember our conversation. That way, I don't have to stop and write everything down. Is that okay with you?
[*pause*] Great! [*turn voice recorder on and place it between you and the student – say student initials and teacher name into the voice recorder for identification purposes*].

1. Tell me about what you're reading now.

2. What happens in your classroom that gets you excited about reading?

3. What does your teacher do that gets you excited about reading?

4. You've had time to read at school. Do you think the amount of time you had was too much, just right, or too little?

5. Is learning to read important to you?   **Why?**

6. What makes you want to read?

7. How do you feel about how well you read?

8. If you could choose books for the classroom library, what would you choose?

9. Has anything changed about your reading this year? In school? At home?

10. Tell me about the best book you've ever read.

Conclusion: Thanks so much for talking with me about your reading. It really helped a lot – I learn so much from talking with you! Let's get back to your reading class now.
[*turn recorder off*]

APPENDIX J

Level 1 Student Portraits

Portrait of Beatrice: A Candle in the Wind

Beatrice is a third grade student of the low achievement/low motivation typology who participated in Ms. Jule's ISSR group.

In the initial interview, Beatrice indicated a positive a valence for the activity of reading by describing it as "fun" and "entertaining", and because the stories made her laugh. She also expressed an extrinsic motivation for the goal of reading "because it's a grade on your report card" and its importance to passing the third grade. Throughout the three interviews, Beatrice mentions her concern regarding her chances of being promoted to the fourth grade by relating statements made by others that influence her extrinsic motivation to read:

> [Beatrice]: Mom says, 'Bea, you're going to fail so you better get back on reading.' [Interview 1]
>
> [Beatrice]: …my mom said if I don't make a good grade I'll fail third grade [Interview 3].

However, Beatrice also specifies a mastery goal for reading when she states that it's important to have time to read at school because "when you read it helps you learn, but when you don't read it can't help you" [Interview 1]. She continues this view in the second interview by stating a value for reading as an activity that will lead her to the goal of reading better. Despite her difficulties with reading, she values the activity in pursuit of the goal.

Beatrice is clear and consistent when she identifies the major barrier to her reading success as difficulty with decoding, or 'sounding out the words'. Her key belief

is, "If I can sound it out, I can read the whole book" [Interview 1]. She is so convinced that this lone strategy is the key to her reading success that she states that she'll "stop reading until I figure it [the word] out" [Interview 1]. In her pre-treatment reading of the passage for the QRI assessment, Beatrice correctly read 0 Correct Words per Minute (CWPM). Such a score is possible when the number of errors in decoding outweigh the number of words read per minute, meaning a very slow rate of decoding with numerous errors. Although the researcher offered her an opportunity to read a different passage (at a lower level), Beatrice insisted on completing the third grade passage – an example of her determination. Believing that sounding out words is the only strategy she has, even though it continually fails her, she continues to mark it as the path to success when she says, "If I read, if I get it out, and I know it, and I get through with the book, I know I can to that other book if I don't have trouble." In the same interview she states, "I keep trying to sound it out but I can't" [Interview 1].

Despite the dire predictions made by her mother regarding failing the third grade, Beatrice reports a remarkable amount of support for reading at home. She states in the first interview that her parents read to her and then ask her to read back to them. In the third interview, she elaborates on the routine at home as follows:

[Beatrice]: I read to my mom and then I read to my brother and my dad and by myself.

[Researcher]: Wow! That's very good – so then you get four cracks at it. How long does it take you?

[Beatrice]: Probably about two hours or one hour.

Her mom also helps her to understand text when she "shows all the motions to the story when I read it out loud" [Interview 3]. These passages describe a willingness on the part of the family to provide supported practice at home but may also reflect their perception of the desperateness of Beatrice's academic position with regard to reading.

Beatrice describes her approaches to finding books that she can read during the self-selected reading period of the day. In choosing books for reading, she states that she often selects "easy" books, and that she specifically chose the book *Ruby Bridges* because she had seen the video and "I probably know the words" [Interview 1]. This practice of reading 'easy' books is repeated across the interviews, and may be an influence on her identity as a reader. Although she expresses a feeling of accomplishment in reading these types of books, ("And when I leave the book it feels really happy 'cause I can read that", Interview 1), in the second interview, she states, "Well, reading's hard for me 'cause I gotta read a lot of easy books, and when I read easy books it's a lot easier" [Interview 2]. The most heartbreaking statement regarding how her perceptions of reading expectancy influence her developing identity as a person came during the first interview when she was asked, 'What kind of reader are you?'. Beatrice states, "Probably a person that's a hard reader." When requested to elaborate on that description, Beatrice replies, "When I get hard on it, it feels like I'm just a bad person that I can't read."

Beatrice's developing identity as a "bad person" and someone who must read "easy books" may also influence how she perceives others to view her. In describing why learning to read is important to her, she states that learning to read will result in better grades, and then she can tell her friends and her parents [Interview 2]. Her

struggles with reading are continually mitigated by a stubborn optimism. In the second interview, for example, she provides a mixed response to a question about her perceptions of reading competence, which juxtaposes her hopefulness with information from an outside source:

[Researcher]: How do you feel about how well you read?

[Beatrice]: Um, probably good.

[Researcher]: Probably good?

[Beatrice]: [No audible response]

[Researcher]: So you think you read pretty good?

[Beatrice]: [long pause] I have no idea. Well, my teacher says I read bad because I'm having a hard time in third grade. [Note: the interviewer did not follow up to find out which teacher Beatrice was referring to, as the third graders have a separate reading teacher, homeroom teacher, and may have someone completely different for the MSSR time].

The desire to see herself as someone who is successful in reading was revealed in the third interview when she was asked to remark on the value of reading aside from the focus on grades and passing the third grade, Beatrice replied: "To get into books so I know that I can read 'cause when you grow up you gotta read stuff."

Beatrice describes participation in the ISSR treatment model as being "fun" and makes statements to indicate that the attention of the teacher is of value to her. She enjoys it when the teacher reads aloud, probably because she can enjoy a story without the complications of trying to decode. She may also appreciate receiving background

information on stories that may be helpful to her in decoding and comprehending. She states that by having conferences, "…the teacher knows how we're doing every once in a while." When asked what she liked best about the conferences with her teacher, she stated, "When she says, 'what's the books about' and we get to tell her 'cause I *love* telling her about the books." It is interesting to note that this struggling student, confined as she is to the "easy" books and confounded by decoding text, still enjoys the experience of sharing what she reads with her teacher during the conference.

Ms. Jule's conference notes indicate that Beatrice met with her nine times during the treatment period. During these conferences, the teacher notes that the texts included five hard books, three just right, and one that was easy. This differs somewhat with Beatrice's contention that she only reads 'easy' books. Perhaps she is referring to the grade level, because in Interview 1, she describes the books as "between 1.3 and 2.3'. However, to the teacher, these books may have still been difficult for her to read. Ms. Jule reports that she suggested the following strategies during these nine conferences: breaking words between double letters (mat/ter), breaking words into smaller parts, using rhyming words to help in decoding, and summarizing text. She also notes that she engaged Beatrice in genre discussions of biography and autobiography. In her reflections, Ms. Jule noted that Beatrice's progress was probably not sufficient to pass the state-wide assessment or to be promoted to the fourth grade. Ms. Jule reflected in her notes that she had talked to Beatrice's mother about the possibility of retaining Beatrice in the third grade due to slow progress in school this year.

Beatrice maintains an intrinsic value for learning to read, and an enjoyment of reading and sharing stories throughout the treatment period – despite the fact that that it is quite difficult for her to read many of the texts available for her. It is difficult for her to avoid the outside pressures of learning to read that move her focus to grades and the possibility of retention in the third grade, given comments made to her by her parents and at least one of her teachers. Nonetheless, with the determination of a candle in the wind, Beatrice manages to maintain a glimmer of hope that she will eventually turn the tide, as evidenced in this exchange during the third and final interview:

[Researcher]: Has you're reading changed throughout the year?

[Beatrice]: The teacher says every time she conferences with me, she says

I've been doing a little bit better.

Later in the same interview, when asked if she's noticed any improvement over the year at all, Beatrice states, "Hmm…I'm not sure. I think it's really easy now. I mean, I like to get started reading the book."

While the 12 weeks of involvement in the ISSR model did not correct a long-standing difficulty with decoding text, Beatrice did manage to maintain a value for reading and for the support offered her by her parents and the exchanges with her ISSR teacher. Beatrice evidenced little progress over the course of the year and was most likely not promoted to the fourth grade. Through transcribing her interviews, it is apparent to this former Speech/Language Pathologist that there may well be a complicating receptive and expressive language delay, as her vocabulary, semantic, and syntactic structures appear to be underdeveloped when compared the transcriptions of

other students in her grade. However, the one-on-one involvement with her ISSR teacher provided an avenue for discussing texts that were entertaining to her and hopefully provided some impetus to continue reading in the face of great difficulty.

Beatrice revealed a small gain in her post-treatment QRI assessment, completing the third grade passage with 4 correct words per minute compared to her pre-treatment score of 0. While her self-concept for reading score on the MRP decreased from 24 to 19, her value for reading increased from 26 to 30.

Portrait of Calvin: AR Driven

Calvin is a third grader who presented low achievement/high motivation on the pre-treatment assessments. He participated in Ms. Jule's ISSR group during the treatment period. Calvin speaks with an articulation impairment that made his speech difficult to understand. The interviewers were therefore asked to repeat what they thought his responses were back to him in a conversational manner and to look for his assent before continuing with the interview.

Calvin describes reading as a fun activity when the books are interesting, and notes that reading is personally important to him because he wants to "be smart." Reading is important because reading well leads to better grades, and not reading can lead to failure [Interview 1]. Interestingly, in the third interview, his he states that learning to read is important because "…if you don't learn to read, you'll end up like, like African Americans like when they were the slaves that couldn't read or write."

Aside from these nods to the importance of reading, it quickly becomes apparent that Calvin's motivations for reading are significantly influenced by his involvement with the Accelerated Reader™ (AR) program. Even though the teachers involved in this research did not encourage AR participation or permit AR testing during the ISSR or SSR time, Calvin mentioned AR as being the reason for his reading and book selections in 17 of 22 responses. It is not until the second interview that the possible impetus for the AR obsession is revealed. In response to "What makes you want to read?", Calvin answers, "'Cause my mom said if I don't read, I just, she said if I don't get 50 AR points by the end of the year, then, she says I'm grounded." Calvin notes that the ISSR period at school

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is important because he would not likely get much reading done at home [Interviews 1,2 and 3]. If he tries to read at home, his mom reminds him to do his chores, and there doesn't seem to be much time left for reading. The ISSR period presents enough time to read enough AR books to reach his goals.

Calvin's devotion to AR has a consistent effect on the books he chooses to read during the ISSR period. When asked why he preferred the *Magic Treehouse* series, Calvin states that "Just, well, reading *Magic Treehouse* will get you a lot of AR points every time." Later, he states that "I read one of them and I got interested in 'm, and then I read a lot of 'em." By the end of the treatment period, he had completed the entire *Magic Treehouse* series [Interview 3], having found a goldmine of books that were both interesting and profitable in terms of AR points.

Calvin expressed a belief that AR provides the clear path to achieving reading success and academic status. Calvin is a new student at this school and by his own account, did not read at all at this old school. But when he arrived to this elementary school, he was introduced to AR and now wants to get "caught up with the other kids, with AR points" [Interview 1]. Perhaps this dedication to AR is a strategy for fitting into a new environment, and his involvement is resolute. The most striking effect of his dogged belief in AR is that his responses to instrumentality questions always involve the quest to earn points. For example, when asked "What have you learned that helps you read better?" his response was "I want to get a reading award" [Interview 1]. Throughout all three interviews, he seems to be unable to report on any instructional practice or teacher strategy that helps him to read better – only AR. In the third interview, when

Calvin is asked what gets him excited about reading, he answers, "It's that…about the

AR points." He elaborates by saying that you receive prizes for earning a certain number

of points. For example, when he earned 10 points he received a pencil, and for 25 points

he was given a pencil sharpener.

Calvin's self-identity as a reader also seems to be tied to the AR program. Note

the following exchange from Interview 1:

[Researcher]: What kind of reader are you?

[Calvin]: About a 3.4 to a 2.4

[Researcher]: And what does that mean?

[Calvin]: That's the books you can read.

Calvin describes himself as a 'good' reader based on his AR level of reading. When

asked the same question in the second interview, he stated that "I read pretty good"

because he's only 10 points behind his sister, and she's a fifth grader! Considering his

performance driven orientation to reading and predominance of extrinsic motivations for

reading, it is interesting to note that in the third interview, Calvin offers the following:

[Researcher]: What makes you want to read?

[Calvin]: 'Cause sometimes when you get into a book, you just can't stop reading

it.

But the AR influence has not quite faded to black: When asked to name the best

book he's ever read, Calvin replies, "*Magic Treehouse Lions at Lunchtime*. I got a

hundred on that one!" [Interview 3].

Calvin is an interesting student; he is very motivated by AR, and perceives his identity as a reader as being tied to his AR performance. This is probably highly influenced by his mom's threat to ground him if he doesn't receive 50 AR points by the end of the term, as well as his strategy for fitting in at a new school. He can spout out numbers and reading levels and test scores, as well as strategies for taking AR tests. He does not give very detailed summaries of stories, but then the speech impairment is a barrier to understanding his complete interview.

Calvin appears to be exclusively motivated by extrinsic factors, but has also mentioned several times that reading will "make you smarter" and "you'll know more." In the post-assessments, Calvin revealed a 7 point drop in his total motivation score, resulting from a 3 point decline in self-concept for reading and a 4 point decrease in value for reading. His total RIT score improved from 190 points to 212, and his Lexile level changed from 413 to 815. He continued to take AR tests, even though there were fewer opportunities to do so. In the fall semester, he completed 68 STAR tests, while in the spring, he took 61 tests. His reading speed and accuracy was essentially unchanged (109.5 – 105.5 CWPM) while his comprehension of the passage increased from 62.5% to 100%. It is not surprising that Calvin's speed of reading the passage was unchanged as the articulation disorder he presents limits his rate of speech. While he evidenced noticeable improvements in his reading ability improved over the treatment period, his motivation followed the all-too-typical decline of many third graders.

Portrait of Carlos: Personal Agency

Carlos is a fourth grader who demonstrated low achievement and low motivation on the pre-assessments. He participated in Ms. Madsen's ISSR group. Across all interviews, he describes an interest in cars and building cars and expresses a preference for books about the topic. He also enjoys the *Magic Treehouse* series because they discuss history and biographies of inventors. He responded that learning to read is important so that you can "make stuff" and "learn about stuff", and especially so that he can build things when he's older [Interview 1]. His preference for books continues to include those from which you can "learn about stuff that I've never learned about before" and does not like to read easy books that do not give new information. He describes the silent reading time as "fun" and that he just likes to "sit beside my friend and read." He also indicates that it is important to have time to read at school because when he is home, he has baseball practice and other activities and does not read there.

Carlos's expressed value for reading as a means of learning more about building cars and gathering information is stable across all three interviews. He does not, for instance, mention grades or a desire to go to college or enter a particular profession where learning to read would have importance. He is consistent in his mastery orientation and is a student with a lot of personal agency about his reading; he reads if he feels like it but otherwise not. As he states in interview 3, "I don't really know what makes me want to read. I just feel like reading sometimes but not all the time." He reads for himself and his own interests – not for anyone else.

As do many of the students interviewed, Carlos names only one strategy for reading better – breaking down words and sounding them out. He claims to have learned this from his mom and from his Kindergarten teacher [Interviews 1 and 2]. Carlos is equally consistent across the interviews regarding his perception of his reading ability. He states that he is a good reader, although "sometimes I go slow to understand it more" [Interview 1]. In the second and third interview, he uses the word "proud" to describe how he feels about his reading. His choice of the word "proud" may be a further expression of his personal agency and mastery orientation, as he notes that in the second and third grades, he struggled with reading. He states in the first interview, "… in the third grade I couldn't really do that well" [Interview 1]

Ms. Madsen's conference notes indicate that Carlos typically chose easier books to discuss with her at conferences. She notes that she encouraged him to make real world connections with the texts he read and to reread to clarify meaning. She also used several of the 8 conferences she held with him to summarize or discuss what he'd read in the book so far.

Carlos' scores on the post-assessment of reading ability indicated an increase of 12 CWPM on the QRI with an increase in comprehension from 62.5% to 75%. He also evidenced modest gains on his RIT score from 182 to 191, while his motivation for reading remained similar to his pre-treatment level (57 to 58). Interestingly, his self-concept for reading increased by 4 points while his value for reading decreased by 3 points. A change in Lexile level was observed, however; his December Lexile level was 274while his March Lexile score was 438

Portrait of Colm: Master and Commander

Colm is a third grader in Ms. Merwin's SSR group. His scores on the pre-assessment measures placed him in the high achievement/high motivation typology.

Colm states that he finds books about sports to be "really exciting and fun" [Interview 1, 2] and that he sometimes gets lost in a book, "…like my mom will be calling my name and I won't even hear her" [Interview 1]. He reiterates this value of being transported by books in Interview 2 when he says, "like it's an adventure like right where you're sitting and you can do anything you want" [also in Interview 3]. He also places an importance on reading for taking tests [Interview 1]. In the second interview, Colm relates that he values the choice of books and the variety [Interviews 2 and 3] offered during the SSR period. This is important to him because "you and another person might like different books ...like you can read whatever you want" [Interview 2].

Colm reports that his teachers helped him to learn to read with "lots of expression" [Interview 1] and to be aware of the soft letters, such as 'g' when pronouncing new words. In the second interview, he adds that he's learned to read a little slower and not just speed through books as a means of improving retention. This is something his second grade teacher taught him. Other than when he related that Ms. Merwin encouraged reading by telling them "…we wouldn't know anything hardly, and we couldn't be able to do anything" without reading, Colm has a difficult time finding any teacher or classroom practice that has been helpful in this current grade.

Colm describes himself as a "pretty good reader" [Interview 1, 3]. He makes ties between reading and identity when he states, "If we didn't read there's no sense in doing anything…I mean, if you didn't read, you'd just be a whole lotta nothin." He describes himself as a "confident" reader [Interview 3] who is "not afraid to read to anyone" [Interview 2].

Despite his previous responses regarding the importance of reading slower so that you can remember what you read, Colm states in the third interview that "I've gotten better with reading faster. I used to read pretty slow, but now I read fast and with good expression." In his post QRI passage reading, he did increase his CWPM by 27.2 words but answered one less question correctly on the comprehension follow-up than he did in the pre-treatment assessment.

Colm reports that having time to read was a pleasant change from when he was in the second grade. He states:

> …in second grade we didn't have a lot of time to read. We'd just do
> workbook pages and our teachers wouldn't challenge us enough. But now,
> we get challenged. We get to, uh, experience what we learn. We usually
> have a book project and we'll get to read books more than once – uh, the
> ones that we like[Interview 3].

Colm is a bright and articulate student with good oral language skills. He presents a predominately mastery orientation to reading. He seems to require very little from the instruction offered in class and reports having good support at home. He was consistent in relating a value of reading because it absorbs/transports him. At his reported level of

independent reading, further intervention by the teacher would not seem to be particularly

important, although Colm did seem to enjoy sharing his stories with the researcher.

Portrait of Darren: Time to Enjoy

Darren is a fourth grader who participated in Ms. Cojak's SSR group. His pre-treatment scores placed him in the high achievement/low motivation typology.

Darren is fairly clear about the types of books he enjoys. In interview 1, he states that he prefers "all kinds of non-fiction books and some fiction books." He enjoys reading books that are funny or that teach him things. If he were buying books for the library, he stated he would be sure to get books that supplement learning, such as math, and stated that he reads non-fiction science books at school because "…we haven't been studying science in our classroom" [Interview 2].

When asked if reading is important to him, he replies in the first interview "not really", adding that, "I really think reading is boring." He elaborates that he does not like sitting for long periods to read and that chapter books have too many words and too few pictures. In the second interview, he states that sometimes he gets excited about reading and sometime he doesn't. Darren describes ties between reading practice and a value of reading when he states, "When you read more, you get more interested in books and reading" [Interview 2]. He demonstrates this further in the third interview when he states that he values the time to read everyday because "…there's so many books that I want to read and not enough time to read them in." The only instance of relating a future perspective for reading occurred in the third interview when he stated: "It's important to me because when you get older you start to read more and you need to learn to read kind of faster because sometimes you'll not have 10 minutes and it's a book with 200 pages."

The strategy that Darren mentions that he learned from his teacher is an elaborated version of the 'sound it out' technique. He states, "When I don't know a word, just stop and sound it out and then go back to the beginning of the sentence and read it again" [Interview 1]. In the second interview, he states a belief that if you read a lot you will read faster, but when you read fast, "…you don't keep the stuff in your head that long, and when you read slow, you kinda do." He enjoys the amount and variety of books at school, as he claims to have read all of his books at home [Interview 2]. When discussing his reading class and teacher, he states in interview 3 that the exciting stories in their reading text (such as Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox), and the way his teacher uses expression to read to them, really gets him excited about reading. His teacher also reportedly offers assistance in understanding the meaning of new words [Interview 2]. He reiterates this in the third interview when he says that "a lot of the books that I read are exciting because, like I said, my teacher makes it exciting." It is important to note that Darren's homeroom teacher is an ISSR teacher who reportedly engages in frequent book talks and read-alouds in her regular reading instruction.

Darren describes himself as an "okay" reader, although his friends think he's "a little bit lower than an okay reader" and his mom things he's "a better reader than an okay reader" [Interview 1]. In the second interview, he states, "It really don't matter how fast you read or how good you read. Its just good when you learn stuff from books." In the third interview, his balanced self-efficacy for reading is again revealed when he states, "I'm really not embarrassed of how fast I read or how slow I read." Relating this to what might have been a previously held 'fast is good/slow is bad' mentality regarding

reading ability, he continues, "…because people that read fast really don't pick up a lot of things that they read."

Darren relates that there have been changes in his reading over the past year. He remarks, "When I was in third grade I didn't understand a lot of words, but this year I understand most of the words I didn't understand last year 'cause I've read more" [Interview 3]. He also states that "I've found more books that I would like to read and it's books that I've heard about." He adds that he often goes to the public library to find books he's heard about that he can't find at school. He describes that he reads at home on the couch with his dog beside him. In the final interview, he reveals that his favorite book is *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, which is, ironically, a lengthy chapter book with precious few pictures. This is in juxtaposition to his first interview comment where he stated that he does not like to read long books with few pictures.

Darren presents a well developed personal agency for reading and a growing enjoyment of the activity of reading during the course of the treatment period. His responses indicate that he reads to learn or to be entertained and does not seem concerned with disparate views of his reading ability from his mother or his friends. In this sense, he may indicate on assessment that he is not highly motivated, as he is not comparative in his estimation of his reading ability nor is he driven to achieve more skill than he needs. He makes use of teacher help and internalizes strategies he's learned and seems to enjoy reading with a mastery orientation.

According to the post-treatment assessments, Darren's motivation for reading over the treatment period increased 6 points for self-concept for reading and 3 points for

value for reading. His reading ability scores, however, remained essentially unchanged with regard to MAP scores; however, he increased his CWPM on the post-treatment QRI assessment from 74.4 to 85.8 with a small increase in comprehension of the passage (75% to 87.5%) that would categorize him as an independent reader at the fourth grade level.

Portrait of DeMario: Downward Shift

DeMario is a third grader who participated in Ms. Merwin's SSR group. His pre-treatment scores indicated that he fit the low achievement/high motivation group.

DeMario stated in the first interview that "I don't like reading a whole bunch – I like read a few pages each day and everything." DeMario relates across the three interviews that he enjoys reading about sports and sports figures and hopes to play football someday. He also notes the social value of reading, such as when he shares what he reads with his friends [Interviews 1 and 2] and when he and his friends tell each other about the best sports books to check out [Interview 3]. DeMario also refers to reading/writing connections made during silent reading. He states that if he reads a word that is "good" he might use it in writing a letter [Interview 3].

Aside from this intrinsic interest in reading about sports and learning new words, DeMario also expresses a performance orientation for reading to earn better grades and to do well on the state-wide assessment. Authority influences on his value for reading in the future perspective include his mom and his teacher, as indicated in the following responses:

> [DeMario]: Because when I was growing up, my momma said if you
> wouldn't read good you wouldn't be like in college or nowhere so I listen
> to my momma so I can read better and got to college and get an education
> and everything [Interview 2].
> [DeMario]:Like she [the teacher] be like telling our whole class, like
> reading will get you a long way from here, like it get you anywhere that

you want to in your life and you have to do good in reading and stuff

[Interview 3]

These strong messages from adults in his environment seem to have made an impression on DeMario as he relates them in each interview. He also mentions that his teachers tell him to read more and to read harder books in order to learn to read better. He alludes to buying into this strategy when he states, "It's like, when I read, it's like something in my head tellin' me, like, 'keep on reading, keep on reading' because then you'll get to be a better reader" [Interview 2]. Perhaps the best way to describe how DeMario has integrated the 'reading practice' strategy with his value for sharing books came in the third interview where DeMario was asked what happens in his classroom that gets him excited about reading. He replies:

[DeMario]: I get excited like every time my teacher say like it's time to read. It gets me excited like to read new books, so I can get more informations so I can tell my friends about the best books to read, you know? So you can get 'em fast if you like the book [Interview 3].

In fact, he suggests that 40 minutes might be better than 30 minutes for the silent reading time.

Another reading strategy that he seems to have learned through experience, and is well afforded by the action-oriented sports books he prefers, is to picture the events told in the story so that he can relate them to his friends. DeMario describes that he chooses books first by topic, and then by looking for a label that will tell him the reading level. If he looks through it and cannot tell if it will be too hard for him to read, he states he would

ask the teacher or the librarian, demonstrating a dependency on outside sources to determine the readability of texts he chooses. His choices are highly influenced by his friends. DeMario in the second interview talks about how he and his friends share their "good" book titles after they read and try to get to the library and get it before they're gone.

DeMario presents a balanced view of his reading ability by describing it in the first interview as "some good and some kind of bad", but an "ok reader" overall. When asked to reflect on his reading progress this year, he indicates that there was improvement by saying, "I'm uh a great reader 'cause every time I read to my friends, they say 'you getting better' and everything" [Interview 2]. He elaborates by saying that he was an "ok" reader and is now a better reader [Interview 3] and that when he reads, he doesn't stop to look at the words for a long time.

DeMario's responses indicate that he reads for enjoyment with a predominately mastery level orientation. He mentions reading with friends as a rewarding experience and chooses books based on interest first, and then level. He also mentions that reading is important to get ready for the state-wide assessment. This reference to the end of year state assessment is his only performance oriented response to questions about his value for reading. Most strikingly, DeMario's comments reflect a consistent perception of positive parental and teacher influences on his future perspectives for reading, although explicit and strategic help with his reading is not mentioned. The good strategies that DeMario uses, such as visualizing the sports action or remembering summaries to share with friends, seem to come from his own experiences.

On post-assessment, DeMario revealed a noticeable decline in motivation, as indicated by an 11 point decrease in self-concept for reading and an 8 point drop in value for reading. His MAP scores were essentially unchanged, although his grade level QRI passage reading was 9.1 CWPM faster on post-assessment with accompanying increases in comprehension from 62.5% to 100%. While the increased time for reading books that interested him may have had some effect on his reading fluency, his involvement in the SSR model was not sufficient to stem a noticeable decline in attitudes toward reading.

Portrait of Dennis: Quest for Knowledge

Dennis is a fourth grader participating in Ms. Neubin's ISSR classroom. His scores on the achievement and motivation measures placed him in the high achievement/high motivation typology.

Dennis is consistent across the three interviews in presenting a mastery orientation of reading to learn. He is interested in science topics and reads mainly non-fiction, with the exception of the *Goosebumps* series of fiction books. Dennis ties his quest for knowledge to a preparation for the real world future, as differentiated from the professional world, naming skills such as reading signs and delivering puppies [Interviews 1 and 2]. In interview 2, he states that he wants to read "Because I know I don't know everything."

When asked to name something that his teacher taught him that helped him to read better, he related that he learned to "break words down" by Ms. Neubin [Interviews 1 and 2]. His reading skills as measured by the MAP test on the pre-treatment administration place him far above other fourth graders, and Dennis reads predominantly science-based expository texts, which frequently introduce more difficult vocabulary words. Therefore, the help in decoding pertains to pronouncing and understanding multisyllabic words related to science topics. He also claims to have learned on his own how to figure out words based on their context. Otherwise, he claims to gain little from reading instruction, but does enjoy it when the teacher reads a novel aloud. When asked if he values having time to read at school, Dennis states, "If you didn't have extra practice reading, then you wouldn't be very good at it!" [Interview 1].

In the first interview, Dennis states that he is a "pretty good reader"; however, in the 2nd and 3rd interview, he says that he doesn't really care how he reads, but is aware that he reads on a 9th grade level. As is the luxury of high ability readers, Dennis chooses books based solely on interest

In her conference notes, Ms. Neubin records that she provided strategies for understanding text features, such as italics, demonstrated using a pronunciation guide, and provided definitions of difficult words. She also writes that she talked about defining words using context and cautioned him not to skip challenging words in reading. In addition, she encouraged him to research topics of interest in more depth, perhaps using the Internet or encyclopedia. She also notes the results of their discussions, such as "Dennis's theory of why we yawn." This note demonstrates most succinctly how Dennis reads in order to understand, think, and theorize. His independent reading is for his own purposes, and he does not appear to be concerned with how this compares to others.

Interestingly, Dennis' motivation for reading decreased 10 points over the treatment period. While his self-concept for reading increased by one point, his value for reading decreased 9 points. He indicated on post-assessment a decreased value for libraries and teacher read-alouds. Dennis is a particularly fascinating student to observe and to talk with. His quest for knowledge is pure and unrelenting, and the more he reads, the more he seems to live 'in his head'. Although it is interesting that his value for reading seems to have decreased noticeably on the measure used for this investigation, his thirst for reading has not; it has, however decreased for the more 'public' acts of reading, such as library time and teacher read-alouds. Dennis may well have reached a

point in his reading interests and abilities where he perceives himself as being completely in charge of his search to learn new things, and he may be perfectly willing to research personal interests on his own. However, his conversations with the teacher during the conferences seem to have been very rich indeed, perhaps indicating a value of discussing new information with a knowledgeable adult. This is another item that might prove to be valuable on an assessment of motivation for reading – the value of sharing what is read with others.

Portrait of Eleanor: Totally Absorbed

Eleanor is a third grade student in Mr. Merwin's SSR group. Her pre-treatment scores placed her in the high achievement/low motivation typology.

Eleanor presents an eclectic taste in books. She enjoys ghost stories, mysteries, the *American Girl* series, and Judy Blume books and readily provides title, author and well-rounded summaries of the stories she's read. The most striking feature of Eleanor's interviews is how involved she becomes in the books she reads. She states in each of the interviews that she enjoys reading because "it gives you the feeling where you always want to blurt out how you know what's going to happen in the book" [Interview 1]. Eleanor describes becoming personally absorbed by books: "Whenever I read, it's kind of like I'm in the story. I always picture it as me as that person. So that's kind of what I feel like" [Interview 2]. She reports a value for learning from books, such as with expository texts about how the body works [Interview 1], or when you learn about "…another person's real life", as with the *American Girl* books [Interview 2]. She adds that reading is important to functioning in everyday life as a grown up, such as when using maps [Interview 1, 3].

In the third interview, she expresses a value of being the first to raise her hand in order to answer to a teacher's question about a book. At first, this statement might seem to stem from a performance orientation by desiring to come first in an "answer the teacher's question" competition; however, when viewing her responses across all three interviews, her tendency to be introspective and absorbed in the stories she reads recommends the conclusion that she perceives a personal ownership of the text. She is the

character, after all - there can be no greater authority! Therefore, it's important to be the first to raise her hand and to talk about the story.

Eleanor seems to make use of reading support offered to her, whether explicitly or serendipitously. She relates that "some books show and explain how you read - it explains sometimes the certain way you read" [Interview 1]. Having time to read at school is good because "…sometimes I just don't get around to reading much. I mean, sometimes I'd rather play with my friends than read" [Interview 1]. When asked what she learned in the classroom that would help her to read better, she replied that her teacher showed her how quotation marks work because she used to get confused but now knows that it indicates dialogue [Interviews 1,2,3]. She now uses quotation marks in her writing [Interview 2]. Eleanor chooses books to read by looking at the title and the cover [Interviews 2, 3], or by searching for titles or topics using the computer in the media center [Interview 2].

When asked what kind of reader she is, Eleanor consistently presents modality specific expectancies. She reports in each of the interviews that she reads well silently but has trouble when she reads aloud. In interview 2, she says, "[l]ike, I always get the words mixed up when I'm reading a sentence – I put one word before the word I'm about to read, like that", and in interview 3, she relates "…whenever I read it out loud, I make mistakes with my mouth whenever I'm reading." She does practice reading aloud to her parents at home with her school reading books. Eleanor also indicates that reading can help her with vocabulary and writing [Interview 1, 2]

Eleanor was an interesting student to interview. She offered, perhaps, the most eloquent description of "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1978), which would seem to disconfirm her placement in a low motivation typology, as this represents a strong intrinsic motivation. An inspection of the MRP survey (Appendix K) reveals that there are no items that would reveal this type of personal involvement in text.

Eleanor did seem to make the most use of strategic support, as evidenced by her reports of teacher suggestions for reading and her voluntary transfer of skills from reading to writing. Eleanor's achievement and motivation scores did not change noticeably on the MAP or MRP measures from the pre- to post-assessments, and she was not available at the end of the year for the post-assessment using the QRI reading passage. However, her strong personal involvement in her reading belies the low motivation scores that she received at both ends of the treatment period.

Portrait of Erika: Reading Status to Reading Enjoyment

Erika is a third grade student in Ms. Jule's ISSR group. She earned scores on the pre-treatment measures that placed her in the high achievement/high motivation typology.

Erika presents a performance orientation at the outset of interview 1. When asked what she's reading now, she replies, "Fourth grade level books" and reports a preference for the *American Girl* series. She also relates that she chooses books as if by status or by challenge offered: "because they are chapter books. They have um, some words that I like, like they have some words that I can read and they're like harder books." She reiterates this in the second interview by saying, "Because they are harder. It's a more harder, the harder level on reading." An "other" orientation is also evidenced in her statement that reading "*would* be a good thing to do; that it *should* be, that it's very important" [italics added]. She adds that she enjoys reading because it is an activity that she can do in her room at home and listen to music.

Erika presents a non-elaborated future perspective for reading as being important for "different stuff for like a work or something'" [Interview 1; also 2]. She expresses that she values time to read at school, free choice of books [Interview 2] and variety [Interview 3]. In the third interview, Erika states that books can help you to learn science and to learn words. In the third interview, she states that she enjoys the *Magic Treehouse* series because it presents facts in an enjoyable fantasy context. Looking across the three interviews, her value of reading as an activity moved from the "other" orientation, where

reading levels were mentioned and outside "shoulds" were expressed, to an enjoyment of reading for learning and entertainment.

Erika reports that she learned to "sound out words with compound parts" from her parents but was not able to think of anything her teacher taught her that helped her to read better [Interview 1]. In the second interview, she names "sounding out words" and "using the pictures" as strategies for figuring out words and reports that she'd learned these from her first grade teacher. She does hold the belief that reading "can help any student read better everyday" [Interview 2]. In the classroom, Erika enjoys the bookshares presented by the teacher.

Erika describes herself as a "fast reader" [Interview 1], and in the second interview relates that "I think I do it really well" [also interview 3]. In several instances in the first two interviews, Erika uses outside references to define her reading identity – "a fourth grade level", "a fast reader." In response to changes in her reading over the year, EK reports that she now can read harder books [Interview 3].

Ms. Jule's conference notes indicate that Erika discussed as many easy books as just right books during the nine conferences that were held. There is no mention of strategies or concerns written by the teacher – only book titles and conversational notes.

Erika seems from the outset to present a performance orientation to reading. She has all the 'right' answers about how reading can help you, but does not elaborate on how reading can help you in the future or what it means to her personally. She states she is a fast reader and reads on the fourth grade level, making comparisons to speed and grade expectations.

At the third interview, Erika makes more frequent references to interest in learning and being entertained by reading, which may indicate a developing mastery orientation. Her motivation to read on the post-assessment was virtually unchanged, but was close to ceiling at pre-test. Her total MAP score increased from 212 to 219, and her QRI results indicate an increase of 23 CWPM and improved comprehension from 75% to 87.5%.

Portrait of Grayson: The Entertainer

Grayson is a fourth grader in Ms. Neubin's ISSR group. He was identified as possessing characteristics of the low achievement/low motivation typology.

Grayson replied to most questions during the three interviews with an offhand sense of humor, making it difficult to accurately determine his perceptions about reading. For example, when asked in Interview 1 what he likes about reading, he quips, "You can fall asleep, I guess [laughs]". He is clear when he says that that he does not like having a half-hour set aside where he cannot talk or sit with his friends. He suggests in several of his responses that he prefers activities that allow movement or talking, and that silent reading is not one of these.

In the first interview, Grayson relates that learning to read is important "when I'm in school." He elaborates on this by saying, "…[b]ecause you can make good grades. And if I make all A's in middle and high school, by the time I get my license, I get my own car! [Sings 'Ta Da"]". Initially, he reports not finding books he prefers at school because he's interested in "war and sinking stuff" – topics that he watches on the Discovery Channel. In the second interview, he reiterates this by stating, "…I like reading stuff about guns and they aren't allowed – the school district doesn't allow it." He also has an interest in books that have been made into movies, such as *Because of Winn Dixie* so that he can "make sure the movie and the story are the same." He also likes to read about and solve mysteries.

While in the first interview Grayson notes that the silent reading time is good for "falling asleep", he remarks in the second interview that the time to read is "good", even

though he can't read books about war. A further change is noted in the third interview, when he states that the time to read is "probably just right…because you can learn different stuff about animals and bridges." This interest in reading books about topics of interest does not seem to be tied to a future perspective, however. Grayson states that reading is " a little bit but not a lot" important "because you're probably going to be doing a lot more stuff like math" when you grow up and get a job, "…and there's no way actually you have to read a lot of stuff." His future career choices include being "…a SWAT person or an Army person" [Interview 3].

When asked what he's learned that helps him to read better, Grayson reports that his "IEP" teacher tells him to "break down the words" [Interview 1], a strategy he repeats in Interview 2. He does not mention the ISSR conferences or advice from Ms. Neubin. However, in the third interview, Grayson names the "book sell", a popular version of an ISSR sharing activity that often followed the silent reading period in his classroom, as an activity that gets him excited about reading.

Grayson describes himself as a "pretty good reader" [Interview 1], and in the second interview as, "not the best of readers, but I'm not the worst." He elaborates that he prefers reading 3rd grade level books to 4th grade books. His estimation of his ability is fairly stable through the final interview, where he states that "I don't read the best, but I can read pretty good." Yet, when asked if anything has changed about his reading this year, Grayson responds, "I read better" and that he reads more at school and at home than he did as a third grader.

During the first of three fidelity observations of Ms. Neubin's classroom, Grayson would occasionally turn in his seat during the silent reading time to engage others in conversation or to entertain them by balancing coins on his fingers, for example. When observing in the classroom at the end of the treatment period, Grayson was observed to actively pursue a book of poetry by Robert Frost that the teacher previewed in her bookshare until he got a turn to look through it. Ms. Neubin's conference notes indicate that she worked with Grayson to look at initial sounds of words and to use pictures to assist him in figuring out words in text.

Grayson presents himself as a social and restless character who enjoys entertaining his classmates and the adults with whom he interacts during the day. He appears to be comfortable with his perceptions of his reading ability, and his expectancy seems to suit his valence for reading. He does not see reading as playing an important role in his future career, but has discovered an interest in reading books that give you some information or that have mysteries to solve. In response to the ISSR model, he appears to have gained some interest in books, a gradual tolerance of sitting still for 25 – 30 minutes, and an enthusiasm for the final sharing activity in Ms. Neubin's ISSR group, the book sell.

Grayson's scores on the post-assessments increased minimally for the MRP survey and by about 5 points in each sub-category of the MAP-Reading. However, his Lexile standing rose from 47 to 124 and his QRI passage reading score increased by 12 CWPM with an increase in comprehension from 67% to 87.5%. The ISSR involvement may have influenced these changes in his interest for reading (valence) and passage

reading skill and level, which is interesting when considering his initial flippancy toward the reading period and the importance of reading books in general. Being an admittedly social creature, Grayson seems to have responded best to the book sharing elements of the ISSR model and found a renewed interest in reading books of his own choosing.

Portrait of Joseph: Engagement Transformation

Joseph is a third grader in Ms. Jule's ISSR group with pre-assessment scores that place him in the low achievement/low motivation typology.

In the first interview, Joseph's lack of interest in books is evident in his inability to name the title of the book he is reading, or those he intends to read next, offering little more as a summary of the current book than "…it's mixed up animals." He describes reading as "really hard, and you gotta work hard and you gotta get your grades up and do well and take tests" [Interview 1] – and that was in response to "Tell me something you *like* about reading." When asked what he doesn't like, he replied, "Reading."

While Joseph may portray reading as something you "gotta do", though not enjoy, he also indicates that reading is important "…so that you can get a good education and get a job" [Interview 1]. He may view this as the 'party line', as his intonation would suggest, but also described himself as a "learning reader", which in later interviews, is clarified when he begins to describe an interest in reading books about history and science. Beyond the aforementioned nod to the importance of reading to getting an education and a job, Joseph's comments in his third interview are revealing of the reading context in which he lives. When asked if learning to read is important, he replies, "No" because "they're just books." The interviewer follows with a question about whether he'll need to do much reading when he's grown, and his response is, "Uh, like if you like work at this place that had like this manual." In further conversation about grown-ups in his environment, he adds that he does not see adults reading at home and that there are no books there, although his mom does read magazines [Interview 3].

It is notable, therefore, in the second and third interviews that he is readily able to name the books he's reading and to provide a fair summary of what they're about. His increasing interest in books that you can learn from is evidenced when he states that he chooses his current books "[b]ecause they have stuff in them that you learn…" He also states that he enjoys the books he chooses for "the excitement and stuff." He describes an increased interest in choosing books during the second interview, explaining:

"Uh, that if it's a good one and I look at the book and inside of it and I want to read it and I'll look like, wow! Look at what he's doing! Mmmm, it's something crazy!"

Joseph is not specific about what occurs in the classroom that helps him read better or enjoy reading. At his most expansive, he states, "Um from my teacher, she helps us…[long pause]…she shows us books and she helps us with this and that." In his second interview, he is asked, "What happens in your classroom that gets you excited about reading?" Joseph responds that he likes reading and "how you get to learn things from the books, like history and…[trails off]". He adds that he likes it when the teacher reads a book aloud.

Joseph perceives himself to be an average reader. He states that in comparison to his peers, he is "kind of like equal to" and "kinda good" [Interview 2]. In the third interview, he states that his reading has stayed the same over the school year. It seems that Joseph is comfortable with his reading ability, and this perception is well matched to the importance he places on reading as a goal, although the changes in value and self-

concept for reading are noticeably improved following the treatment period, as described below.

According to Ms. Jule's conference notes, Joseph was involved in only four conferences during the treatment period. There is no note in her records to indicate whether his school attendance played a part in the reduced number of meetings with him; however, at least one of his three interviews had to be rescheduled due to his absence from school. The teacher reports that Joseph discussed books that spanned the range of easy to hard. There are no recommendations recorded for strategy use, and only one comment to note that he reads without expression and does not pause for punctuation.

This change regarding his interest in reading books to learn and his ability to name titles and describe the books he's been reading is interesting when considering his typology. The change in his post-assessment performance, especially with regard to motivation, was remarkable. His value for reading increased by 24 points and his self-concept improved by 10 points over the 12 week period. This change is supported by his interview responses, which indicate a dismissal of books at the beginning of the treatment period and an inability to name titles or give summaries. By the second and third interviews, his knowledge of titles and extended summaries are accompanied by statements of his enjoyment of the learning and entertainment provided by books. With regard to reading ability, his MAP scores indicate an increase of 8 to 13 points in every sub-category, and an improved Lexile score of 287 from a pre-treatment level of 157. In addition, his speed of reading accurately increased by 12 CWPM with improved comprehension (50% to 75%).

Portrait of Joshua: Special Needs

Joshua is a fourth grade student participating in Ms. Cojak's SSR treatment group. His pre-treatment scores on the assessments placed him in the low achievement/high motivation typology. Joshua is an interesting student as he has suffered a severe brain trauma and stutters severely when speaking. Although the teacher was not completely informed on the nature of the trauma, Joshua has encountered learning difficulties since the injury, although he seems to be overcoming them quite admirably.

Joshua reports across the interviews that he enjoys reading books about sports, particularly football. He states that reading is important to "learning stuff" [interview 1] and that it has been fun to explore the books in his reading group. He states that he wants to read so that he can "get good at it" [Interview 3].

Joshua seems to receive good support for reading at home and at school. His mom encourages reading and turns off the TV to reduce distractions. At school, the teacher makes sure that she states the page number she's reading from and checks on Joshua to make sure he's following on the correct lines [Interview 2]. He often reads aloud to her "…so the teacher will hear me" [Interview 2]. Joshua mentions that concentration as important to his reading success, which is typical of learners who are recovering from severe head trauma. His reading teacher provided him with a strategy of writing down what he's read to help him to remember.

Joshua states that he enjoys the opportunity to read books during SSR time [Interview 1], and then to go to the shelf and pick out another whenever he's done

[Interview 2]. When asked what his teacher does that gets him excited about reading, he relates that she gives them time to read everyday, in addition to the SSR time that occurs. Joshua describes himself as a good reader [Interviews 1 and 2] and remarks in the third interview that he has begun to read longer. On the whole, he reports that his reading ability is "just about average."

Joshua is difficult to interview, transcribe, and analyze because of the speech/language disorder resulting from the brain trauma. He is unfailingly polite and cooperative, but it took a long time to get precious little from him in terms of his experiences of SSR. Results of the post-assessments indicate that his value for reading decreased by 5 points and his self-concept for reading was also diminished by 7 points by the end of the treatment period. His MAP scores were virtually unchanged during the treatment period, although he did increase from reading the 2nd grade QRI passage to reading the 3rd grade passage with a similar CWPM. It is difficult to evaluate the speed and accuracy of his reading considering his oral speech dysfluency.

Joshua certainly needs support for reading, listening, and speaking and there seem to be accommodations evident at school and at home. However, considering his enjoyment of sports books, teacher monitoring may have supported him in reading better, and feeling better about his reading. I regret he wasn't selected for the ISSR group.

Portrait of Raynauldo: Have to Learn to Want to Learn

Raynauldo is a fourth grader in Ms. Madsen's ISSR group. His scores on the pre-treatment assessments placed him in the high achievement/low motivation typology.

In the initial interview, Raynauldo could not think of anything he did or did not like about reading, almost as if this was the first time he's considered reading as an activity he could scrutinize. He expresses early in the treatment period that reading is for learning and studying for tests – a school reading mentality [Interview 1]. Raynauldo gives a nod to reading as being important to knowing what to do when he's grown up [Interviews 1, 2, 3]. He reports an interesting perspective of his father when he states, "…you gotta read – only a gown up can stop. It's very important" [Interview 2]. The second interview, however, is the first time that he describes reading as "fun" because you can "learn stuff and stuff" so that he can be smart when he grows up. Still, he says that reading is something he does "'cause I have to." He enjoys non-fiction books, especially if they have activities that you can do. By the third interview, Raynauldo reveals that he gets excited about reading in his reading group because of the books, especially the science books. By this final interview, he claims that he reads "just for fun" [Interview 3].

In the second interview, Raynauldo states that reading as an activity is "Ok." It's "kind of fun and kind of boring", and that reading too long makes his head hurt. He expresses more convincingly that reading is important because you can "learn stuff", like about castles and lords. His teachers tell him to sound things out if he doesn't know a word. In the first interview, he stated that he chose a book about weather because they

were studying weather. In the beginning of the treatment period, he seemed to view reading as a school-related activity.

Raynauldo describes himself as a good reader [Interview 1], and in the second interview as an "ok" reader because he likes reading "sometimes." In the third interview, he states that he feels "happy" about how well he reads, and describes himself as a "fun to read" reader. He adds that he also reads more at home now. Raynauldo may be experiencing an enjoyment of reading that is not influenced by his mantra of "having" to read to learn an get a job, as revealed in the "have to learn" and "should learn" comments in the earlier interviews.

Ms. Madsen's conference notes indicate that Raynauldo read a mix of text difficulty levels and that he enjoys non-fiction books. She assisted him in negotiating texts structures in expository text and in breaking down some of the harder words in the science texts. Raynauldo's motivation increased during the treatment period a total of 8 points; 3 points for value of reading and 5 points for self-concept for reading. His reading ability scores as indicated by performance on the MAP tests were not remarkably changed. He increased a little better than 8 CWPM on the post-reading of the QRI passage with a consistent comprehension score of 75%. However, the most notable change for Raynauldo during the treatment period was his attitude of reading for enjoyment instead of reading for school activities as expected.

Portrait of Rose: Social Reader

Rose is a fourth grader in Ms. Cojak's SSR treatment group. She was placed in the low achievement/high motivation typology.

Rose expresses across the three interviews a high social value for reading. She and her friend Hillary read the same books then talk about them at recess. She likes to read because she can "…learn something new, like new things everyday" [Interview 1, also 2]. She reads some non-fiction books but states in interviews 2 and 3 that she prefers fiction, particularly if it involves animals. She describes a value of reading with a future perspective when she states that reading is important "[b]ecause you can do it your whole life and you want to keep it" [Interview 1, also 3]. Her comments regarding the SSR time at school indicate that she values the consistency of the time to read as well as the choice and variety [Interviews 2 and 3]. She states in Interview 2 that she feels good that "you get to choose your own book and the teacher's not making you read a book." She states that having 30 minutes gives you time to finish a book or to get pretty far through it.

Rose describes a procedure that she goes through in choosing books: "I look at the title and I flip through them and I'll look at one page and Ill read the page and see if it's good or not" [Interview 1, also 2]. Her parents encourage 30 minutes of reading at home, which totals an hour a day of reading between school and home. She also states in interview 2 that she learned the "five finger" rule from her teacher – that if she places her hand on the page of a book and can read all of the words that her fingers are touching, that the level is probably a good one.

When asked what kind of reader she thinks she is, Rose consistently replies that she doesn't care how well she reads "'cause I just do it for fun" [Interviews 1,2, and 3]. When asked how well she reads, she states she is a good reader.

Rose is very consistent in her responses across interviews – almost word for word. She is a very social reader and enjoys sharing books with her friend Hillary. Rose expresses a view of the SSR independent reading time as an opportunity *not* to worry about how well she reads, saying that "… it doesn't really matter to me because you have your own time to read and it doesn't really matter" [Interview 3].

Rose's consistent mastery orientation for reading to learn about things that interest her and her high social value for reading are complemented by her reported positive expectancy for reading. Her total motivation score was unchanged at post-assessment, although her value for reading increased by 3 points and her self-concept decreased by 3. Her MAP scores changed very little; however, on her post-treatment reading of the QRI passage, Rose's CWPM increased from 74.6 to 107.2 with a dramatic increase in comprehension from 37.5 to 100. As she is a student who enjoys the opportunity to read and share books, providing Rose with opportunities to read at school, and also at home, seems to have increased her independent reading performance.

Portrait of Sergi: Expanding Repertoire.

Sergi is a third grader in Ms. Jule's ISSR group. His scores on the pre-treatment measures placed him in the high achievement/low motivation typology.

Sergi indicates in the first interview that he doesn't really like to read but that he prefers it to the other "work" they have to do in school [Interviews 1 and 3]. When asked if reading is important to him, he states "not that much" [Interview 1], but that reading does help you learn things. At the beginning of the treatment period, he indicates a preference for non-fiction books the "have facts and they tell you stuff" [Interview 1, 3]. However, in the second and third interviews, he states that he's enjoying books that are funny and reading poems, although he still reads non-fiction because "they tell you about a lot of stuff and your facts." In the second interview, he concedes that although he still doesn't like to read much, he likes to read "a little everyday." He states in the first two interviews that if he reads too much, he gets a headache and has to lay his head down (needs glasses?). When asked how he feels about having time to read books he chooses at school, he replies "very good" because "well, you get to choose 'em - we can choose any book" [Interview 2]. He reinforces this value of choice in Interview 3 when he says, "You can read any book you want" in response to "What happens in your classroom that gets you excited about reading?"

Sergi initially describes a dependence on the teacher to get him interested in or motivated to read a book. In the first interview he states that he likes it "…when the teachers ask you questions and you try and when they read and you try to figure them out." He does not like it when "…you gotta read by yourself the whole book and the

teacher doesn't like start you off so you can, um , like get where you're interested in the books a little when you're starting so you don't have to read it yourself – your teacher won't know what you're reading" [Interview 1]. Although he does not like it when there are hard words to sound out, he has discovered that in poems, the lines end in rhyming words, and when the vowels are the same, it's easier to figure the words out. Although he did not note this in his responses, the ISSR teacher bookshare provides him some teacher support to get interested in a book. He does not read at home unless it's on the computer.

Sergi often answers that he doesn't know what kind of reader he is, but when pressed will say that he's a good reader [Interviews 1 and 2]. In the third interview, he states that he is a pretty good reader, and probably above average.

Ms. Jule's conference notes indicate that Sergi frequently read books at a just right level. She discussed genres with him and noted that he really began to enjoy humorous books as well as non-fiction texts and poems.

Sergi begins the treatment period with a negative valence for reading. He states that he doesn't like it when the teacher asks them to read a book without introducing it and only prefers reading to other school activities. In the second interview, Sergi names quite a few genre preferences and why he likes them, demonstrating that he is expanding his repertoire. His motivation for reading on post-assessment did not change noticeably, nor did his performance on the QRI passage. However, his total MAP score increased from 198 to 212 and his Lexile level jumped from 569 to 809. The ISSR treatment may not have had much effect on his motivation scores, although his exploration of various genres was evidenced in his interview responses.

Portrait of Trinka: Animal Lover

Trinka is a fourth grade student in Ms. Neubin's ISSR classroom. Her scores on the pre-assessment placed her in the high achievement/high motivation typology. Trinka expresses an interest in reading to learn more about animals and people's lives. She is particularly fond of non-fiction about animals as she has lots of pets at home and wants to know how to care for them (Interview 2). This interest in reading about animals is consistent throughout the interviews. Beyond these real world applications, she also states a future perspective for reading, as when reading signs (Interview 1). Reading is also important to completing school work such as book reports (Interview 1). In the third interview, Trinka states, "'Cause learning to read is your whole life – you've got to read a lot and stuff."

Trinka reports that she perceives good classroom support for reading. Her teacher, who has her for homeroom as well as for the ISSR reading group, reads aloud frequently and encourages students to read [Interview 3]. She notes that her teacher shares books and them puts them out for students to read [Interview 3]. In response to "What makes you want to read?" in the third interview, she states, "[e]verybody talks about good books they've read, and the teacher reads books to us and tells us about some book that she's read." This statement indicates that she perceives herself to be in a classroom community of readers.

Trinka states that her teacher taught her to sound out words [Interview 1], and if that doesn't work, she should cover half of the word up to see if it has a smaller word in it

[Interview 2]. The teacher also models how to figure out words and concepts when she's reading aloud to them

Trinka's expectancy for reading is consistently high, stating that she can "read really good" [Interviews 1, 2, and 3). She adds in the third interview that she does not notice a change in her reading this year.

Ms. Neubin's conference notes include strategies for using outside resources to expand knowledge from non-fiction texts. They also talked about the rhythm of poetry, discussed science concepts of interest, and talked about text features, such as parenthesis and the use of capital letters to infer shouting by the character. Trinka's motivation for reading, occurring at ceiling level at pre-test, was unchanged at the end of the treatment period. Her reading of the QRI evidenced an increase in passage level difficulty from fourth to fifth grade with an increase in comprehension from 25% to 62.5%.

APPENDIX K

Motivation to Read Survey

Motivation to Read Profile

My Name is: _____ Date: _____

Sample 1: I am in_____.

        □ third grade
        □ fourth grade

Sample 2: I am a _____.

        □ boy
        □ girl

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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

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. When I grow up I will spend _____.

        □ none of my time reading
        □ very little of my time reading
        □ some of my time reading
        □ a lot of my time reading

17. When I am in a group talking about stories, 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 teacher to read books out loud to the class _____.

        □ every day
        □ almost every day
        □ once in a while
        □ never

19. When I read out loud I am _____.

        □ a poor reader
        □ an OK reader
        □ a good reader
        □ a very good reader

20. When someone gives me a book for a present, I feel
_____.

     ☐ very happy
     ☐ sort of happy
     ☐ sort of unhappy
     ☐ unhappy

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