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DIGITAL LITERACY: THE IMPACT OF A BLENDED LEARNING MODEL ON
STUDENT MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

By
Jennifer Yearta Miller

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Gardner-Webb University School of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Gardner-Webb University
2021

Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Jennifer Yearta Miller under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

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After 22 years in teaching, this dissertation process has allowed me to find my passion as an educator. I believe in a blended, personalized learning environment that allows students to have ownership and empowers them in their learning.

First, I would like to thank my dissertation committee, Dr. Debbie Jordan, Dr. Jennifer Putnam, and my chair, Dr. Mary Roth, for helping me grow as an educator and guiding me on this journey. Your support and encouragement have been invaluable. Dr. Roth, thank you for never giving up on me and for your understanding when I needed it most.

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Finally, to my children, Mary Katherine and Lawson. You inspire me every day. I am proud of you and love you beyond words. As Langston Hughes wrote, "hold fast to [your] dreams," for I believe in you both, and I know you will accomplish anything you set your minds to.

Abstract

DIGITAL LITERACY: THE IMPACT OF A BLENDED LEARNING MODEL ON STUDENT MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT. Miller, Jennifer Yearata, 2021: Dissertation, Gardner-Webb University.

Educators continue to search for a balance between preparing students for a marketable future and integrating face-to-face instruction. Many factors influence various educational models related to best instructional methodologies. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between student perceptions regarding student motivation to read and the corresponding effect on student achievement within a blended learning environment. This mixed methods study determined whether the use of digital collaborative learning, as it applies to literacy, within a blended learning environment would have any corresponding effects on student motivation and achievement.

Participants included fifth-grade students at the elementary level and students enrolled in a teacher cadet course at the secondary level. Quantitative data were analyzed using paired *t* tests, while qualitative data were coded for themes. The results of the study led to a revised conceptual framework that included a personalized learning component. A major key finding emerged at the conclusion of the study: Data indicated increased levels of engagement and overall enthusiasm for reading in a blended learning environment.

Two secondary findings included: The teacher cadets believed the use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment served to provide students with an individualized, targeted focus on reading instruction and a significant difference existed in participant pre and posttest scores, with student levels of achievement having increased at the conclusion of the study.

The results of the study indicate the use of digital collaborative literacy within a blended learning environment has a direct impact on student motivation, engagement, and achievement.

Keywords: blended learning, digital literacy, collaborative literacy, student engagement, student achievement, student motivation, reading, assessment, growth, personalized learning, targeted instruction

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Student engagement, as defined by Guthrie et al. (2012), is a “multidimensional construct that includes behavioral, cognitive, and affective attributes associated” (p. 602) with being highly involved in the reading process. While the idea of engaging and motivating students has long been used interchangeably as a construct, the process of motivating students is a much more specific and intuitive task. Motivation, as defined by Eccles and Wigfield (2002), is what “energizes and directs behavior and often is defined with respect to the beliefs, values, and goals individuals” (p. 602) have toward various tasks. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) took the definition of motivation a step further as it relates to reading. Reading motivation then can specifically be defined as an individual’s “personal goals, values, and beliefs with regard to the topics, processes, and outcomes of reading” (p. 405).

The 2015 scores released from the Program for International Student Assessment ranked the United States within the average range according to the Organisation of Economic Co-Operation and Development (2016). However, statistics also show that there has been no significant change in reading literacy scores since the 1970s. It can be concluded then that past and present educational reading practices have proven ineffective at raising student literacy skills. In examining the root cause for the lack of improvement over past decades, current trends in reading education must be carefully studied. While preschoolers appear not to suffer from motivational deficits, school age children tend to find instruction lacking in interest and engagement (Cordova & Lepper, 1996). Various studies have shown that student intrinsic motivation progressively declines from third grade to high school (Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Harter, 1981). One

explanation for such a decline has been attributed to the lack of context and abstract methods by which teachers introduce new reading material (Bruner, 1966; Dewey, 1938). As a result, many students find it increasingly difficult to apply their learning to practical efficacy. This, in turn, undermines student intrinsic motivation; thus, the implication would be rather than decontextualizing instruction, children need to be provided with meaningful contexts in order to significantly increase their motivation and learning (Cordova & Lepper, 1996).

Statement of Purpose

Many factors influence various educational models related to best instructional methodologies. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between student perceptions regarding student motivation to read and the corresponding effect on student achievement within a blended learning environment. Examining the instructional interaction among fifth-grade students and teacher cadets using a flexible learning model served to further determine best practices among educators.

Statement of the Problem

Although there is much debate as to the author of the quote, “We the willing, led by the unknowing, are doing the impossible for the ungrateful. We have done so much, with so little, for so long, we are now qualified to do anything with nothing,” the sentiment remains the same (Unknown). The quote asserts a sense of urgency to those in the public service field. Teachers are faced with motivating students to think deeper and more critically about a world they have yet to fully experience. The quote alludes to a lack of means in which to fulfill the obligation; this, compounded with limited time and resources, challenges teachers to make decisions on how to best expand those resources.

Such a task is magnified in the area of literacy as the basis for all areas of achievement. It stands to reason that an enhanced understanding of what teachers know regarding student motivation and the role of digital collaborative literacy would further inform future teaching practice and professional development in the area of student motivation and achievement. One case study determined that technology in conjunction with traditional reading instruction may have positive effects on struggling readers. The study concluded a balanced approach using both traditional and technological practices was necessary in order to teach reading effectively; however, the study stressed the need for teacher efficacy as it relates to effective technology instruction (Fox, 2014). The implication being that teacher perceptions on motivating students to read may vary from student motivation to read.

Previous research indicated that poor literacy skills place students at a distinct economic disadvantage (Irvin et al., 2007). Motivation is vital for lifelong learning as well as academic success (Sancore, 2008). Arrowsmith (2012) asserted that students are neither motivated nor unmotivated, but rather motivated in different ways. Further research indicates assessing the appropriate and effective motivators to engage students in authentic literacy tasks is necessary.

Significance of the Study

Classroom discourse as a method by which students and teachers interact with text dates back over 150 years. Recitation was a common teaching practice in the American English class in the late 19th century. Teachers of the time considered the rapid questioning of students and their subsequent ability to answer effective pedagogy (Nystrand, 2006); however, by the early 20th century, pedagogical thoughts were

changing on recitation, as researchers observed that classrooms had become a “place of displaying knowledge rather than a laboratory for getting and using it” (Stevens, 1912, p. 16). In 1919, Colvin claimed that only approximately 5% of the questioning in the recitation model was “genuine thought questions” (p. 269). While literature-based classrooms in more modern times recognize the value of discussion practices, the methodology itself can vary widely among classrooms. Concurrently, the number of non-book readers has increased from 8% in 1978 to 23% in 2014 (Weissmann, 2014). While the shift from recitation to open-ended discussion has led to a change in pedagogical practice, there is a lack of attention to other variables such as engaging and motivating the 21st century reader.

Allington and Gabriel (2012) claimed that for the past 30 years, the educational push to make “every child a reader” (p. 10) has gained little momentum instructionally, as teaching practices have differed only slightly in the last 3 decades. Children need to be provided with engaging experiences to become successful readers. Allington (2002) stressed the necessity of student talk as an authentic learning experience. Studies have indicated a significant increase in reading comprehension occurs when purposeful talk is incorporated in classroom dialogue (Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Weissmann, 2014). Classrooms that utilized a more informal model with a focus on conversation rather than a formalized question and answer method of discussing ideas and concepts from text tended to produce more successful readers. Open-ended questioning, which left room for a multitude of possible answers as opposed to a single correct answer, allowed students to express their thoughts from various points of view; however, many researchers recognized that while there was a significant value of thoughtful classroom discourse,

little research had been done to enhance reading motivation and comprehension in students (Allington, 2002; Knapp, 1995; Nystrand, 1997).

We still have few interventions available to focus on helping teachers develop the instructional expertise to create such classrooms and few of the packaged programs offer teachers any support along this line. True conversation cannot be scripted or packaged. The classroom talk we observed was highly personalized and focused on a targeted reply to student responses. (Allington, 2002, p. 745)

This study examined the discourse among students and preservice teachers in a blended learning model as it relates to student motivation to read and reading achievement. Reading comprehension and engagement are improved through conversation focused on analyzing and comparing rather than basic recall of textual information (Cazden, 1988). Fall et al. (2000) found that learning outcomes increased when students engaged in conversation about what they read as opposed to completing more traditional reading skill tasks. Fostering a blended learning culture, conversations in this study took place through the Canvas online learning management system (LMS). Students and preservice teachers engaged in conversation about what they were reading through a variety of media which included writing on a discussion board and recording both audio and visual discussions.

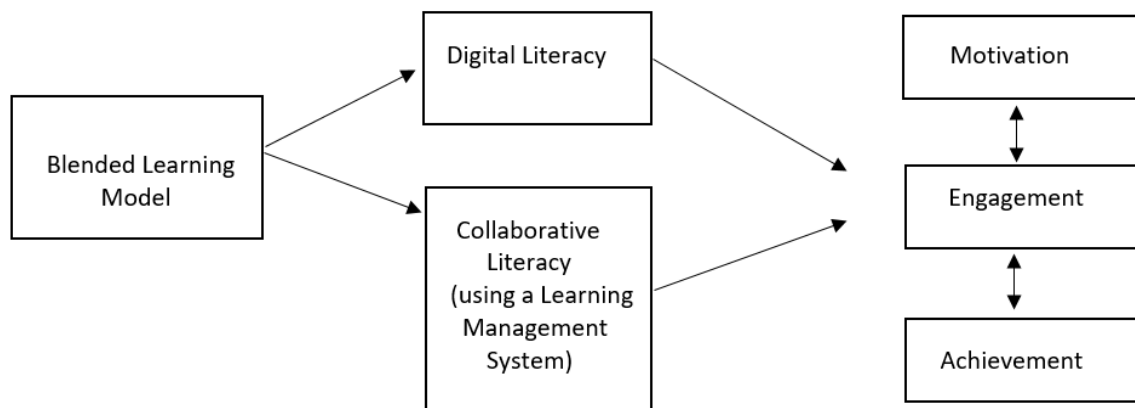
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding the study determined the effects of digital collaborative literacy using a blended learning model on student engagement. The study examined whether student engagement plays a role in student motivation to read and

reading achievement.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



While a significant amount of research exists studying student motivation to read (e.g., Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000) and its subsequent effect on achievement, further research was needed to determine teaching practices which may positively affect student outcomes. Research examining student motivation to read in conjunction with teacher perceptions of student motivation to read may further help to determine possible causes of student motivations as it relates to student achievement.

Social Cognitive Theory

According to Bandura's (1999) social cognitive theory, people learn through observing other's behaviors and attitudes as they relate to their cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. Such modeling of these behaviors occurs within four necessary conditions: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. This study focused primarily on the motivational aspect of social cognitive theory. As 21st century learners, technology and electronic mass media are no longer cutting edge, but necessary tools required for learning and succeeding in current environments; therefore, current trends in

technology and literacy would suggest further research is needed to motivate all learners. In a modern world, information is largely stored electronically as opposed to print form. In fact, electronic inquiry has become an essential cognitive skill requiring a strong sense of efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Developing a learner's self-efficacy technologically then becomes equally important to developing those more traditional learning goals. This "symbolic modeling" (Bandura, 1999, p. 25), or behaviors that are portrayed through electronic media, allows learners to transcend the boundaries of their own environment. As a result, learning no longer revolves around the individual learner's ability to mimic learning behaviors, but rather a need for collective and collaborative social applications in order to further enrich individual growth. Social cognitive theory, as outlined by Bandura (1999) , readily lends itself to this method of knowledge acquisition.

Following Bandura's (1999) research of social cognitive theory, Gambrell and Marinak (2009) purported the "mastery experience" as a powerful motivational tool of self-efficacy. The ability of learners to evaluate their own learning competencies is invaluable. Studies have found that social mastery experiences increase learner confidence as well as their motivation to try tasks at an equal and/or more challenging level (Bandura, 1999; Gambrell & Marinak, 2009). Gambrell and Marinak cited discussion as an effective tool for engaging in mastery modeling. Small group discussions about text encourage learners to engage in active learning, allowing them opportunities to interact and exchange points of view within their group construct.

Research Questions

The following research questions served to guide the research study in order to further examine the outcome of the relationship between student perceptions regarding

student motivation to read and the corresponding effect on student achievement within a blended learning environment.

1. How does engaging in digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment impact fifth-grade students' motivation to read?
2. How does using a blended learning framework impact teacher cadet beliefs on student reading motivation?
3. To what extent does the use of digital collaborative literacy impact student achievement?

Definition of Terms

Blended Learning

The Christensen Institute defined blended learning as a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online learning with some element of student control over time, place, and/or pace and at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home; the modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience (Horn & Staker, 2014).

Classroom Discourse

Refers to the language used by teachers and students within the classroom to communicate with each other. The use of in-person learning through conversation is the study of classroom discourse (Nuthall, 2004).

Digital Literacy

The New York City Department of Education defined digital literacy as, having the knowledge and ability to use a range of technology tools for varied

purposes. A digitally literate person can use technology strategically to find and evaluate information, connect and collaborate with others, produce and share original content, and use the Internet and technology tools to achieve many academic, professional, and personal goals. (Crowley, 2014, p. 1)

The American Library Association's Digital Literacy Task Force (2011) defined digital literacy as one's "ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information requiring both cognitive and technical skills" (Martin & Roberts, 2015, p. 19).

Digital Native

Refers to any first generation student who has grown up with new technology. In other words, children who have grown up surrounded by tools and devices of the digital age. Prensky (2001) added, "our students...are all 'native speakers' of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet" (p. 1).

Learning Management System (LMS)

K-12 Blueprint (2014) defined an LMS as, an online platform that enables the delivery of materials, resources, tools, and activities to students both in and out of the classroom environment. It allows teachers to offer tailored instruction that can be accessed by students anytime, anywhere without geographic constraints. (p. 1)

Social Literacy

A social literacy contract is "shared cultural knowledge the individuals draw on to produce and use written texts in culturally appropriate ways" (Rowe, 2008, p. 66).

Teacher Cadet Program

A course of study intended to introduce precollegiate students to teaching. According to the official website, the program is designed to provide “high school students with insight into the nature of teaching, the problems of schooling, and the critical issues affecting the quality of education in American schools” (Teacher Cadets, 2019, Overview).

Summary

In an academic setting, students are expected to engage in learning activities, apply the instruction to a given situation, and meet the predetermined mastery standards; therefore, understanding student motivation and engagement is key in developing effective practices by which significant student growth occurs. Literary research has outlined several key components, instructional practices, and theoretical constructs whereby student learning is supported.

Literacy as a foundation to learning has historically led educators to question, research, and explore best practices by which to enhance and expand student literacy instruction. The following chapters provide a thorough foundation of research examining current literacy trends in education as well as historically relevant literary models as they relate to student motivation, growth, and achievement. Methodology is also examined in order to determine the future significance within the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

In the age of modern learning environments, becoming a skilled, digitally literate reader is nonnegotiable for students in our 21st century society. In fact, poor literacy skills and economic disadvantage have been directly correlated in countless research studies (Irvin et al., 2007). How then does education prepare students for the literacy filled everyday world outside of the classroom? Irvin et al. (2007) contended motivation beyond the classroom is three-fold. First, the topic must be one the students feel is of value to communicate. Second, the topic must be one that evokes a strong sense of conviction or interest. Finally, reading should occur in a time frame that is flexible, within reason, for the student. Irvin et al. emphasized that these three dynamics in conjunction with multiple opportunities for feedback and practice produce highly engaged readers. The question then becomes how teachers build the bridge between academic literacy and real-world literacy, as academic literacy is typically neither motivating nor engaging. In the cycle of sustaining literary competence, motivation leads to engagement, and engagement leads to achievement; thus, these interrelated elements are crucial in developing students with college and career-ready literacy skills.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between student perceptions regarding student motivation to read and the corresponding effect on student achievement within a blended learning environment. Examining the instructional interaction among fifth-grade students and teacher cadets using a flexible learning model served to further determine best practices among educators; thus, the following chapter is organized to further examine the components of a blended learning environment. Student

choice, engagement, motivation, and achievement are key factors that were closely examined in the literature review. Research was also reviewed to determine teacher efficacy as it relates to digital collaborative literacy through the use of an LMS.

Blended Learning

Twenty-first century learning dictates that a strategic, system-wide transformation occurs in the educational learning framework. No longer can educational institutions maintain the status quo of yesteryear. Current trends indicate a shift in mindset to a proactive learning process for all stakeholders. Such a shift is seismic in nature for most schools; a blended learning approach can serve to act as a bridge to enable best teaching and learning practices. Murphy et al. (2014) recognized that in the emerging field of blended learning, many different conceptualizations exist; therefore, blended learning has been identified as including the following components: Teaching and learning occur within a formal educational program; students learn at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction; students have some level of control over time, pace, path, and/or pace of instruction; and part or all of the instruction is delivered away from home in a supervised, brick-and-mortar location. Initial findings of the Murphy et al. study showed a positive correlation between the use of a blended learning environment and student achievement. The researchers cautioned, however, that due to blended learning models being in their infancy, further study is necessary to determine the effectiveness of using such a model.

Tucker et al. (2017) identified and defined five key trademarks of a blended learning environment. Personalization is described as providing unique learning pathways for individual students. Agency is the process by which learners are given the opportunity

to participate in key decisions in their learning experience. Authentic audience is defined as giving learners the opportunity to create for a real audience both locally and globally. Finally, creativity entails providing learners individual and collaborative opportunities to make things that matter while building skills for their future. Tucker et al. asserted that the blended learning school is designed to both learn and facilitate learning. Indeed, schools must be flexible enough to adapt and change to meet the needs and minds of the 21st century learner. Today's student has the desire "to learn, create and connect on their own terms, with their own interests, and by their own design" (Tucker et al., 2017, p. 10).

The shift in vision and culture is a resulting necessity, as educators assume students are digital natives. Educators assume a higher level of competency in regard to technology and the use of digital tools than students actually may have. Guymon (2014) pointed out that students still need support as they transition from recreational use of technology to skills required to succeed in an academic environment:

Introducing a new device, app, or the internet itself still requires that we pay attention to equity issues and differentiation.... Incorporating support mechanisms for technology use into instructional designs and lesson plans is now just as important as doing the same for subject matter practice. Rather than viewing ourselves as "Digital Immigrants" and our students as "Digital Natives," it would serve all of us to accept the fact that we are, in our own ways, "Digital Explorers."
(p. 3)

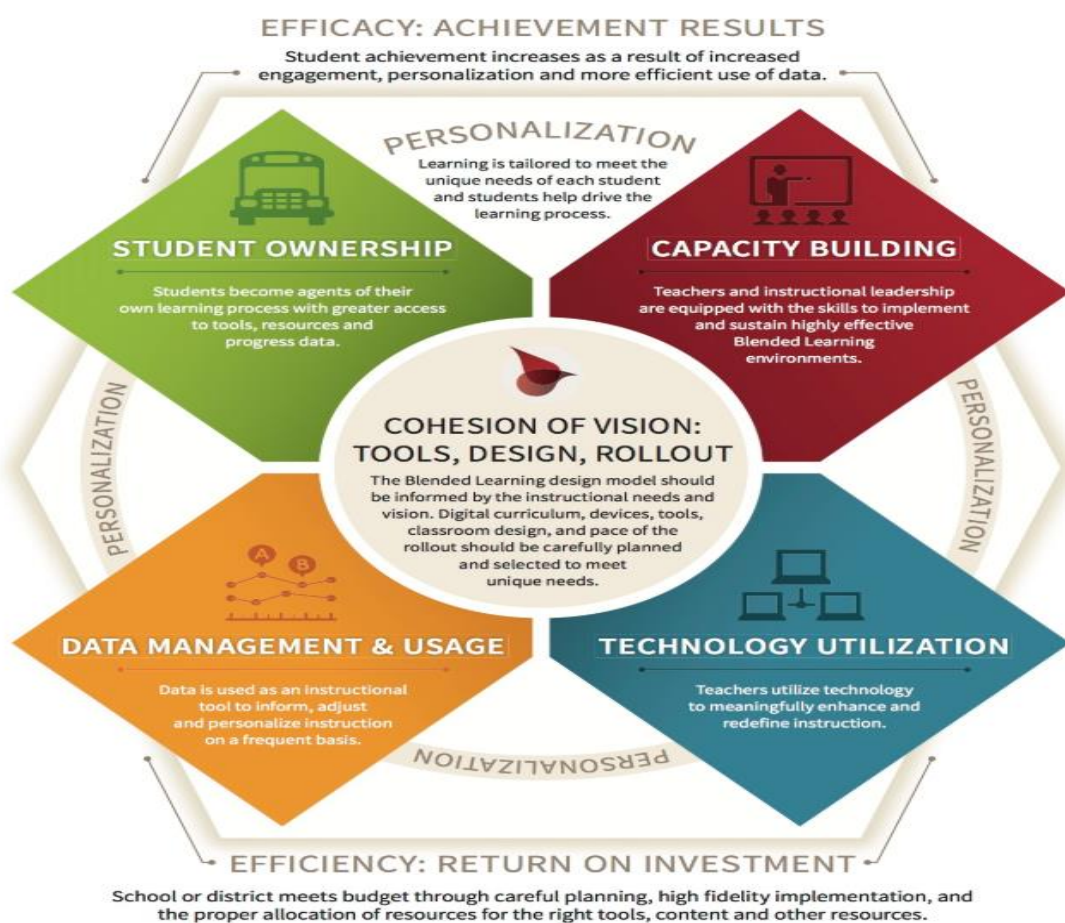
As digital natives, students are quick to adopt technology, but they need support that allows them to use it effectively in an academic setting. For example, how students can prepare for the transition to the online academic setting by making connections using

collaboration may be seen in the following design: Students may design offline working collaboratively to set expectations. Students transition to working online, reflecting on the offline collaboration. Students then self-assess, distinguishing between key elements to collaboration both offline and online.

The Redbird Advanced Learning Group (2014), through its affiliation with Stanford University, developed the Blended Learning Elements of Effectiveness tool (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Blended Learning Elements of Effectiveness



The tool, which is similar to the empowerment evaluation tool developed by

Clinton and Hattie (2015), allows all stakeholders to examine and evaluate the interconnected elements. Throughout the cyclical process, the intent of increasing teacher and student efficacy is vital. Clinton and Hattie affirmed that everyone needs to work collectively to improve student achievement. The blended learning framework provided a model by which students will be able to communicate, collaborate, think critically, create, and adapt in an ever-changing workforce.

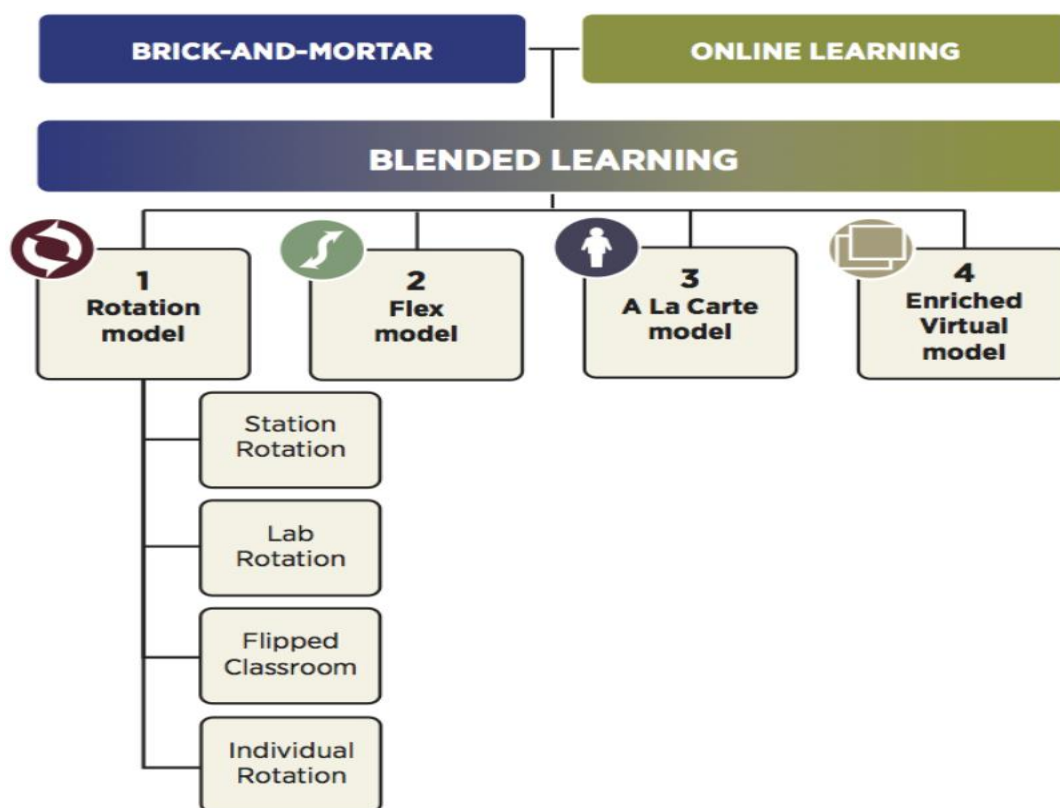
Trends in Education

Dziuban et al. (2018) addressed the question of whether blended learning can result in improved educational equality. The study examined blended learning outcomes and implications in higher education. Student perceptions were analyzed to determine how students evaluate their educational experiences. The study used the U.S. Department of Education's definition of blended learning as a "combination of online and in-class instruction with reduced in-class seat time for students" (Dziuban et al., 2018, p. 1). While results indicated a positive correlation between a blended learning environment and a personalized educational experience, Dziuban et al. wrote that the mere "definitional continuum" of blended learning itself is "observer dependent and may not exist outside of [one's] perception of the concept" (pp. 12-13). Ultimately, Dziuban et al. recognized that due to its flexibility, blended learning allows educators to maximize positive educational outcomes in higher education. Further research may indicate an equally impactful scenario in the K-12 setting.

Similarly, another recent study investigated the effectiveness of a blended learning environment as it relates to design features and learning outcomes (Kintu et al., 2017). Once again, the study consisted of university-level students whose questionnaire

responses were used to determine student satisfaction, knowledge construction, performance, and intrinsic motivation within a blended learning environment (Kintu et al., 2017). At the end of the semester, students were asked to complete an online self-regulated learning questionnaire (Barnard et al., 2009) as well as the intrinsic motivation inventory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Results showed a perceived usefulness/satisfaction of 81% with the blended learning design features within the LMS which helped the students communicate, work with peers, and reflect on their learning. High intrinsic motivation levels were reported in regard to learner outcomes, with 83.7% of learners reporting interest and enjoyment of tasks, perceived competence at 70.2%, and effort and importance at 80%. The study concluded that design features, or technology quality, and high intrinsic learner motivation play a key role in an effective blended learning environment.

More recently, research has been published in light of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Schools worldwide scurried to reinvent that educational institution with little warning (Young, 2020). Hybrid models of learning forced educators to adapt their instructional practices to include both traditional brick-and-mortar learning with online, virtual learning. The hybrid model at its very foundational roots is the definition of blended learning (Dziuban et al., 2018). As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, several blended learning models emerged for mainstream use by educators. Horn and Staker (2014) identified four effective models for a blended learning environment (Figure 3).

Figure 3*Blended Learning Models*

According to Horn and Staker (2014), the rotation model incorporates a set schedule in which students shift between learning modalities, one of which consists of online learning. Within the rotation model, four options of rotation exist. Station rotation requires students to rotate through all of the stations within the classroom setting. Lab rotation incorporates the use of a computer lab where students experience online learning. A flipped classroom model involves the primary dissemination of content and instruction online, while targeted practice and projects are completed with a teacher at a brick-and-mortar school. Finally, individual rotation uses individualized, targeted playlists for students to work through at their own pace. Another model identified by Horn and Staker is the flex model. This model is highly individualized and fluid for the learner. The

primary source of student learning is through an online component, typically off campus in delivery. However, the instructor is available for students as needed at a brick-and-mortar school. Students and teachers have the flexibility to meet student needs through small group instruction, individualized tutoring, or group projects. On the other hand, the a la carte model is entirely an online experience for students where courses are meant to be taken in conjunction with a brick-and-mortar school experience. Finally, the enriched virtual model requires face-to-face learning with an instructor. When students are learning remotely, online learning is the primary source of instruction. While students in the enriched virtual environment are required to meet face to face with an instructor, face-to-face sessions are not as frequent as they are in the flipped classroom model. Conversely, the enriched virtual model's in-person learning requirement sets it apart from both the flex and a la carte models (Horn & Staker, 2014).

Horn and Staker (2014) asserted that the blended learning models provide “teachers with opportunities to specialize” (p. 180). Horn and Staker went on to note that teachers have the flexibility to choose their best practices as it applies to their teaching strengths and how they will disseminate strategies to the students. Six possibilities exist for teachers: content experts who focus on developing and posting curriculum; small-group leaders who provide direct instruction as part of a station or lab rotation; project designers to supplement online learning with hands-on application; mentors who provide wisdom, social capital, and guidance; evaluators to whom other educators can give the responsibility of grading assignments and, in some cases, designing assessments; and data experts. Transforming the delivery method by which teachers instruct students affords teachers the flexibility to grow in their own right as professionals (Herzberg,

1987).

Tucker (2020) took the blended learning models a step further by incorporating a metacognitive strategy to accompany each model. Metacognition is the gateway by which students are able to design, inspect, consider, and adjust their level and pace of learning. When learners take an active role in the learning process, teachers and students are able to work together to decide what, when, and how the student will learn. Tucker offered examples as to how this integration of blended learning and metacognition can be partnered.

The station rotation model allows students to rotate through stations on a fixed schedule with at least one station being an online learning station. Rotations may include tasks such as offline collaborative practice and self-paced digital or hands-on learning while the teacher conducts small group discussions or lessons. In the station rotation model, Tucker (2020) added a learning log to the rotation. Tucker suggested that the addition of an online learning log will encourage students to reflect on their practice. This, in turn, will encourage “students to think about a specific assignment in detail” (Tucker, 2020, p. 53).

The lab rotation, also referred to as the whole group rotation, is similar to the station rotation model, but it requires the whole class to rotate to a computer lab as a part of the rotation process. Students are involved in offline work and online work completed in a lab setting while the teacher conducts student conferences. The addition of an ongoing self-assessment tool in the whole group rotation model encourages students to “think critically about their skills and progress as learners” (Tucker, 2020, p. 53).

The flipped classroom models flip the traditional model of class time and work

time; thus learning takes place at home via online outlets while application takes place at school. Self-assessment tools have long been identified by researchers as a way to motivate students to think about their own levels of growth and learning (Wilder, 2010). Tucker (2020) asserted the inclusion of an end-of-the-week exit ticket paired with the flipped classroom model will serve to allow students to not only reflect on their learning, but will also provide the teacher with valuable data to further guide instruction.

Finally, the playlist or individual model offers a variety of online and offline activities. Students are provided with an individualized rotation schedule set by the teacher or a software program. The teachers check in with individual students to monitor progress and pace. Tucker (2020) partnered a think-aloud video reflection as part of a playlist model. The video reflection will keep not only keep students engaged in the reflection process but also allow for discourse about a specific strategy.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on education across the world, and speculation abounds as to the subsequent fallout within the classroom setting. Just before the 2020-2021 school year began, Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) authored a report in conjunction with The Learning Policy Institute and admitted that while the changing face of the educational landscape may be challenging, several factors should be considered and implemented to provide students with high-quality instruction through the use of blended learning models. Darling-Hammond et al. assimilated various research findings. First, the researchers found that a blended learning model was more effective than other traditional face-to-face models. Instructional design however is key. Darling-Hammond et al. maintained certain features must be present in order for a blended learning model to be well designed. For example, synchronistic and

asynchronistic instruction should blend to provide students with a variety of opportunities for learning. Students should also be allowed to choose when and how they will engage in this instruction. Providing students with choice enhances their level of learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). The researchers also asserted the level of intensity in which they engaged in their learning matters. Interactions among students and teachers that are interactive, happen often, and are meaningful provide a deeper level of understanding for students. Darling-Hammond et al. determined interactions should focus on problem-solving and the development of ideas. In the digital age, interactive learning no longer consists solely of textbooks and worksheets, but rather of a combination of online outlets including digital textbooks and interactive tasks. Darling-Hammond et al. also noted the value of formative feedback and student reflection. Students benefit from formative feedback throughout the process in completing a task as opposed to only receiving feedback after the task is completed. Tucker (2020) also noted the importance of student reflection as a tool by which students are provided with the opportunity to think deeper about their learning and make adjustments to their subsequent learning. Finally, Darling-Hammond et al. noted that it is crucial for students to receive instruction in various self-management strategies including goal-setting, self-evaluation, and time management. Students who were proficient in these skills were able to better manage their online learning. Darling-Hammond et al.'s findings could serve to support and guide a curriculum shift to a blended learning model.

While researchers may not agree on the specific changes in education post-pandemic, there is one assertion they all agree on: Education is forever changed. How, when, and where students learn has been permanently altered (Selingo & Silagadze,

2021). With research on the effects of a blended learning model and the pandemic in its infancy, the research that is available tends to focus on higher education institutions; however, Young (2020) made five post-pandemic predictions for all schools in America. Young's first prediction was that the use of digital learning tools is a permanent change for both virtual and brick-and-mortar institutions. Young noted that while the transition to a tech-support learning environment was not smooth, fraught with sharp learning curves that sent some teachers running from the profession, the forced switch to a blended learning environment has proven innovative and "invigorating" (p. 2) for many educators. Young also predicted that many students will opt to stay virtual rather than return to a brick-and-mortar location, stating that families are seeing the benefits of an online learning environment, citing increased student agency. Third, Young predicted innovative, new models of teaching will continue to increase and improve. Young attributed such phenomena to the lack of preparedness to develop new instructional delivery systems at the onset of the pandemic. Educators were forced to be innovative and create new models for learning without adequate time or resources. Young predicted in the aftermath of the pandemic, educators, having created mediocre models in a rush, will have more time to work on and improve the newer, more engaging models for students. Alternative schooling methods are also predicted to stay on the rise. The flexibility in student learning as a result of the various instructional delivery methods embarked upon in school districts across the country was something parents felt benefited their child (Young, 2020). Brick-and-mortar, traditional learning environments have dictated an outdated system of student learning. Students matriculate through school at levels based on either a grade-based or standards-based reporting system regardless of

student preparedness. Young asserted that “how and when student progress will continue to change” (p. 4). Digital content and data tools to assess student learning have cleared a path for personalized student growth and learning. Whether forced due to global circumstances or simply viewed as the current best course of action in education, the idea that “a K-12 learning environment where competency and mastery determine advancements versus age or grade levels” (Young, 2000, p. 4) is no longer a far-fetched idea.

Global Impact

With the spread of COVID-19 globally from east to west, American schools have had the distinct advantage of observing other countries’ education response to the pandemic. For example, Fadillah et al. (2020) found that in Indonesia, mathematical disposition increased as a result of blended learning models used to engage students during the pandemic. The study identified three leading principles in mathematics: the principle of lifelong learning, the principle of active student learning, and the principle of learning how to learn. Educators used these principles in planning instruction with the “notion that learning [is] something done by students, and not something done to students” (Fadillah et al., 2020, p. 175). Fadillah et al. identified mathematical dispositions as attitudes that allow students to take responsibility in their learning as it pertains to math. A disposition questionnaire used indicators to determine student levels of their mathematical dispositions. The indicators were scored on four levels of low, less, moderate, and high. The results of the study indicated a moderate to high rating of mathematical dispositions when implementing a blended learning model. Fadillah et al. suggested the continued use and improvement of blended learning models will only serve

to increase student learning.

Another study conducted in the Asian-Pacific region found that the process of implementing blended learning in schools was drastically accelerated with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Wang, 2020). The study, which began prior to the pandemic in 2016, examined emerging scenarios of online and blended learning implementations at five area universities. At the time, Wang (2020) determined that blended learning was still in its infancy, as educators viewed the online portion of blended learning as a supplement to the traditional face-to-face curriculum. However, as the pandemic spread globally, educational institutions were forced to expand their online instructional delivery methods. As a result, blended learning opportunities quickly became mainstream practice (Wang, 2020). Wang concluded that the combination of online and offline learning be determined by need based on the curriculum program. Wang also recommended that rapid innovation among educators is crucial in delivering high-quality and meaningful instruction.

Conversely, in Australia, a study conducted by Attard and Holmes (2020) noted improved student engagement with the use of blended learning environments during the pandemic. The study consisted of 10 case studies within nine Australian schools at the preschool, primary, and secondary levels. Like the Indonesian study, the Australian study focused on mathematics. An enhancement in student learning was noted using a variety of blended learning models. The researchers attributed the shift to the diverse accessibility to diverse learning opportunities which were aligned to individual student learning needs while providing a flexible learning environment beyond the classroom walls. Attard and Holmes purported that a “in a post pandemic world, a large proportion

of teachers will be well-positioned to take advantage of new skills gained during the crisis, increasing the likelihood that blended learning will become more widespread in the future” (p. 19).

As research continues to be made available globally, the educational system must monitor and adjust findings in order to determine the best instructional practices to optimize student growth and achievement.

Shifts in Education

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted a shift in education, effectively transforming the educational landscape. Educators across the world worked to continue to provide students with quality instruction without the past conveniences of face-to-face learning in brick-and-mortar institutions (Wang 2020). Since the early 2000s, education has recognized a need for different and varying curriculum structures to meet all students’ needs; however, as is often the case in education, the allocation of funds, resources, and time proved lacking (Wang, 2020). The onset of the coronavirus crisis sent the field of education into a much more fast-paced, problem-solving, solution-seeking mode. Obstacles that were seemingly insurmountable prior to the COVID-19 outbreak had to be confronted and tackled in order for the business of educating children to continue (Siegel, 2020). Siegel (2020) argued that since the pandemic has fast-tracked the transformation in education, there is no returning to the previous pre-COVID-19 methods of learning. Siegel challenged educators to rethink traditional education models and recommended gravitating towards more blended learning models. One such transformation includes changing the way the educational system structures time. Traditionally, learning models revolved around time as a constant, with learning as the

variable (Siegel, 2020). Siegel suggested reversing the structure so time is the variable and learning remains the constant. Siegel also recommended time be used as a tool by which student needs are not only met, but students are accelerated based on their level of content mastery. The pandemic has made it abundantly clear that a one-size-fits-all model in education is neither effective nor efficient in regards to student growth. Simple internet access has proven to be a chasm many in education did not realize existed (Siegel, 2020). A shift to student-centered learning models may provide students with the flexibility to grow and learn at their own pace while providing educators with new opportunities in their role. Rather than being the resource by which the knowledge flows, with the integration of technology, teachers are no longer required to be the giver of knowledge but rather the provider to the knowledge resources (Siegel, 2020). Siegel also predicted a change in how educators develop and analyze curriculum. Curriculum development may shift to focus on real-world application of the future as opposed to surface level facts and skills (Siegel, 2020). Finally, a shift in school culture is on the forefront as the pandemic brought to light many disparities within the educational system itself including equity, diversity, and inclusion. Indeed, belief systems and ideologies have been challenged due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Siegel, 2020). While the forced educational transformation may have simply been a means of survival for many educators, an undeniable shift in education is most likely here to stay.

Collaborative Literacy

Research would dictate that examining how teachers motivate students is critical in studying student outcomes. Student engagement directly results in opportunities for students to practice their reading; however, practice without feedback and coaching leads

to insufficient reading habits (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000).

Cambria and Guthrie (2010) broke reading motivation down into three categories: interest (enjoying reading), dedication (belief in the importance of reading), and confidence (reading because one can). All three motivations are synergistic in nature and directly impact achievement. It can also be understood that at the elementary level, social relationships are crucial to student reading development. Students who read in a collaborative setting, as compared with students who read individually, had an increased level of recall. Evidence suggested that student-teacher relationships have a significant effect on literacy engagement and achievement (Decker et al., 2007). Nurturing relationships in conjunction with teaching practices for motivation yielded specific aspects of motivation. Six teaching practices were examined to determine various aspects of motivation. Building trusting relationships with students with positive student-teacher discourse about instruction affected student confidence. Building success for students included differentiating tasks to meet students at their learning levels. Assuring relevance for student learning by choosing tasks that related to real-world problem-solving and were aligned with the curriculum promoted dedication to the task for students. Fostering awareness for tasks with students included gaining a better understanding of student learning styles and recognizing differences among students. Providing students with choice for instructional tasks directly correlated with increased student interest. Finally, arranging social goals for students within the learning environment allowed students to develop ownership of their learning and the surrounding environment.

As all three motivators (confidence, dedication, and interest) manifested within the learner, students began to see reading as an important and valuable literacy

experience. With continued knowledge and growth, the students' breadth and depth of literary knowledge expanded (Nokes, 2008).

Learning Management Systems

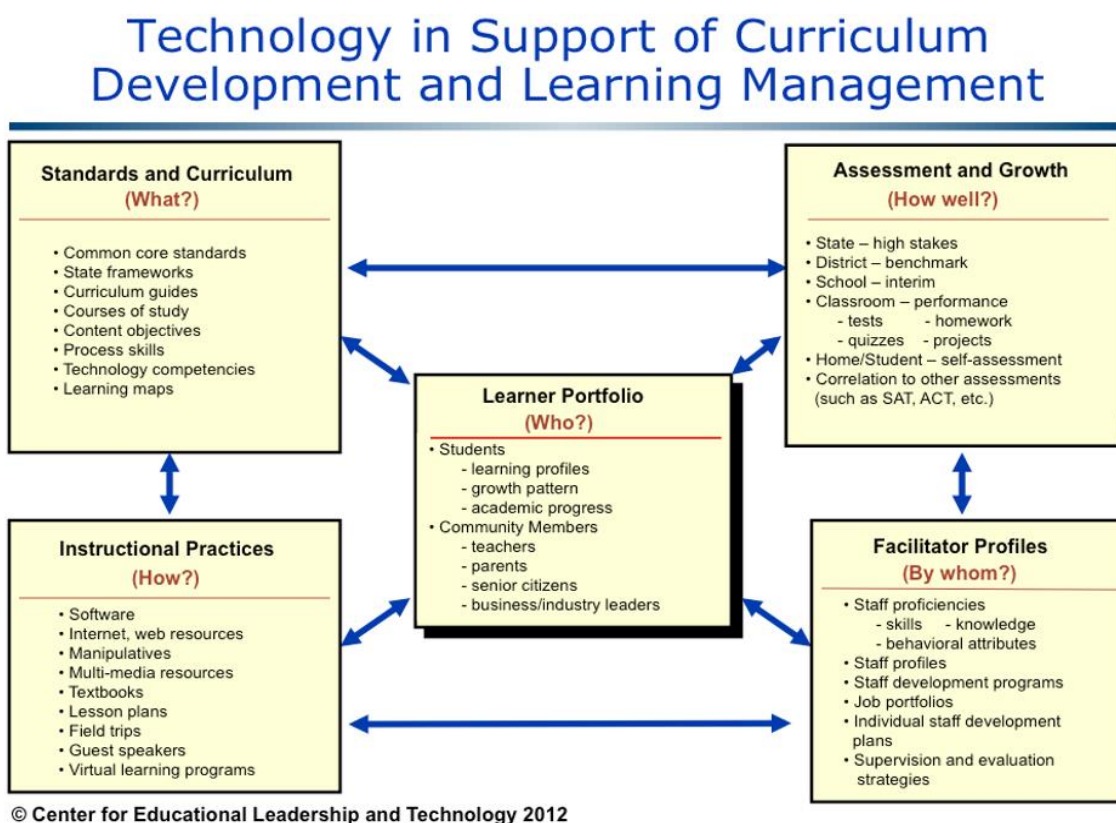
Hoffer explained that “in times of change, learners will inherit the earth; while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists” (Phillipo & Krongard, 2012, p. 4). Indeed, in the 21st century, cultivating change is necessary, and technology is at the root of current trends in societal shifts. Thus, technology has become a nonnegotiable factor in informing and supporting students as schools prepare them for a future in an ever-changing world. How to best facilitate this new method of learning was first addressed by higher level institutions as online courses were introduced as valid learning modules. A system that allowed for teachers and students to access information from multiple resources in a concise yet “complex ecosystem” became the ultimate quest (Remis, 2015, p. 3). While many derivations were tested and eliminated, an LMS offered the best framework to meld “contemporary education reforms with effective and creative uses of technology” (Phillipo & Krongard, 2012, p. 1). As the second decade of the 21st century commenced, the trickle-down effect began seeing LMSes in high school, middle school, and elementary classrooms. Remis (2015) explained student familiarity and comfort level with social media. An LMS offers students the opportunity to use their digital background knowledge to communicate and learn on a broader platform. An LMS not only empowers students, but all members of the learning community both inside and outside the school building. The exchange of a variety of digital data in real time is one of the most powerful learning tools education can offer students.

Blended Learning

The Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (Phillipo & Krongard, 2012) developed a conceptual framework that provides a comprehensive model of the five identified components needed for implementation (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Technology in Support of Curriculum Development and Learning Management Framework



At the center of the framework is the learner portfolio, which serves to include all stakeholders in the student's learning. Standards and curriculum, instructional practices, assessment and growth, and facilitator profiles all work cohesively to provide insight into the learner as a whole.

As Murphy et al. (2014) defined, one of the primary components in a blended

learning environment includes students learning, in part, through an online delivery of content and instruction. Standards and curriculum inform educators as to what content objectives and pacing to follow, as well as technological components of instruction. Instructional practices advise educators as to how to disseminate content through various resources including media. Facilitator profiles encourage teacher growth, allowing for a change mindset among educators which is essential for a modern learning environment. Assessment and growth inform how well instructional content is learned by students. Assessment includes both formative and summative data from the classroom to the state level. Most importantly, student profiles are centered and interchangeable within the framework, allowing all stakeholders to monitor student growth and academic progress.

Once the five components are in place, learner performance and growth can be individualized “by means of access to information that can alter and shape a student’s personalized learning path” (Phillipo & Krongard, 2012, p. 4). In a study conducted by Whitmer (2012), students using an LMS versus their more traditional paper and pencil counterparts received significantly higher grades. Whitmer concluded that the instructional practices for which technology is used is what affects the outcome of student achievement, not the use of technology in isolation.

At its foundational level, Edwards (2014) stressed that digital learning provides educators the ability to “level the playing field” (p. 5) for all learners, providing them with the opportunity to develop skills for 21st century careers. An LMS allows students to communicate without boundaries. Traditionally, classroom discourse consisted of dialogue between the teacher and students in their classroom. However, due to the global implications of an LMS, classroom discourse can be redefined to include teachers,

students, parents, and all community members. The potential effects on student engagement and achievement using an LMS are perceivably limitless. This study examined the potential effects an LMS has on pedagogical factors.

Digital Literacy

According to a 2018 report from the International Literacy Association, digital literacy ranked within the top 10 as a topic both trending and critical to literacy advancement. Societal shifts have transformed education resulting in a need for student college and career readiness. This shift has led to an increased rigor in literacy standards due to the decreased marketable viability of those with low literacy skills (Calkins et al., 2012). In short, “children who leave school today without strong literacy skills will not find a job” (Calkins et al., 2012, p. 9). Educational change dictated that effective teaching practice should include new and varying forms of literacy in order to strengthen achievement; however, many teachers struggled to incorporate technology into the classroom, citing a general lack of knowledge and time as primary factors (Stover et al., 2015). Stover and Yeara (2017) argued that technology should not be an isolated skill, but rather integrated into an already existing curriculum. Technology, then, is used to enhance the curriculum, making learning more effective and efficient. Literacy itself has evolved, expanding beyond printed text. As students are being prepared for the careers of tomorrow, “employees will need to process and critically analyze information, collaborate with others, and disseminate information using a range of modalities” (Stover & Yeara, 2017, p. 2); therefore, technology should ultimately provide us with tools to work more effectively and efficiently than its printed text counterpart. When used by design, technology offers students the opportunity to learn using a variety of strategies,

while providing teachers with authentic assessment to monitor student learning (Stover & Yearta, 2017).

Theoretical Constructs Related to Digital Literacy

Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences has widely acknowledged that students learn through a variety of modalities. He stated that information should be presented using an assortment of intelligences which provides students with the opportunity to learn in a way that best fits their educational needs. As a result, varying learning styles have been observed throughout classrooms for decades. As technology descends upon the modern classroom, the question becomes how to best integrate technology to meet the multiple intelligences. Dewey's (1938) theory of inquiry suggested critical thinking occurs when students learn through the use of their own thoughts and ideas. Judson (2010), in conjunction with Dewey, purported that students learn best through the use of the present. Today, students enter kindergarten digitally fluent. Fox (2014) wrote, "introducing digital literacies will not only be familiar to them but will also engage them in the present by providing them with a rich literacy experience" (p. 5). Fox examined the struggling reader and whether motivation is affected by the introduction of technology in the reading process. Fox conducted a case study of a struggling emergent reader in the third grade. The 5-week study consisted of the subject engaging in digital literacy while focusing on motivation, comprehension, writing skills, and technology skills. In conclusion, Fox determined that while the students' reading and writing performance increased overall, when the student engaged in technology she was not familiar with, there was no significant improvement. Fox concluded that such an outcome is a result of increased frustration levels. Technology

was integrated in the study through the use of e-books, google docs, and Word documents. The study ultimately found that while technology may have a positive effect on student motivation and achievement, a more effective strategy for struggling readers would be to integrate traditional and technological strategies to improve literacy skills.

Eshet-Alkalai and Chajut (2009) expanded a conceptual framework for digital literacy to include the following six key components: photo-visual literacy, reproduction literacy, branching literacy, information literacy, socioemotional literacy, and real-time thinking. First, photo-visual literacy is described as one's ability to work effectively in a digital environment, up to and including graphical communication. Second, reproduction literacy is one's aptitude for creating authentic, meaningful written work by manipulating various online tools. Branching literacy is the ability to construct knowledge through a series of online domains including the Internet. The fourth component, information literacy, is the ability to critically sort through biased and false information. Socioemotional literacy, the fifth factor, is one's ability to communicate effectively online using communication platforms including group discussions. Finally, real-time thinking skill is the ability to process information in real time and respond accordingly, such as in an LMS.

Eshet-Alkalai (2004) went on to state that digital literacy extends beyond basic software and operational procedures and does in fact include a variety of cognitive, motor, sociological, and emotional skills. Digital literacy requires more than simply using technology; therefore, reading comprehension, not just procedural issues, becomes a primary component in an individual's ability to be digitally literate. Further examination is needed to determine digital natives and their level of digital literacy.

In a school setting, student ability to perform well on high stakes testing has become an integral part of online assessments. While today's students come with a set of procedural technical skills, many lack the ability to apply these technical skills to the learning process.

Student Choice and Ownership

Another key factor in student motivation to read is student choice. Researchers have long argued a student interest level can significantly affect growth and achievement. Guthrie and McRae (2016) explained that affording student choice in reading strengthens ownership. Student ownership in reading can be directly correlated to engaging and motivating learning experiences for students. Many factors play a role in providing student choice, including relevance to instruction, meaningful selection, and appropriate reading level of the student. Guthrie and McRae determined that when certain criteria had been met, students showed an increased level of self-regulation as well as a higher level of acquisition in reading strategies.

In contrast, students in classrooms in which the teacher talked constantly, giving detailed direction and using directed questioning strategies, were led to feel significantly less motivated due to feeling criticized and unable to provide their own thoughts about reading. However, students who were provided with opportunities to question and discuss their reading with the teacher responding with encouraging feedback and challenges for further thinking by the student were significantly more likely to feel engaged and motivated about their reading (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Controlled reading environments consisting of frequent dictates can interfere with the pace of learning and suppress critical thinking. As a result, lack of ownership diminished the selection and use of reading

strategies (Reynolds & Symons, 2001).

Indeed, student choice is highly supported in research; however, choice does not simply mean in the text title alone. Choice in literature also entails how they read (alone, with a partner, or in a small group) as well as how they respond to their reading (self-regulated questioning and discussion) of the text (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). Student choice, within the context of literacy, has proven to increase student motivation and engagement to read.

Student Engagement, Motivation, and Achievement

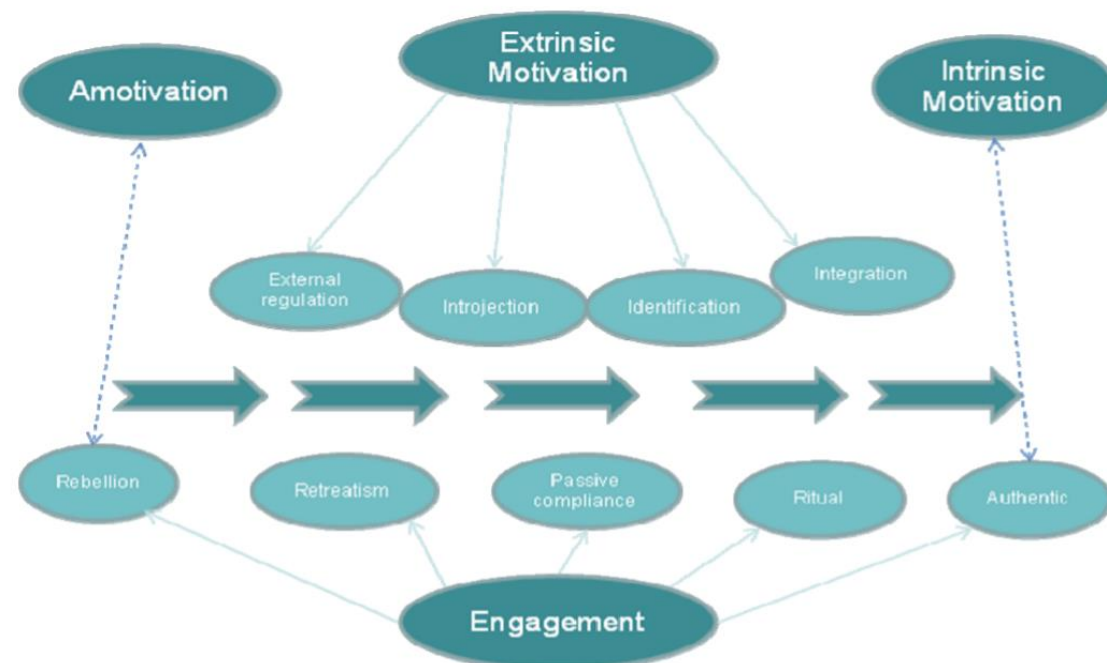
Since the dawn of education itself, engaging and motivating students has been a question for researchers. At its earliest, motivation resulted in the fulfillment of a need; however, in modern education, engaging students has become a multi-faceted and much more complex question to answer. First, it is important to clarify the interlinking scope of engagement and motivation themselves. Schlechty (2001) identified motivation and engagement as working hand in hand to enhance the learning outcomes for all students; he defined engagement as occurring when “students are attentive, persistent, and committed. Students value and find meaning in the work, and learn what they are expected to learn” (p. 1).

For Schlechty (2001), engagement is active, requiring the learner to not only be present but also aware. Completing the task is not enough; completing the task with “enthusiasm and diligence” (Schlechty, 2001, p. 64) constitutes authentic and active engagement. Schlechty’s engagement framework runs along a continuum from authentic engagement (student completes a task because it has meaning and value) to rebellion (student refuses to do the task, possibly disrupting others). Student response to school

work is the basis for the engagement framework.

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), “To be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated” (p. 54). Ryan and Deci’s self-determination theory categorized varying degrees of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Learners may fall anywhere on the scale from amotivation (not motivated), to external regulation (rewards and punishments), to integrated regulation (synthesis with the self), to intrinsic regulation (interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Saed and Zyngier (2012) considered motivation as an indispensable prerequisite for student engagement. Saed and Zyngier took Schlechty’s (2001) and Ryan and Deci’s (2000) study a step further by combining Schlechty’s typology of engagement with Ryan and Deci’s self-determination theory of motivation (Figure 5).

Figure 5*Self-Determination Theory of Motivation*

Using this model, the interrelationship between engagement and motivation is clear. A student who is not motivated will most likely not engage in the task, while a student who is intrinsically motivated and sees the value of the task is authentically and actively engaged.

Social Cognitive Theory

The value of the task as perceived by the student becomes a key factor in motivation. According to Bandura (1997), a student's level of self-efficacy has a significant effect on the student's learning. Student achievement can predict and even change a student's level of self-efficacy (Diseth, 2011; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1999). Zimmerman (2000) wrote, "perceived self-efficacy influences students' methods of learning as well as their motivational processes" (p. 86). Additionally, Bandura (1997)

asserted that a student's belief in their ability to manage a task can influence their emotional aptitude, potentially lowering their stress, anxiety, and depression levels. A significant benefit can come from teachers fostering a positive sense of self-efficacy within students. Summarily, a student's belief in their own academic capabilities are pivotal in their motivation to achieve academically (Zimmerman, 2000).

Student Achievement

Numerous studies and countless research has been done examining student achievement. Marzano et al. (2001) identified and categorized nine high-yield instructional strategies that affect student achievement. The researchers noted that no one strategy works equally well in every instructional situation; all the strategies should be viewed as tools that serve to increase student achievement. Marzano et al. was quick to point out that instructional strategies are only one aspect that affects classroom pedagogy. Management techniques and curriculum design are also mitigating factors in effective pedagogy. The question lingers as to whether certain instructional strategies are more effective in certain subject areas.

Taylor et al.'s (2002) research examined those practices that improve classroom reading instruction and achievement. The researchers determined that student achievement increased when the following practices occurred: high levels of integration of reading and writing, students discussed what they were reading, emphasis on deep understanding of text rather than literal comprehension, and skills taught in context. Taylor et al. noted that the more "active cognitive processes" (p. 5) occur, the higher the level of achievement. Active cognitive process are simply ways of engaging and motivating readers to grow and learn. The question then becomes how classrooms

actively engage and motivate students and in turn increase achievement.

Teacher Cadet Program

The Teacher Cadet Program began in South Carolina in 1986; however, little research exists as to the perspectives of the stakeholders or its intended effects. Currently, 37 states nationwide have implemented the program. South Carolina data show that 37% of students completing the program intend to pursue a higher education degree in the teaching field according to the program's official website. In a study conducted by Lewis (2014), participants in the Teacher Cadet Program shared the perspective that the field experiences were a valuable aspect of the course. While little research exists on the current trends of the Teacher Cadet Program, the majority of students believed their decision to choose to enter the teaching profession was largely based on relationships forged during their enrollment in the program (Lewis, 2014). Indeed, many states view the Teacher Cadet Program as a first step in teacher recruitment, providing students the opportunity to experience first-hand various aspects of the classroom.

Summary

This study incorporated the instructional practices of a blended learning model while studying the effects of motivation and achievement through the use of an LMS. Fifth-grade students participated in a book study with preservice teachers while engaging in guided book talks addressing comprehension and critical-thinking skills.

In conclusion, it is essential that educators leverage student literacy learning in order to provide a solid foundation in a modern learning environment. The following chapter outlines the methodology of study, which further examines student motivation to read and corresponding growth and achievement.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview

This study employed a mixed methods research design examining fifth-grade student perceptions and beliefs regarding the extent to which students are motivated to read. Students and preservice teachers were asked to complete questionnaires after taking part in a novel study using an LMS. Students also took a pre- and post-assessment, created through the Mastery Connect item bank, which reflected the instructional skills being taught. The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between student perceptions regarding student motivation to read and the corresponding effect on student achievement within a blended learning environment. Examining the instructional interaction among fifth-grade students and teacher cadets using a flexible learning model served to further determine best practices among educators.

The methodology chapter outlines the procedure and organization of the study, beginning with the research design. A mixed methods approach was used to collect data. Accordingly, as the researcher, I identified the research setting and study participants. Instruments for collecting data are also described in this chapter. Procedures for conducting the study as well as ethical considerations and limitations were taken into account as the study progressed.

Research Design

This study was a mixed methods approach that consisted of a collection of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently as the parallel convergent study progressed. During the first phase of the study, quantitative data were collected prior to and following the 6-

week study in order to measure student growth and achievement using a pre and posttest. Concurrently, quantitative data were also collected using the Motivations for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ; fifth-grade students) and the Teacher Beliefs About Student Motivation to Read Questionnaire (TBSMRQ; teacher cadet preservice teachers) before and after the study to examine changing perceptions as it related to student motivation to read. Qualitative data were collected as interviews were conducted with a random sampling of participants to gather data on student and teacher perceptions of student motivations in reading. During the second phase of the study, data were compared based on pre- and post-study results as they related to student motivation to read and subsequent student achievement (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Parallel Convergent Model

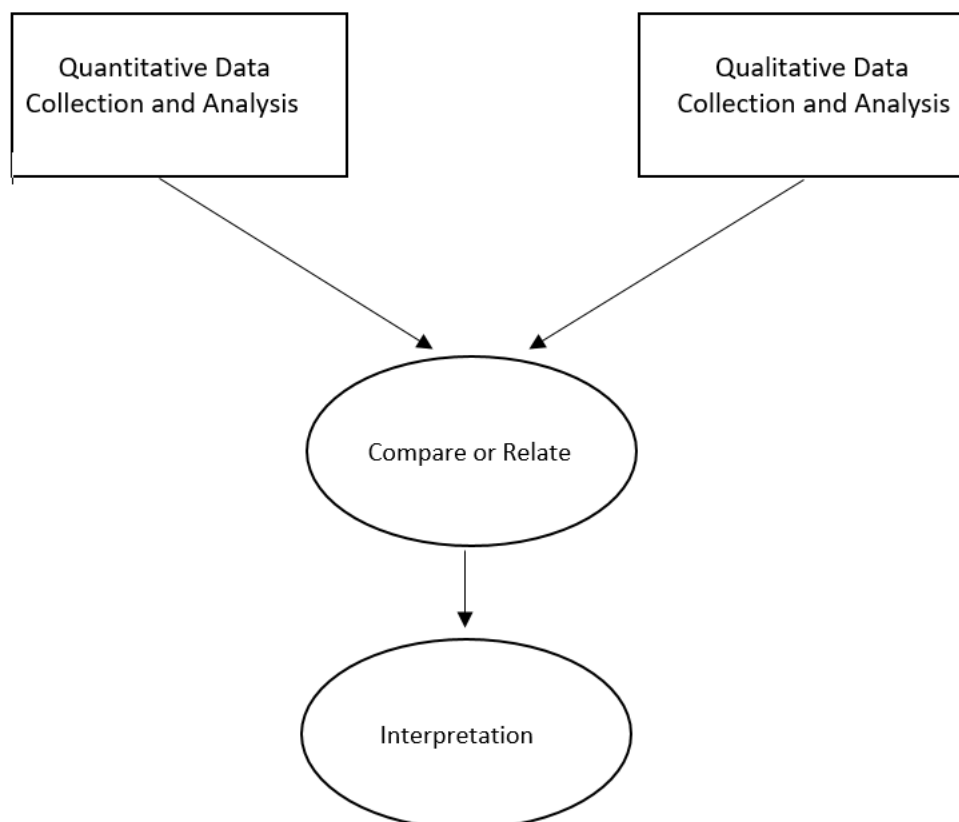


Figure 6 depicts the sequencing of the study using the parallel convergent model (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently. The data sets were analyzed separately. Results were merged and interpreted in combined results.

Research Questions

Results served to determine possible outcomes as they related and answered the following research questions:

1. How does engaging in digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment impact fifth-grade students' motivation to read?
2. How does using a blended learning framework impact teacher cadet beliefs on student reading motivation?
3. To what extent does the use of digital collaborative literacy impact student achievement?

Research Setting

Participants consisted of fifth graders from an elementary school (Site A) and a Teacher Cadet Program at the high school level (Site B). Both educational institutions were in suburban South Carolina.

Site A was a public institution serving students from 4-year old kindergarten through fifth grade with an enrollment of approximately 580 students. According to the South Carolina Department of Education 2016 Report Card, the student-teacher ratio was 23.9 to 1 for the duration of the study. Site A had a 50% poverty index rating with a population consisting of 49% minorities.

Site B was also a public secondary institution serving students in ninth through

12th grades. According to the South Carolina Department of Education 2016 Report Card, at the time of the study, Site B had an enrollment of approximately 1,900 students with a graduation rate of 88.7%.

Participants

Participants at the secondary level were enrolled in a teacher cadet course at the time of the study. A total of 15 preservice teachers participated in the study. All 15 of the students were previously enrolled in the Introduction to Teaching 102 course.

Two classrooms of fifth-grade students participated in the study. Henceforth, the fifth-grade classrooms will be referred to as Class A and Class B; each class having conducted the novel study with the teacher cadets using Canvas. Class A consisted of 22 students; one identified as gifted and talented, and two identified as special education with an individualized education plan. Class A's teacher, Teacher A, was a veteran teacher having obtained a master's degree with 22 years teaching experience. Teacher A was also a National Board certified teacher. Class B's teacher, Teacher B, was a third-year teacher recently having started her postgraduate work for a master's degree. Class B consisted of 20 students; four identified as gifted and talented, and two identified as resource with an individualized learning plan.

Instruments and Materials Used

Data were collected for two groups: teacher cadets and fifth-grade students. Both groups completed a pre- and post-questionnaire and participated in interviews. Data were also collected reflecting fifth-grade student achievement.

MRQ

The MRQ was developed by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997). I obtained permission

to use the questionnaire in the study (Appendix A). Students were asked to rate themselves on 53 items consisting of 11 constructs as they relate to individual motivation to read: reading efficacy (three items), reading challenge (five items), reading curiosity (six items), reading involvement (six items), importance of reading (two items), reading work avoidance (four items), competition in reading (six items), recognition for reading (five items), reading for grades (four items), social reasons for reading (seven items), and compliance (five items). The questionnaire was obtained from the National Reading Research Center. A reliability range from .43 to .81 was reported by Cambria and Guthrie (2010) for the MRQ. Work avoidance and reading for grades had a reliability range of .44 and .43 to .60 and .59 respectively. The remaining nine categories of the questionnaire showed consistent reliabilities ranging from .52 to .81 (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). Cambria and Guthrie's factor analysis showed evidence of construct validity which supported 11 factors for the 53-item MRQ in fourth and fifth graders. A positive correlation from low to moderately high levels was found for the reading motivation aspects of the questionnaire. The MRQ developed by Wigfield and Guthrie has been in published research which explored the multidimensionality of student reading motivation in fourth and fifth grades (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). The MRQ is a valid and reliable tool to monitor change in student reading motivation over time.

TBSMRQ

Quirk et al. (2010) developed the TBSMRQ. Using the MRQ as a foundation, Quirk et al. based the development of the TBSMRQ on Wigfield and Guthrie's (1997) research of the MRQ as the basis of motivation for reading. The 64-item TBSMRQ is aligned with the MRQ's 11 dimensions of reading motivation. However, Quirk et al.

added a 12th subscale, autonomy, with the intent of measuring a teacher's beliefs which serve to nurture student learning. The addition of the autonomy subscale added seven items to the questionnaire. Reliability was determined using a coefficient alpha. The most reliable subscales with internal consistency coefficients greater than .77 included self-efficacy, competition, importance, grades, and autonomy (Figure 7). Recognition and avoidance subscales showed the least amount of reliability; however, this was consistent with the reliability results Wigfield and Guthrie found in the MRQ. Permission for the use of the questionnaire for this study was granted by Dr. Matthew Quirk (Appendix A).

Figure 7

Reliability Coefficients for TBSMRQ

	<i>N</i> (Full)	Alpha (Full)	<i>N</i> (Revised)	Alpha (Revised)	Increase in Alpha
Social	6	.50	3	.85	.35
Compliance	3	.66	2	.79	.13
Importance	2	.82	2	.82	n/a
Self-efficacy	4	.91	4	.91	n/a
Competition	5	.88	5	.88	n/a
Involvement	5	.37	3	.82	.45
Autonomy	7	.78	6	.81	.03
Curiosity	9	.53	7	.81	.28
Grades	6	.80	5	.89	.09
Challenge	6	.53	4	.84	.31
Avoidance ^a	6	.16	6*	.46*	.30
Recognition ^a	5	.32	4*	.60*	.28
TMRQ (total)	64	.90	41	.94	.04

Note. The Avoidance subscale's revision involved the elimination of the reverse scoring for items 59 and 60 but did not include the elimination of any items.

^aSignifies that the Avoidance and Recognition subscales were dropped from all other correlational analyses due to low reliability (thus they are not included in the TBSMRQ total for the revised scale numbers); n/a signifies not applicable.

*Signifies that the subscale was removed from subsequent analyses due to low reliability.

Following the removal of items with a low reliability, the alpha coefficients increased significantly, with revised subscales ranging from .79 to .91 and overall internal consistency increasing from .90 to .94.

Both the MRQ and TBSMRQ were administered with participant responses reflecting a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4. A score of 1 indicated "not at all like me,"

while a score of 4 indicated, “very much like me.”

Pre- and Post-Assessment

A pre- and post-assessment were administered to both groups of fifth-grade students. In order to create a meaningful and valid benchmark, I chose test items from Mastery Connect, a database of item bank questions that directly align with the South Carolina reading standards. Mastery Connect uses the CASE item bank developed by TE21, Incorporated. Item bank questions are developed through an eight-step process (Table 1).

Table 1

TE21 Case Item Bank

Step	Action
1	Item developed and nominated by items writers, all experienced teachers, many with National Board certification
2	Item evaluated by CASE Assessments Senior Managers and Curriculum Specialists for plausible foils, content alignment, appropriate question stem, difficult level rating, and appropriate grade and content vocabulary
3	Multiple grammar and format checks by Editor
4	Partner reviews
5	Final item approved by content area Senior Managers
6	Final format checked by Editor
7	Final quality check
8	Final item submitted for test administration

Equivalent forms of CASE item assessments are administered throughout the year to test reliability and validity. The assessments have on average a 90% predictability of how well students are likely to perform on state tests. The following South Carolina

standards were assessed in both assessments:

Meaning and Context

Standard 5: Determine meaning and develop logical interpretations by making predictions, inferring, drawing conclusions, analyzing, synthesizing, providing evidence, and investigating multiple interpretations.

- 5.1 Quote accurately to analyze the meaning of and beyond the text to support inferences and conclusions.

Range and Complexity

Standard 13: Read independently and comprehend a variety of texts for the purposes of reading for enjoyment, acquiring new learning, and building stamina; reflect on and respond to increasingly complex text over time.

- 13.1 Engage in whole and small group reading with purpose and understanding.
- 13.2 Read independently for sustained periods of time to build stamina.
- 13.3 Read and respond according to task and purpose to become self-directed, critical readers and thinkers.

Standards were chosen based on their application to the unit as it relates to the study as well as the district's identification of the standards as essential. Essential standards have been identified by the school district as those which are nonnegotiable for student learning. In other words, students must have mastered those standards identified as essential before being promoted to the next grade level.

Interview Questions

Interview questions for the fifth-grade students were piloted by a random group of

teachers from Site A to review the questions for clarity and understanding. Interview questions for the teacher cadet population were piloted by students enrolled in the course requirement prior to enrolling in the Teacher Cadet Program, Introduction to Teaching 102 (Appendix B). The interviewer asked respondents additional questions and clarified questions as needed during the interview process. I made adjustments accordingly to the five-question interview. Questions were coded to look for trend data as it related to reading efficacy.

Procedures

As the researcher, I collaborated with principals at the elementary and high school level to identify eligible students to participate in the study. The initial step was collecting participants. I selected participants from a suburban school district. Site A was a sampling of a typical school in the district. Site B participants were chosen based on their background knowledge in the education field as well as their enrollment in the teacher cadet course. At this point, permission from the pool of possible participants (fifth-grade students and high school students) and their parents was obtained. The fifth-grade students completed the pre-assessment (Appendix C) as well as the MRQ (Appendix D), while preservice teachers completed the TBSMRQ (Appendix E) the week prior to beginning the digital literacy study.

The fifth graders chose from a selection of books from the fantasy genre that were preselected by the classroom teacher. Texts were offered on varying levels to accommodate student needs. The online book study followed an alternating schedule of rhetoric between fifth-grade students and teacher cadets.

Respondents used Canvas, the school district's LMS, to conduct the online study.

Canvas allowed students to post in a mixed media format and also allowed for small group interactions between the teacher cadet and fifth graders. Each teacher cadet was assigned two to three fifth-grade students. Students were placed in small groups based on their reading level and same book title choice. Table 2 shows the 4-week schedule used by the participants. Respondents began by posting an introduction of themselves to include a brief history of their reading life. Possible statements about their reading life included their thoughts and feelings about reading, how often they read for pleasure, and their past experiences with reading both instructionally and recreationally. Participants then alternated 2 days of reading the selected novel and predetermined passages with posting and/or responding to teaching points and discussions prompted and facilitated by the teacher cadet. This cycle took place over a 4-week period (Figure 8).

Figure 8

Study Timeline

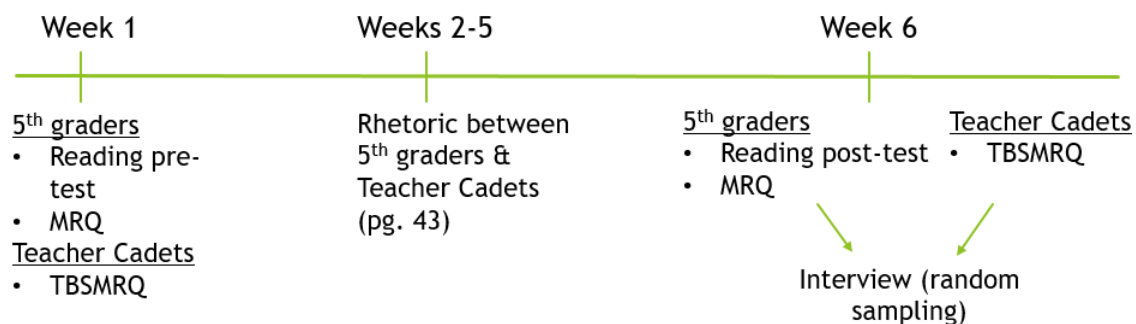


Table 2*Reading Schedule*

Day	Assignment
Day 1	5 th : Introductory Post
Day 2	Teacher Cadet: Introductory Post
Day 3	Reading Selection 5 th : First thoughts
Day 4	Reading Selection
Day 5	Reading Selection Teacher Cadet: Respond to 1 st thoughts and post Teaching Point 1
Day 6	Reading Selection
Day 7	Reading Selection
Day 8	Reading Selection 5 th : Complete teaching point 1
Day 9	Reading Selection
Day 10	Reading Selection Teacher Cadet: Respond to teaching point 1 and post teaching point 2
Day 11	Reading Selection
Day 12	Reading Selection
Day 13	Reading Selection 5 th : Complete teaching point 2
Day 14	Reading Selection
Day 15	Reading Selection Teacher Cadet: Respond to teaching point 2 and post teaching point 3
Day 16	Reading Selection
Day 17	Reading Selection
Day 18	Reading Selection 5 th : Complete teaching point 3
Day 19	Reading Selection
Day 20	Reading Selection Teacher Cadet: Respond to teaching point 3 and post teaching point 4 (this should be a review of the book)
Day 21	5 th : Final Assessment Teacher Cadet: Respond to teaching point 4 and Final Thoughts

In the week following the conclusion of the online collaboration, the fifth graders and teacher cadets completed the MRQ and TBSMRQ respectively. Fifth-grade participants also took the standards-based post-assessment (Appendix F).

Data Analysis

As the purpose of the convergent parallel design was to “obtain different but complementary data on the same topic” (Creswell & Clark, 2011, p. 77), I analyzed data from questionnaires as well as pre- and post-assessments. Interviews were also conducted to determine trends within the study. I chose a mixed methods design to more thoroughly answer the research questions in the study. While the quantitative data allowed me to make assertions that could be applied to the field of education in general, the qualitative data served to identify emerging traits and characteristics that resulted from the study. Student achievement, one aspect of the blended learning model this study examined, is traditionally measured through the analysis of quantitative data; however, student motivation and student engagement are much more subjective in nature. Therefore, I chose to examine both quantitative and qualitative data when determining the outcomes of student motivation and student engagement on a blended learning model using digital collaborative literacy. In order to develop a more complete understanding of the qualitative and quantitative data, Creswell and Clark (2011) recommended comparing and contrasting statistical quantitative results with qualitative findings for “corroboration and validation purposes” (p. 77). I was notified by the instructors when questionnaires and assessments were completed. I collected the pre- and post-data from Sites A and B. Pre- and post-assessment scores were compared to determine a correlation, if any, between the use of digital collaborative literacy and student achievement. Pre- and post-

MRQ scores were used to conclude whether digital collaborative literacy had an impact on fifth graders' motivation to read. The same process was duplicated for the pre- and post-TBSMRQ scores to analyze the use of the blended learning framework as it related to preservice teacher beliefs on reading motivation. *T* tests were run to determine any significances as it related to student motivation and achievement. I chose to use *t* tests in order to find whether a significant difference existed in regards to student achievement (pre and posttest) and student motivation (MRQ and TBSMRQ). The purpose of a paired *t* test is to determine if the dependent variable is affected by the independent variable (Burnham, 2015). In the study, I ran three *t* tests. In all three *t* tests, the independent variable was the 6-week study in which fifth-grade participants interacted with teacher cadets using digital collaborative literacy. The dependent variable for the first *t* test was a pre- and post-assessment used to gauge student achievement. The dependent variables for the other two *t* tests in the study were questionnaires used to determine student motivation. A simple paired *t* test is used when data are collected from the same participants multiple times (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In the case of this study, data were collected before and after the collaborative digital learning experience through a pre and posttest, the MRQ, and the TBSMRQ. Creswell and Creswell (2017) noted the palpability of a paired *t* test over that of an independent group *t* test due to it being more statically valid. Due to these reasons, I chose to use a simple paired *t* test to answer the research questions in the study.

A random sampling of six students using a computer randomization program, three from Site A and three from Site B, were selected to answer interview questions. Participant names were entered into the program which then selected three students based

on my input into the program. I limited the interviewee selection to three respondents from the fifth grade and teacher cadet population for a total of six interviews to be conducted. The selection was largely due to instructional classroom time constraints in conducting the interviews. I recorded and transcribed the interview responses. Saldana (2016) noted that coding is one way of examining qualitative data. Saldana defined coding as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 4). Saldana identified a variety of data collection methods including interviews, which were used in this study. For the purposes of qualitative data analysis, coding is generated by the researcher in order to identify trends, detect patterns, and categorize data (Saldana, 2016). In this study, trends in interview data were analyzed in order to define any tendencies in student motivation and teacher perceptions. Data were coded for the phenomenological study looking for emerging common themes. Findings were reviewed by classroom teachers at Sites A and B in order to determine validity through a member-checking process (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Lincoln and Guba (1986) described member checking as a

process of continuous, informal testing of information by solidifying reactions of respondents to the investigator’s reconstruction of what he or she has been told or otherwise found out and to the constructions offered by other respondents or sources, and a terminal, formal testing of the final care report with a representative sample of stakeholders. (p. 77)

Member-checking assures participant voice is accurate and credible as a qualitative source (Lincoln & Guba, 1986); therefore, the classroom teachers at Sites A and B

engaged in a member-checking process.

Ethical Considerations

Participants in the study included minor children under the age of 18; therefore, I sought IRB approval before conducting the study. Parent and student permission was obtained to allow students to participate in the study. Student names were kept confidential and anonymous. I respected the vulnerability of the study group by seeking informed parental consent for data collected during the study. Accordingly, parents had access to study findings including full disclosure of whether, when, and how results were shared. Internet use during the study was limited to Canvas, the school district's LMS. As the researcher, I managed all multi-media discourse between the teacher cadets and fifth-grade students that took place in Canvas within a private group. I set up the study course module and shared access with the classroom teachers. Administrative school district personnel also had access to the Canvas course as is standard policy with all district Canvas courses.

Limitations

Sample size was a limitation, as the study conducted only examined the responses of students in one fifth-grade classroom and one teacher cadet course. Student fidelity in participating in the novel study was also a limitation. Results from students or preservice teacher participants who did not consistently participate in the novel study but took part in the research study may lead to inaccurate results.

Additionally, participants could have been exposed to external and internal factors that influenced the way questions were perceived and answered. One final aspect to consider is that I was employed as a teacher at one of the site schools. As a result, participants may have felt influenced in their responses.

Delimitations

A delimitation of the study was my decision to use fifth-grade students for the study. I made this decision based on the district's curriculum guide and the ability of the students to navigate Canvas, the district's LMS. Another delimitation was my decision to use the Canvas LMS. The school district in which the study was conducted uses this particular LMS for all district schools.

Summary

Nationally, at the time of the study, states were in the process of passing various legislations in an effort to increase reading achievement; e.g., South Carolina's Read to Succeed Program. As a result, literacy practices nationwide had been under close examination. This study looked at student motivation to read and the resulting levels of achievement as well as teacher perceptions of student motivation to read.

In conclusion, the study examined the level of motivation and achievement in reading through the use of a blended learning framework. The following chapter examines both the qualitative and quantitative results of the study. Pre- and post-assessments identified student achievement results, while pre- and post-MRQ and TBSMRQ scores were analyzed. Qualitative interview data were also examined for emerging trends as they related to the study. Chapter 4 serves to connect the results of the study to the literature and conceptual framework.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between student perceptions regarding student motivation to read and the corresponding effect on student achievement within a blended learning environment. In the modern world, education has recognized the need for students to be problem solvers and critical thinkers. Wong (2007) noted that instructional practices that require students to use higher order thinking skills increase student critical thinking skills. However, motivating students to develop such skills has proven challenging, even perplexing at times for educators. Teachers are often faced with attempting to instructionally compete with more fast-paced surroundings including social media and online gaming. Polochanin (2017) observed the need for meaningful tasks when planning instructionally effective lessons. Simply providing students with the technology is not enough. Motivating students and the corresponding effect on student achievement in a globally technological world are increasingly imperative as educators are tasked with preparing students with college and career-ready skills upon graduation. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does engaging in digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment impact fifth-grade students' motivation to read?
2. How does using a blended learning framework impact teacher cadet beliefs on student reading motivation?
3. To what extent does the use of digital collaborative literacy impact student achievement?

Participants

The participants attended school in a South Carolina district 20 miles south of the metro Charlotte, North Carolina area. Participants at the secondary level were enrolled in a teacher cadet course at the time of the study. A total of 15 preservice teachers participated in the study; however, due to absences and exam schedules, I was only able to use 12 of the teacher cadet responses.

Two classrooms of fifth-grade students participated in the study. The fifth-grade classrooms each conducted the novel study with the teacher cadets using the Canvas LMS platform. One fifth-grade classroom consisted of 22 students, with 20 of those participating in the study. The second fifth-grade classroom consisted of 20 students, with 18 participating in the study. Parents of four students declined participation in the study. The four students were provided with alternative instruction by their classroom teacher. Data were collected for the 38 fifth-grade students participating in the study.

Results for Research Question 1: Student Motivation

How does engaging in digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment impact fifth-grade students' motivation to read? (qualitative/quantitative)
Ho1: There is no statistically significant difference between student motivation to read before and after using digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment.
The results of the survey are represented in Table 3.

Table 3*Results of Paired Sample t Test for MRQ*

	Pre-treatment survey results	Post-treatment survey results
Mean	148.45	146.60
Variance	286.55	290.10
Respondents	42	42
<i>Paired differences</i>		
df	41	
<i>t</i> Stat	0.43	
<i>p</i> value	0.668	

Two fifth-grade classes with a combined total of 38 students participated in the study. Each classroom teacher administered the MRQ 1-2 days before the study began. The questionnaire was administered a second time by the classroom teacher within 2 days of the conclusion of the 6-week study. The pre- and post-MRQ were completed by the fifth graders in their usual literacy block during the school day. Participant responses were reflected on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4. Likert scale responses were added for a total sum and calculated using a paired sample *t* test. When analyzing the pre- and post-survey data, the pre-survey scale scores (M=148.45) compared to the post-survey scale scores (M=146.60) showed the average change in the motivations for reading by the students. The results indicated that the *p* value 0.668 exceeded the *p* value of 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis of having no statistically significant difference can be accepted. There is little evidence to suggest that engaging in digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment impacts fifth-grade students' motivation to read.

Three of the fifth-grade participants were randomly selected from the study group to respond to interview questions. Participants answered a series of six questions. The

questions are listed in Table 4.

Table 4

Interview Questions for Fifth-Grade Participants

Number	Question
1	How do you think about yourself as a reader?
2	After working with your high school buddy, has anything changed about your reading?
3	Describe the interactions you had with your high school buddy.
4	Would you like to participate in a book study again in the same way? Why or why not?
5	In what environment do you most enjoy reading?
6	What did you think about using Canvas to communicate with your college buddy?
7	How did you feel about using different forms of media (technology, paper, books) during the novel study?

I identified student engagement and blended learning model as two overarching categories. Responses from each category are displayed in Tables 5 and 6. Table 5 examines fifth-grade student responses as they related to student engagement.

Table 5*Digital Collaborative Literacy—Student Engagement*

Student responses	Code
I think that, like, I really like to read inside of my head. But when I read out loud I kind of sound like a robot.	Student ownership
I think that I'm a good reader, but I just need to try to read more books because sometimes I'll try to read a book and I just stop.	
I think of myself as a very good reader, because I really love reading my mom's an author so I...there's a lot of reading in my house.	
Yeah, actually I've gotten faster because I had a book, and I could only read like one or two chapters a day and after reading with him [TC], I started to read three or four chapters a day in it.	Student motivation
Yes, I read, I've been reading more books. And I've been trying to learn how to read books. And keep going instead of stop.	
I feel like I've gone into a deeper state of reading like whenever I am reading I feel like I go, I understand the book more...as like I'm in the book.	
Yes. Because I really like how we get to interact with like a high school person, instead of like, middle school or elementary school.	Collaboration
Yeah. [inaudible] because you got to read what other people say and how they feel. And you also got to put what you want.	
Yeah. Because it felt like that I've changed as a reader and that reading has come, like, not as hard as it used to sometimes.	Student motivation
Like if I really had one of these, I would like to have a tree house. Like in a forest that I would have like a certain pathway to go there and read like the Captain Underpants creators, they had a treehouse like all that cool stuff so I would like get that kind of treehouse that's cool.	Agency
There is like a table in our class...there. All right.	Compliance
I think I enjoy reading either sometimes outside, and like on a porch or something, or like in my bedroom with, like, some nice piano music and stuff.	Agency

Several themes emerged in the student engagement portion of the interview including the fifth-grade student perceptions of their motivation, collaboration, agency,

and compliance. The most frequent answers among respondents involved student motivation and agency. The responses in both categories were positive with participants acknowledging the desire to read ahead of the assignment and create environments for themselves to “enjoy [the] reading” experience. One student, however, did not have a sense of engagement but a level of compliance at having to sit at a table in the classroom and noting it was “all right,” yet the majority of responses were favorable in regard to the use collaborative digital literacy within a blended learning framework.

Table 6 serves to analyze data of fifth-grade student perceptions of a blended learning model.

Table 6*Digital Collaborative Literacy—Blended Learning Model*

Student responses	Code
<p>We had like conversations about what like specific parts of the book that made us really think about it. And we had to remember, and I liked it when he was like, I forgot what I think, so he would just like answer back to our answers like so we answered his question. And then he would answer, like say, 'good job' or 'I really like what you said there'. And I really like being good.</p> <p>We really only really talked about the setting. Or like, what...how did you feel about the book? Just what kind of question she'd ask us.</p> <p>Um, it was really good communication, we talked about...Okay, we talked about, like. how the book was and how like what we liked about the book, and a lot of stuff.</p>	Discourse (Student and cadet)
<p>It was a little difficult but it would have been way more difficult if we didn't, if it didn't have its own little thing. I liked the discussion box. Yeah, but I would rather have like something like on the launch pad. It would be a little app that you could click on. It was a reading buddies button, you know, that would be a little bit easier.</p> <p>Yeah, because you like, because all you had to do was like press on your reading course.</p>	Ownership
<p>It was an experience. It was very nice. It was very good it was like, easy responding. Nothing really hard about it, nothing bad about it.</p>	Discourse
<p>I like all that because you wouldn't have something like a paper to keep up with to see what pages you're supposed to read. Just be on your laptop which you could easily keep up with because you take it home, bring it back to school. It is pretty simple.</p> <p>I feel good. Good. My laptop because it keeps me organized.</p>	Ownership
<p>I feel like it's easier now. That it's just like we can communicate on our computers, write down like, notes about our book and everything. That. like, we read in the book...you can read it electronically or you can read it in a book if you prefer...either way.</p>	Personalized learning

Discourse and personalized learning were emerging themes for using the blended learning model. The fifth-grade participants liked the discourse with the teacher cadets using the LMS. Several responses mentioned the positive reinforcement and

encouragement they received from the teacher cadets in regard to the reading.

Student ownership emerged as a cross-categorical theme among interviewees with responses noting a variety of ways to adapt or adjust their learning to enhance the overall experience. The majority of interviewees felt they were actively engaged in their learning during the study.

Results for Research Question 2: Teacher Cadet Perceptions

How does using a blended learning framework impact teacher cadet beliefs on student reading motivation? (qualitative/quantitative) Ho1: There is not a statistically significant difference between teacher beliefs about student motivation to read before and after using digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment. The results of the survey are represented in Table 7.

Table 7

Results of Paired Sample t Test TBSMRQ

	Pre-treatment survey results	Post-treatment survey results
Mean	241.42	258.58
Variance	303.54	672.45
Respondents	12	12
<i>Paired differences</i>		
df	11	
<i>t</i> Stat	-1.73	
<i>p</i> value	0.112	

The teacher cadet class with a total of 12 students participated in the study. The classroom teacher administered the TBSMRQ 1-2 days before the study began. The questionnaire was administered a second time by the classroom teacher within 2 days of the conclusion of the 6-week study. The pre- and post-TBSMRQ were completed by the

teacher cadets in their usual teacher cadet course block during the school day. Participant responses were reflected on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7. Likert scale responses were added for a total sum and calculated using a paired sample *t* test. When analyzing the pre- and post-survey data, the pre-survey scale scores (M=241.42) compared to the post-survey scale scores (M=258.58) showed the average change in perception of student motivation to read by the teacher cadets. The results indicated that the *p* value 0.112 exceeded the *p* value of 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis of having no statistically significant difference can be accepted. There is little evidence to suggest that the use of a blended learning framework impacts teacher cadet beliefs on student motivation to read.

Three teacher cadet participants were randomly selected from the study group to respond to interview questions. Participants answered a series of six questions. The questions are listed Table 8.

Table 8*Interview Questions for Teacher Cadet Participants*

Number	Question
1	What were your perceptions about students' motivation to read before you started the study about reading instruction?
2	Now that the study is over, what are your perceptions of teaching students to read?
3	During the book study, you were in the teaching role. What aspects do you feel strengthened your future career as a classroom teacher?
4	What area(s) do you feel were an area of growth for you as a pre-service teacher?
5	How do you feel that digital collaborative literacy contributed to the motivation of the students?
6	Do you think the use of a blended learning model affected student responses during the novel study?

I identified instruction, growth, and blended learning model as overarching categories. Responses from each category are displayed in Tables 9, 10, and 11. Table 9 is coded for those responses applying to the area of instruction.

Table 9*Digital Collaborative Literacy—Instruction*

Teacher cadet responses	Code
I wanted to get them to explain things to me better and have a better understanding, like when they wrote it.	Teacher expectation
So like before we started. I think students should be very motivated to read because reading is a really big, important part of education. I grew up reading all the time and I feel like it's made me. It helps with spelling. It helps with comprehension. I just think reading's overall is pretty good.	Student motivation
Um, I felt like most students, it's kind of self-motivated. It just depends on the student, I felt it's not something you can really generalize. I feel like some students are more open to it because they like it. And then you have some students where they may not like it as much, but they're just naturally self-motivated.	
Okay, I had to change my wording because some of them didn't really understand and they would like... setting when they asked about the setting and they did not understand and I had to explain. Like in the description like in the...when I was asked, so you had to like go back and make sure that I explained what I meant.	Personalized learning
I would say still pretty much the same thing. I noticed that with my study...some of the students giving pretty short answers. Or I would say...I would ask a question and then I would ask why. And only some of them will answer the 'why?' part. So I think reading is still important but just getting deeper into the questions and the meaning of the reading.	
Um, it was fun. It's a lot more difficult than things that I've done before because I work with kids on a day-to-day basis. So I think teaching is probably one of the most difficult things...like teaching how to read and stuff like that and talking about your books. So one of the most difficult things that I've had to kind of like teach them feel like that's kind of one of those things. They either got it or they don't. If they don't know, you got to put a lot of effort into getting them caught up on it.	

Several questions in the interview process focused on instruction. Emerging

themes included teacher expectations and student motivation. One teacher cadet explained a desire for the students to respond with a better understanding of the text. In turn, student motivation was an individualized process; while some students seemed intrinsically motivated, others did not. One respondent believed the level of student motivation directly correlated to the student's reading comprehension level.

The category of growth among the teacher cadets is coded in Table 10.

Table 10*Digital Collaborative Literacy—Growth (Teacher Cadet)*

Teacher cadet responses	Code
My, like I said, with explaining...like...I will make...okay, in the future that I explain more carefully. Okay when given directions and when asking questions.	Self-efficacy
I felt like I learned...it made, it made me think also because I had to come up with the questions and I'm not usually on that end of coming up with a question. So it made me think about questions and to just kind of prepare me for that in the future because I do want to be a teacher so I do have to start asking myself questions and getting myself prepared for it.	
I think overall just the relationship standpoint. My...that's my favorite part of teaching is being able to not only just be a teacher, but teach them about things outside of the classroom as well. I feel like if you're able to have a solid relationship with your students, they're going to be excited about learning and about what you bring to the table for them.	Building relationships
I'd like to do better with that, even better so that I can understand how they learned.	Self-efficacy
I feel like it makes you more comfortable. Just getting like the hands on experience because like teaching's hard. Like having students that you're responsible for, their education and their growth in the classroom, that's hard. Like there's not a handbook that's like, okay, you have to do this, this and that. You have your standards and you just gotta roll with it. So I think hands-on experience is the best because it's hard being like in the classroom. You're like, okay, this is 100% my responsibility and having other people like trust you with that is hard.	Personalized learning

Questions were embedded within the teacher cadet interview that asked them to examine their own level of growth from the study. Participation in the study was the first time the cadets were placed in the role of teacher. As a result, self-efficacy emerged as an overarching theme in the area of growth. Participants noted “understanding how [students] learn” and being self-aware of their own level of questioning were imperative

to guiding the fifth graders to reach higher levels of thinking in their reading.

Table 11 serves to examine teacher cadet perceptions of using a blended learning model.

Table 11

Digital Collaborative Literacy—Blended Learning Model

Teacher cadet responses	Code
I think it worked very well. And I can remember notifications and stuff like that.	Organization
I think it works pretty well. They seem to enjoy it, like you said, and it's just something different than sort of doing like a face to face thing. It's just a different experience for both of us.	Authentic learning experiences
I feel like it was fun. It was kind of like having a pen pal. But at the same time, I'm really like traditional, I like more like on paper kind of stuff. So just because we were able to actually be in the classroom with them. I feel like it definitely served a purpose. But I do like more so like face to face interactive relationship.	
Like having someone new. Yeah, that was helpful to them. It was good.	Organization
I think so, because some students might act different with me than they would with their teacher...give me different answers. So that's, I felt like that's definitely affected it and the whole technology thing. That's kind of a new thing. I think it affected it in a positive way, because it was something different.	Authentic learning experiences
I think it's good for them because some students...not because anything bad about the teacher or the student, but some students and teacher just don't really blend well. Whether it's just learning style, or whatever it could be. And I feel like bringing variety to them is like good, especially at this age because it also teaches them once they get older, they're going to have different teachers and they're going to be taught different ways. And so open set up to them early on. I feel like they're more excited about it. They're not like, Oh, God, I have to do this with the same teacher all the time. It's like, yeah, I get to make a new friend and see how they want to do it too. So I think, like, they probably liked it better too.	Building relationships

Within the category of blended learning, authentic learning experiences were prevalent among respondents. The teacher cadet participants felt the use of technology enriched the reading experience for the fifth-grade students. One teacher cadet compared the experience to that of a pen pal noting the similarities and differences using collaborative digital literacy and face-to-face instruction. Organization also appeared as a theme from the interviews. The teacher cadets stated the use of an LMS helped organize both themselves and the fifth graders with a central location to find assignment components including reminders, discussion boards, and lessons.

I examined all three areas of instruction, growth, and blended learning as a larger group to determine any reoccurring themes. Overall, the theme of personalized learning was most prevalent in teacher cadet responses. In the context of personalized learning, teacher cadets noted the value in a targeted approach to reading emphasizing instruction based on student strengths, needs, interests, and skills. Another cross-categorical theme that emerged was building relationship. Teacher cadets cited the need for a relationship to be established in order for students to think critically about their reading.

Results for Research Question 3: Student Achievement

To what extent does the use of digital collaborative literacy impact student achievement? (quantitative) Ho1: There is a statistically significant difference between teacher beliefs about student motivation to read before and after using digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment. The results of the survey are represented in Table 12.

Table 12*Results of Paired Sample t Test Student Achievement Test*

	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	48.42	62.24
Variance	605.55	307.70
Respondents	38	38
<i>Paired differences</i>		
df	37	
<i>t</i> Stat	-4.06	
<i>p</i> value	0.0002	

Two fifth-grade classes with a combined total of 38 students participated in the study. Each classroom teacher administered the pretest 1-2 days before the study began. The posttest was administered by the classroom teachers within 2 days of the conclusion of the 6-week study. Items on both the pre and posttests were populated using the Mastery Connect CASE item bank. Both assessments were given during their usual literacy block in the school day. When analyzing the pre and posttest data, the pretest scores ($M=48.42$) compared to the posttest scores ($M=62.24$) showed the average growth made by the students. The results indicated that the p value 0.002 did not exceed the p value of 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis of having no statistically significant difference can be rejected. There is strong evidence that digital collaborative literacy has a positive impact on student achievement.

Qualitative Data Analysis and Triangulation

As the researcher, I conducted face-to-face interviews with the fifth-grade and teacher cadet participants at the conclusion of the study. Interviews were conducted following the interview protocol as outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2017). Creswell

and Creswell referred to Tesch's (1990) Eight Steps in the Coding Process when analyzing qualitative data. The eight steps are listed in Table 13.

Table 13

Tesch's Eight Steps in the Coding Process

Question	Step
1	Get a sense of the whole. Read all the transcriptions carefully. Perhaps jot down some ideas as they come to mind as while reading.
2	Pick one interview. Go through it, asking, "What is this about?" Do not think about the substance of the information but it's underlying meaning. Write thought in the margin.
3	Completed this task for several participants, make a list of all topics. Cluster together similar topics. Form these topics into columns.
4	Now take the list and go back to the data. Abbreviate topics as codes and write codes next to the appropriate segments of the text.
5	Find the most descriptive wording for the topics and turn them into categories. Look for ways of reducing the total list of categories by grouping topics that relate to each other.
6	Make a final decision on the abbreviation for each category in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.
7	If necessary, recode existing data. (pp. 142-149)

Following the eight-step process, I noted several emerging codes. I developed a codebook based on the information collected from the participants. Common themes were highlighted and defined as collaborative digital literacy related to a blended learning environment. I defined coded terms in Table 14.

Table 14*Quantitative Codebook*

Word	Definition
Ownership	Learners actively engage in the learning process.
Student motivation	A students' intuitive curiosity to connect their learning experiences.
Discourse	Conversation that takes place among learners and educators to transfer knowledge.
Agency	Learners initiate and control the learning experience.
Collaboration	Learners working among peers to enhance the learning process.
Compliance	Students are not actively engaged in the learning process, instead they are completing an activity in order to finalize the task.
Personalized learning	A targeted learning approach which customizes instruction based on student strengths, needs, interests, and skills.
Self-efficacy	The learner's belief in their ability to succeed at a given task.
Building relationships	Educators connecting with students on a personal level in order create sense of safety and support for the learner. In turn, the learner will increase his/her potential to engage in the learning process.
Organization	The process of grouping materials and instruction to meet the learner's needs.
Authentic learning experiences	The use of instructional strategies to connect learners with real-world skills and problem-solving abilities.

Data were triangulated “to build a coherent justification for themes” (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 201). Using the TBSMRQ, MRQ, and interviews questions, I examined common trends among questions and corresponding answers within the

parameters and definitions of a blended learning framework as discussed in Chapter 2. The pre- and post-survey Likert scale results were analyzed for both the TBSMRQ and MRQ for the purpose of “converging several sources of data” (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 201) to solidify “the validity of the study” (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 201).

Summary

Educators continue to seek a balanced and progressive view of student learning while incorporating modern technology skills with traditional face-to-face instruction. Blended learning environments may serve to offer such an approach. Through the use of digital collaborative literacy, student motivation and achievement may increase. Research showed that teacher perceptions of student motivation may also be influenced through the implementation of a blended learning environment. Student and teacher perceptions of motivation to read were analyzed through the use of interview questions and questionnaires, while student achievement was measured using pre- and post-assessments. The data were collected and analyzed to determine if a blended learning environment had any significant effects on student reading motivation.

My interpretation of the findings are examined in Chapter 5. Limitations of the study are discussed as well as implications for practice. I determined recommendations for further study as it applies knowledge from the literature review in conclusion of the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

Anthony (2019) stated,

Technology has revolutionized innumerable aspects of our lives. There are very few industries that remain undisrupted by radical technological innovations, but one that has not changed nearly as much as others is education. Blended learning is an innovative model of education that combines the best of face-to-face instruction...with adaptive technology to give students a more personalized learning experience. (p. 1)

With the dawn of the 21st century, technology has cemented itself as a global mainstay. Educators, however, continue to search for a balance between preparing students for a marketable future while integrating face-to-face instruction.

Critical-thinking skills must include not only technology but a traditional problem solving approach as well. Researchers have theorized as to whether a blended learning framework may provide the balance for which education is so desperately searching (Topor, 2017).

This study sought to determine whether the use of digital collaborative learning, as it applies to literacy, within a blended learning environment would have any corresponding effects on student motivation and achievement. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does engaging in digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment impact fifth-grade students' motivation to read?
2. How does using a blended learning framework impact teacher cadet beliefs on

student reading motivation?

3. To what extent does the use of digital collaborative literacy impact student achievement?

This chapter discusses the results of the study, implications for educational practice, limitations within the study, and recommendations for further research. I offer a reflection and conclusion of the study with a summary of my findings.

Discussion of Results

For the purpose of this mixed methods study, qualitative and quantitative data were collected to determine any effects digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment had on student motivation and achievement. Quantitative data were analyzed using paired *t* tests, while qualitative data were coded for themes and compared to the quantitative data in order to triangulate the data.

Research Question 1: How Does Engaging in Digital Collaborative Literacy in a Blended Learning Environment Impact Fifth-Grade Students' Motivation To Read?

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to answer the first research question. The quantitative data did not show a significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between the pre- and post-study Likert scale questionnaire, MRQ. Based on the results of the questionnaire, students did not perceive their reading motivation to be affected when using digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment at the conclusion of the study; however, student motivation and ownership were prevalent themes that emerged during the interviews I conducted among three randomly selected fifth graders after the study concluded. All three fifth-grade interviewees noted they enjoyed the LMS

platform for discourse with their teacher cadet. Interviewees also shared positive experiences of their learning with instructors (teacher cadets), not their regular classroom teacher. Although interview data would appear to be in direct conflict with questionnaire data, several factors may have contributed to this discrepancy. The MRQ is a pre-scripted set of questions with answers tallied on a Likert scale. The lack of explanation and discourse on the questionnaire may have led students to interpret questions differently. In completing the MRQ, fifth-grade participants were self-assessing their motivation to read. As defined by Brown and Harris (2013), self-assessment is “a descriptive and evaluative act carried out by the student concerning his or her own work and academic abilities” (p. 368). Research has shown that when students are asked to self-assess their own learning, they tend to underestimate their academic abilities (Andrade, 2019). Based on the quantitative data, participants did not internalize a shift in their motivation to read. Transversally, the qualitative data indicated increased levels of engagement and overall enthusiasm for reading in a blended learning environment. This key finding reflects Schlechty’s (2001) research in which engagement actively requires the learner to not only be present but also to be aware.

Connection to Previous Research

As discussed in the literature review, completing the task is not enough; completing the task with “enthusiasm and diligence” (Schlechty, 2001, p. 64) constitutes authentic and active engagement. Ryan and Deci’s (2000) self-determination theory asserts varying degrees of motivation in a learner. Saed and Zyngier (2012) took Schlechty’s (2001) and Ryan and Deci’s research a step further by examining the interrelationship between engagement and motivation. Saed and Zyngier determined that

a student who is not motivated will most likely not engage in the task, while a student who is intrinsically motivated and sees the value of the task is authentically and actively engaged. The qualitative results of this study indicate an increased level of engagement and enthusiasm for reading.

Research Question 2: How Does Using a Blended Learning Framework Impact Teacher Cadet Beliefs on Student Reading Motivation?

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to answer the second research question. The quantitative data did not show a significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between the pre- and post-study Likert scale TBSMRQ. Based on the results of the questionnaire, the teacher cadets did not perceive the fifth-grader student reading motivation to be affected when using digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment at the conclusion of the study. Limited prior exposure in the teacher role may have influenced cadet responses to the questionnaire. The Teacher Cadet Program itself is viewed as a first step in teacher recruitment, as the majority of students enrolled believe their decision to choose to enter the teaching profession was largely based on relationships forged during their enrollment in the program (Lewis, 2014). Cadet perceptions were most likely based on their own academic experiences which involved little, if any, knowledge of a blended learning environment; however, personalized learning, authentic learning experiences, and self-efficacy emerged as the top three prevalent themes during the interviews I conducted among three randomly selected teacher cadets after the study concluded. Reading motivation and social relationships have been determined to play a critical role in student reading development (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). Given the results of the interview data, the teacher cadets felt that the use of digital collaborative literacy in

a blended learning environment served to provide students with an individualized, targeted focus on reading instruction.

Connection to Previous Research

The teacher cadets believed the discourse with their fifth-grade counterparts was an instructionally useful tool which allowed for flexibility and personalization of reading comprehension skills. Tucker et al.'s (2017) research determined that student agency is the process by which learners are given the opportunity to participate in key decisions in their learning experience. As discussed in the literature review, Tucker et al. determined the blended learning design facilitates learning by providing both individual and collaborative opportunities. The interviews with the teacher cadets served to affirm the use of collaboration while engaging in digital literacy.

Research Question 3: To What Extent Does the Use of Digital Collaborative Literacy Impact Student Achievement?

A significant difference ($p < 0.05$) existed between the pre and posttest scores of the fifth-grade students. Both assessments were generated from the CASE item bank in the Mastery Connect program. The items selected for both the pre- and post-assessments were of equal rigor and focused on the identified South Carolina curriculum standards. The results of the data would support Marzano et al. (2001) findings that no one instructional strategy in isolation affects student achievement, but rather a combination of several strategies. This study used a variety of research strategies identified by Marzano et al. including cooperative learning, providing feedback, reinforcing effort, and providing recognition. Taylor et al. (2002) also noted that the more “active cognitive processes” (p. 5) students experience, the higher the level of achievement. The data from

the study support Taylor et al.'s research, as participant pretest and posttest scores showed a significant difference, with student levels of achievement having increased at the conclusion of the study.

Connection to Previous Research

The quantitative results supported the conceptual framework for the study. While a significant amount of research existed studying student motivation to read (e.g., Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000) and its subsequent effect on achievement, further research was needed to determine teaching practices that may positively affect student outcomes. The results of the study indicate a positive correlation between the use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment and student achievement. Hattie (2015) affirmed that everyone needs to work collectively to improve student achievement. The blended learning framework provided a model by which students are able to communicate, collaborate, think critically, create, and adapt in a flexible learning environment in which teacher and student efficacy is vital. Similarly, Dziuban et al. (2018) recognized that due to its flexibility, the blended learning environment allows educators to maximize positive educational outcomes.

Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura's (1999) social cognitive theory asserted that people learn through observing others' behaviors and attitudes as they relate to their cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. Such modeling of these behaviors occurs within four necessary conditions: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. This study focused primarily on the motivational aspect of social cognitive theory. Developing a learner's self-efficacy technologically has become equally important to developing those more

traditional learning skills. This “symbolic modeling” (Bandura, 1999, p. 25), or behaviors that are portrayed through electronic media, allows learners to transcend the boundaries of their own environment. This study served to transcend those boundaries by partnering fifth graders with teacher cadets in reading; two groups which would not have come together instructionally in a more traditional classroom setting. Each grouping consisted of one teacher cadet paired with three to four fifth-grade students. During the interview portion of the study, both groups mentioned the authentic and nontraditional learning experience of engaging in discourse for the book study. One fifth grader noted the modeling by the teacher cadet with comments like, “I really like what you said there.” An online discussion would then ensue. The fifth graders had a positive response to the teacher cadets modeling the strategy of talking about their reading. Qualitative and quantitative data showed that the observed partnership served to increase student engagement, motivation, and achievement.

Pandemic Impact

For 21st century learners, technology and electronic mass media are no longer cutting edge but necessary tools required for learning and succeeding in current environments. The case for the partnering of education and technology was made clear with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic did not directly affect the results of the study, as the study was completed before the schools participating were quarantined. However, as schools across the country began to shut down, the study became increasingly relevant. As American education grappled with continuing to educate our children while no longer having access to the traditional face-to-face model, educators were forced to quickly learn how to transform instruction to a completely

technological model (Young, 2020). This sudden shift in the spring of 2020, led many educators to one conclusion: A traditional model was not preparing our students for a technology-based, critical-thinking world; and a strictly technological instructional model was not providing students with targeted, hands-on learning experiences (Selingo & Silagadze, 2021). The hybrid models adopted by some districts, including the district where the study was completed, appeared to hold a potential answer: the blended learning model (Selingo & Silagadze, 2021). Indeed, the study's use of a blended learning model proved relevant for such unprecedented times. The shift in education brought on by the pandemic is most likely here to stay (Young, 2020). The results of this study can serve to inform future practice for the use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment.

Implications for Practice

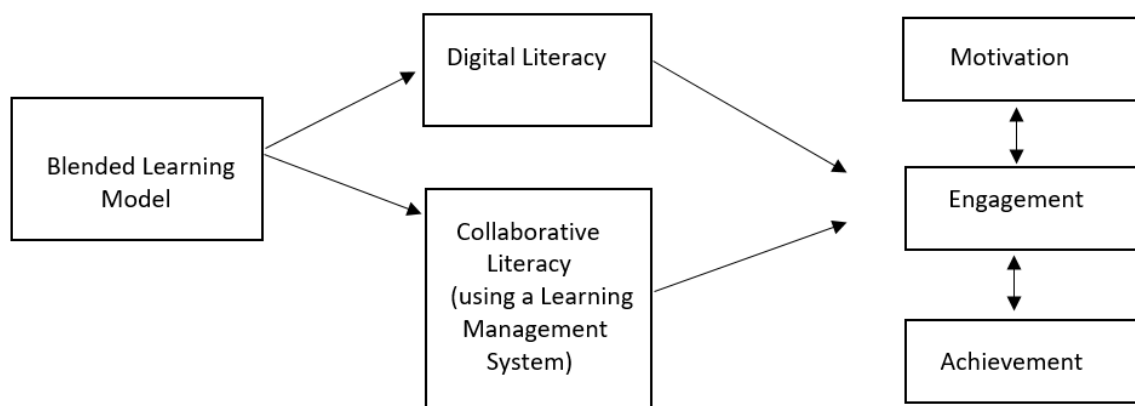
The major finding that emerged at the conclusion of the study was the quantitative data from the study which showed a significant difference in participant pretest and posttest scores, with student levels of achievement having increased at the conclusion of the study. Although the quantitative data did not show a significant difference in the students' motivations to read or the teacher cadets' perceptions in student motivations to read, interview data would suggest generalizations be made in regards to student motivation and engagement. Additional findings from the student interviews indicated increased levels of engagement and overall enthusiasm for reading in a blended learning environment. A second additional finding of the qualitative data from the teacher cadet interviews suggested the teacher cadets believed the use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment served to provide students with an individualized,

targeted focus on reading instruction.

In reference to the conceptual framework, the study would suggest that the use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning model has an effect on student engagement, teacher beliefs in regard to reading instruction, and student achievement.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



In taking a second look at the conceptual framework, it is important to be reminded of key components related to the study. A blended learning model incorporates brick-and-mortar facilities with online learning. Both the teacher cadets and the fifth-grade participants attended instruction in their respective schools; however, the digital collaborative learning portion of the study required the use of an online learning management system. The study worked to determine the subsequent effects on student motivation, student engagement, and student achievement. Each category is analyzed below. It is important to note the components of the original conceptual model as other factors emerged, and a revised conceptual framework was created based on the results of the study.

Student Engagement

Based on the findings from student interview data, emerging codes showed an increase in student motivation and agency. Students felt a blended learning environment had a positive effect on their motivation to read; therefore, implications for practice would suggest students are more actively engaged in reading when immersed in a blended learning environment. In a true blended learning environment, “the online and face-to-face components work together to deliver an integrated course...with some element of student control” (Horn & Staker, 2014, p. 35). It is this integration of modalities and level of student control that differentiate blended learning from traditional learning, resulting in increased levels of student engagement (Horn & Staker, 2014).

Instruction

The teacher cadet interview data suggested when assuming the teacher role, the cadets believed they were able to provide targeted instruction in reading when utilizing a blended learning model. Research has shown that personalized, targeted instruction has a direct effect on student achievement (Hattie, 2015). It can be asserted that an increase in professional development for teachers in regard to a blended learning model will in turn translate to a shift in instruction and subsequently increase student achievement (Holloway, 2006).

Student Achievement

Major findings in the study were the quantitative results regarding student achievement. The pre and posttest scores of the fifth-grade students showed a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) existed. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between student perceptions regarding student motivation to read and the corresponding

effect on student achievement within a blended learning environment. Results indicate that an increase in student achievement in reading was the outcome of an increase in student motivation while utilizing a blended learning model. Student achievement being at the forefront of much educational research as achievement scores ultimately show student growth in learning, implications for practice indicate a blended learning model having a positive effect on student growth and achievement in reading. As discussed in the literature review, Murphy et al. (2014) recognized that in the emerging field of blended learning, many different conceptualizations exist. Therefore, blended learning has been identified as including the following components: teaching and learning within a formal educational program; students learn at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction; students have some level of control over time, pace, path, and/or pace of instruction; and part or all of instruction is delivered away from home in a supervised, brick-and-mortar location. Initial findings of the Murphy et al. study showed a positive correlation between the use of a blended learning environment and student achievement. The researchers cautioned, however, that due to blended learning models being in their infancy, further study is necessary to determine the effectiveness of using such a model. This study's results supported Murphy et al.'s findings of the relationship between a blended learning model and student achievement. Professional development on the components of a blended learning model and training on implementation within the classroom environment are key. A shift in classroom practices utilizing these components would serve to have a positive impact on student learning.

The findings from the three research questions indicate a positive correlation on the effects of collaborative digital literacy in a blended learning environment. While the

quantitative results of the MRQ and TBSMRQ did not show a significant difference in student motivations in reading, I believe it is important to create a common language among educators and students in an ever-changing digital age. Research has shown that targeted, research-based professional development for educators has a direct impact on student learning in the classroom. Holloway (2006) noted that professional development is a key component in the process and will, in turn, translate to students in the classroom. The teacher cadets at the entry level of preservice teaching had limited experience with professional development as a learning tool to improve instructional practice. As a result of this limitation, the cadets noted a need for strategies and methods to help guide instruction more effectively. As the researcher, I found the teacher cadets to be intrigued yet uncomfortable assuming the teacher role as they still maintained student status at the high school level.

Teacher and student awareness of digital learning competencies would also serve to create a common digital vocabulary and expectations. The South Carolina Department of Education established Digital Literacy Process Standards in 2017. The standards are outlined in Table 15.

Table 15*South Carolina Digital Literacy Process Standards*

Standard and sub-standards	Competency
1	<p>Foster an inclusive computing culture</p> <p>Recognize that equitable access to computing benefits society as a whole.</p> <p>Consider others' perspectives as well as one's own perspective when developing computational solutions.</p> <p>Consider the needs of a variety of end users regarding accessibility and usability.</p>
2	<p>Collaborate around computing</p> <p>Select appropriate technological tools that can be used to collaborate on a project.</p> <p>Collaborate productively with individuals of varying perspectives, skills, and backgrounds.</p> <p>Set and implement equitable expectations and workloads when working in teams.</p> <p>Integrate constructive feedback while working in teams.</p>
3	<p>Recognize, define, and analyze computational problems</p> <p>Recognize when it is appropriate to solve a problem computationally.</p> <p>Make sense of computational problems and persevere in solving them.</p> <p>Relate computational problems to prior knowledge.</p> <p>Recognize that there may be multiple approaches to solving a problem.</p> <p>Approach problem solving iteratively, using a cyclical process.</p>
4	<p>Compute, test, and refine computational artifacts</p>

(continued)

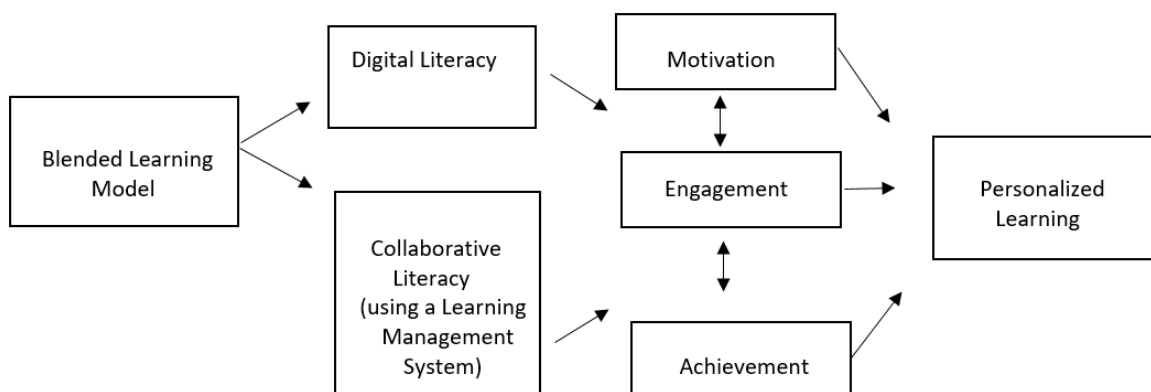
Standard and sub-standards	Competency
	<p>Consider the purpose of computational artifacts for practical use, personal expression, and/or societal impact.</p> <p>Recognize when to use the same solution for multiple problems.</p> <p>Test computational artifacts systematically by considering multiple scenarios and using test cases.</p> <p>Approach troubleshooting systematically.</p> <p>Consider performance, reliability, usability, and accessibility when evaluating and refining computational artifacts.</p>
5	<p>Communicate about computing</p> <p>Select and use appropriate technological tools to convey solutions to computing problems.</p> <p>Communicate about computational processes and solutions using appropriate terminology consistent with the intended audience and purpose.</p> <p>Articulate ideas responsibly by observing intellectual property rights and giving appropriate attribution.</p>

The standards were published in December 2018 as part of the South Carolina Digital Learning Plan. In the plan, the importance of professional development was emphasized as “key for successful implementation of a digital learning plan. It must be ongoing, embedded in the context of the district, differentiated for a wide range of experiences, and extend beyond classroom teachers” (Albert, 2018, p. 28). The plan also encouraged school- and district-level coaches, administrators, and classroom teachers needing to have expertise with digital learning to participate in continuing professional development. Action steps included pilot programs for alternative instruction implemented throughout the state for the 2019-2020 school year. Due to the shutdown in

March 2020 as a result of COVID-19, the implementation of potential alternative programs stalled. However, as a result of the shutdown and subsequent hybrid models of instruction implemented for the 2020-2021 school year, the blended learning framework combining virtual and face-to-face instruction has become a more widespread instructional practice. Holloway (2006) noted that “professional development centered on student achievement goals is meaningful to teachers, enabling them to base their instructional decisions on solid evidence of what students need” (p. 41). Such targeted professional development would ensure success for all students (Holloway, 2006). Implications for practice indicate that while teachers may have a more thorough understanding of a blended learning model, additional professional development would be beneficial to train teachers on effective instructional practices in regard to the use of digital collaborative literacy.

Revised Conceptual Framework

As a result of the findings of the study, a revised conceptual framework emerged. While two key findings supported the initial conceptual framework of the study, one finding resulted in an addition to the original framework: The use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment served to provide students with an individualized, targeted focus on reading instruction (Figure 9).

Figure 9*Revised Conceptual Framework*

The primary focus of the study revolved around a blended learning environment which combined face-to-face instruction with online methodologies. In examining the qualitative data, the theme of personalized learning emerged. Interview respondents noted several key components of a personalized learning model within the constructs of instruction and student growth. Much like blended learning models, personalized learning models are in their infancy. Many iterations of the elements required to constitute a personalized learning model exist; however, a few key components remain steady including targeted instruction, data-driven decision, flexible content and tools, and student reflection and ownership (Johns, 2018). Indeed, the South Carolina Office of Personalized Learning (2016) centered their framework around learning pathways, learner profiles, and flexible learning environments with student ownership at the cyclical core. Both teacher cadet and fifth-grade interviewees responded positively to the flexibility in learning the study offered. The teacher cadets noted the ability to provide formative feedback, thereby allowing for more targeted and data-driven instruction. Fifth-grade respondents felt they had choice and voice within the study, which provided them with a sense of ownership in regards to their learning.

The revised framework acknowledges the partnership that can exist between a blended model and personalized learning. Based on the results of the study, the blended learning model served as the vehicle by which student motivation, engagement, and achievement positively impacted student learning using digital collaborative literacy. The results led to a more personalized experience for the students.

Limitations

Limiting factors existed within the study that affect the transferability of the results of this study to other studies on digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment. The study did not include a control group to compare to the experimental group's data. Two fifth-grade classrooms were used in the study. Each classroom teacher continued teaching their usual units of study as outlined by the curriculum guide for the duration of the study. A control group would have helped to determine if classroom teacher instruction affected the outcome of student achievement data. The study does not account for any additional instruction by the classroom teacher.

Group size was another limitation in the study. The student groups consisted of 38 fifth graders and 12 teacher cadets. A larger sample size would have served to increase the reliability of the study (Creswell & Clark, 2011). A lower sample size was a result of student enrollment in the classes/course at the time of the study. The interview sample size was also a limitation of the study. In examining the qualitative data, 3 fifth grade students and 3 teacher cadets participated in the interview portion of the study. A larger sample size would be needed to strengthen the resulting qualitative data.

Fidelity of implementation may have also affected the results of the study. The study did not take into account teacher cadet levels of implementation. The teacher cadet

course instructor reported the possibility that some cadets did not prepare for their digital discourse with the fifth-grade students with equal levels of fidelity. This may have affected the fifth graders' learning experience and resulting motivational outcomes.

Recommendations for Further Study

The MRQ and TBSMRQ did not show a significant difference in fifth-grade student or teacher cadet perceptions about motivations to read. An implication of further study indicates a closer examination of the categories within the questionnaires. The authors of the questionnaires had categorized types of questions. Table 16 shows the breakdown of categories.

Table 16

Categories for the MRQ and TBSMRQ

MRQ	TBSMRQ
Reading efficacy	Self-efficacy
Reading challenge	Challenge
Reading curiosity	Curiosity
Reading involvement	Involvement
Importance of reading	Importance
Reading work avoidance	Avoidance
Competition in reading	Competition
Recognition for reading	Recognition
Reading for grades	Grades
Social reasons for reading	Social
Compliance	Compliance
	Autonomy

While this study did not examine pre- and post-categorical responses among participants, a recommendation for further study could be made to examine participant responses to further determine any significant differences among themes within categories as outlined by the authors of the questionnaires. This step could not be taken with this study, however, due to a lack of sufficient data within each category to run valid

statistical analysis. The MRQ and TBSMRQ questions are qualified categorically as outlined in Table 16. One to three questions are asked per category; I would recommend adding additional questions to increase the category validity in future studies.

I would also recommend a larger sample size for qualitative and quantitative purposes. Larger sample sizes would serve to increase the validity of the study (Guetterman, 2015). For qualitative purposes, Creswell and Creswell (2017) recommended a sample size of three to 10 for phenomenological studies. This study used a sample of three teacher cadets and three fifth graders based on student availability and the need to randomize the selection of participants to interview. A larger interview sample may provide further information on trends and identify emerging codes in relation to the use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment.

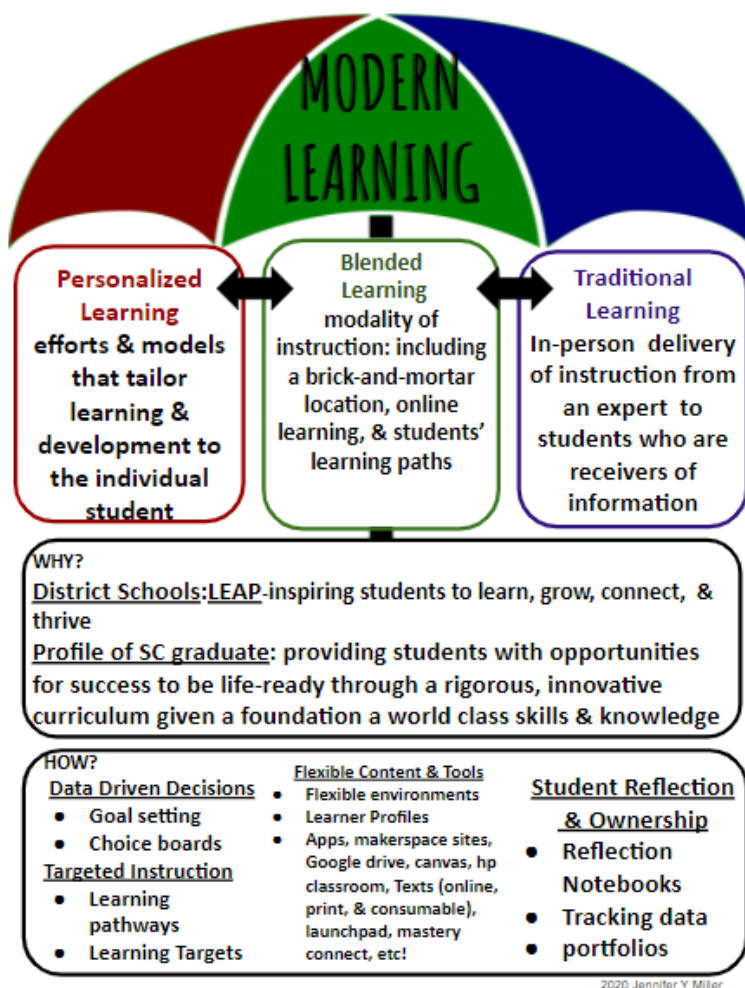
Finally, I would recommend the use of preservice teachers at the college level as opposed to teacher cadets. Based on prior coursework, the teacher cadets had limited, if any, experience in the role of teacher. Preservice teachers at the college level with entry level coursework and internships completed may provide further insight into emerging trends in regard to student motivation and engagement in reading. College level preservice teachers would also have more experience than teacher cadets assuming the teacher role. Ma and Cavanagh (2018) noted that preservice teacher level of self-efficacy, their belief that they are capable of achieving certain academic goals, played an influential role in their first teaching experience. The preservice teachers were very aware and considered their “authoritative appearance” (Ma & Cavanagh, 2018, p.146) when examining classroom management. Further research is needed to determine if this shift in roles from student to teacher affects the discourses and targeted instruction provided to

the fifth-grade student participants.

Reflection

While a significant amount of research existed studying student motivation to read and its subsequent effect on achievement, further research was needed to determine teaching practices that positively affect student outcome. Based on the conceptual framework of the study outlined in Chapter 2, it is suggested that a blended learning model has a significant impact on student motivation, engagement, and achievement. The study has resulted in a professional passion, enabling me to extensively examine the effects of a blended learning environment on various instructional practices. Due to my ongoing shift in educational practices to a more blended and personalized learning environment, career opportunities have arisen at the school and district level. The opportunities have allowed for further investigation of the effects of a blended and personalized model as opposed to a more traditional classroom model. I have been able to incorporate the revised conceptual framework of the study with a district- and school-level modern learning framework (Figure 10).

Figure 10

Modern Learning Framework

The framework incorporates multiple factors within a modern learning environment including personalized learning, blended learning, and traditional learning. The framework serves to align with district-level goals and state standards for South Carolina graduates. The four key components within a personalized learning model are identified along with possible instructional strategies and tools.

Incorporating a blended learning model with personalized learning is not unique to this study, however. As early as 2013, the International Association for K-12 Online Learning published a report identifying 12 elements of personalized learning (Patrick et

al., 2013). This study incorporated five of the elements: active involvement, social participation, engaging in self-regulation and being reflective, aiming towards understanding rather than memorization, and accounting for developmental and individual differences. Along with the 12 elements of personalized learning, Patrick et al. (2013) identified four essential attributes required to be a personalized learning model: learner profiles, learning pathways, individual mastery and flexible learning environments. The concept of personalized learning models in the early 2000s was a clear break from the one-size-fits-all models of traditional learning (Patrick et al., 2013). Norris and Soloway (2018) previously established a link between the two models as it applied to 1-to-1 classroom environments. The researchers purported that blended learning led to personalized learning. This finding was due largely to the use of student inquiry. Norris and Soloway argued that the use of a digital device drastically enhances a student's ability to participate in inquiry as a learning tool.

As the shift in education continued to progress, the definitions between blended learning and personalized learning became ambiguous. Some institutions simply combined the two terms into one, referring to it as blended personalized learning. Fisher's (2019) research worked to clarify and divide the one concept into two definitive entities: blended learning and personalized learning. Fisher identified personalized learning as a "pedagogical philosophy" (para. 4) that ultimately tailors learning to individual students needs through a variety of models. A personalized learning model that encourages student agency is the culminating goal for any learning experience (Fisher, 2019). On the other hand, Fisher defined a blended learning model as a "modality of instruction" (para. 8). Different from personalized learning, which is defined as a

philosophy, blended learning is defined as a modality of learning that includes both online and offline components (Fisher, 2019).

More recently, Prasad (2020) asserted that a blended learning model would propel personalized learning strategies to increased levels of student engagement. Prasad defined personalized learning strategies as those that provide students with choice and voice, tailors learning to student needs and interests, and is individualized. The idea of providing students with choice and voice in their learning incorporates allowing students the time and space needed to master particular skills. Prasad noted that a blended learning model promotes the concept of choice and voice through the use of online and offline learning modalities. Ownership is another key factor in the personalized learning model. Prasad noted that self-paced instruction and reflection within blended learning provides a pathway to ownership. Personalized learning considers all learning styles, allowing students flexibility to problem-solve using strategies that best meet their learning needs. An LMS is invaluable when offering students a variety of learning modalities (Prasad, 2020). Collaboration is yet another key factor within a personalized model. The flexible learning environment in a blended learning model speaks directly to the need for student and teacher collaboration (Prasad, 2020). Finally, personalized learning is adapted to the individual needs of each learner. Again, Prasad pointed to the use of an LMS and self-paced learning.

The study has served as a platform for educational practices, as South Carolina has begun to shift to a personalized learning framework with the creation of the Office of Personalized Learning within the South Carolina Department of Education.

Educators continue to develop and examine best instructional practices for

students in an ever-changing world: a world in which technology is a tool used to prepare students for college and career ready life skills. Although the quantitative results of the MRQ and TBSMRQ did not show an increase in student perceptions of themselves as motivated readers or teacher cadet perceptions of student levels of motivation, other results of the study indicated a more positive outcome. Bandura (1997) noted that a student's level of efficacy has a significant effect on the student's learning. In addition, Zimmerman (2000) asserted that student achievement can predict or even change a student's level of self-efficacy and motivational processes. Bandura's (1997) and Zimmerman's research on social cognitive theory and its resulting examination of student achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy may serve to explain the results of this study. Based on the quantitative results of the study, achievement was significantly affected by the use of digital literacy in a blended learning environment. The qualitative results also showed an increase in student levels of self-efficacy and motivation to read. The use of the teacher cadets as participants in the study was to examine how teacher perceptions on student motivation to read were affected through the use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment. The study met the criteria as a field experience for the teacher cadet course. In the literature review, a study conducted by Lewis (2014) noted that participants in the Teacher Cadet Program shared the perspective that the field experiences were a valuable aspect of the course. It is my hope that the study will affirm educator beliefs and lead to further investigation as to how blended learning models impact student motivation and achievement levels.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between student perceptions regarding student motivation to read and the corresponding effect on student

achievement within a blended learning environment. The educational landscape is shifting as a result of a global shift that began well over 20 years ago. While pedagogy has been slow to react, education has acknowledged the need for a digitally literate environment for students (Anthony, 2019). The key finding along with additional findings of the study indicate the use of digital collaborative literacy within a blended learning environment has a direct impact on student motivation, engagement, and achievement. The key finding that emerged at the conclusion of the study was as follows: Increased levels of engagement and overall enthusiasm for reading in a blended learning environment. Two additional, secondary findings that emerged at the conclusion of the study included:

1. The use of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment served to provide students with an individualized, targeted focus on reading instruction.
2. A significant difference in participant pretest and posttest scores existed with student levels of achievement having increased at the conclusion of the study.

Motivation and engagement are key factors in the subsequent achievement of students (Schlechty, 2001). The primary motivation of the discussion in the study was to determine the possibilities for maximizing student learning while using a variety of virtual learning strategies. Educators must determine which tools are effective and what type of instruction benefits from the use of technological tools in order to meet student needs. Literacy is the foundation that drives all other content areas of study. If motivation is the point of entry for teachers, the level of engagement is the factor that influences achievement outcomes. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) noted that practice without feedback

and coaching leads to insufficient reading habits. The fifth-grade and teacher cadet participants in the study responded positively to the use of digital collaborative literacy and subsequent increased student achievement. While this study was unable to definitively determine the effects of digital collaborative literacy in a blended learning environment, the conversation must continue as to how to best meet student needs and capitalize on academic growth.

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Appendix A

Approvals

Approval for dissertation study use of TBRSMQ by Mathew Quirk via email:


Re: Request to use TBRSMQ - Message (HTML) ? [] - []

FILE MESSAGE


Thu 6/21/2018 3:23 PM
 Matthew Quirk [REDACTED]
 Re: Request to use TBRSMQ
 To Jennifer Miller

Hi Jennifer,
Of course, you are welcome to use the tool.

Good luck!
Matt

On Thu, Jun 21, 2018 at 8:38 AM, Jennifer Miller [REDACTED] wrote:




Dr. Quirk:


Good Morning! I would like to ask permission to use the Teacher Beliefs about Student Motivation to Read Questionnaire as a part of my dissertation study at Gardner-Webb University. My study, "Digital Literacy: A Mixed-Methods Study on the Impact of Learning Management Systems on Student Motivation and Achievement," will determine whether student engagement and achievement in reading is affected when 5th graders participate in a book study through the use of a Learning Management System with pre-service teachers. I would like, with your permission, to have the pre-service teachers, who will be taking on the role of the teacher, take the TBRSMQ to examine the relationship between their perceptions and students' motivation to read.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Jennifer Miller, M.Ed.

Approval for dissertation study use of MRQ by John Guthrie and Allan Wigfield via email:

 Reply
  Reply All
  Forward


Wed 3/6/2019 7:27 AM
 John T. Guthrie [REDACTED]
 Re: Request to use MRQ
 To Jennifer Miller

You are permitted to use the MRQ for research purposes only.




On Tue, Mar 5, 2019, 8:53 PM Jennifer Miller [REDACTED] wrote:

Dr. Guthrie and Dr. Wigfield,

I would like to ask permission to use the Motivations for Reading Questionnaire as a part of my dissertation study at Gardner-Webb University. My study, "Digital Literacy: The impact of a blended learning model on student motivation and achievement," will seek to determine whether student engagement and achievement in reading is affected when 5th graders participate in a book study through the use of a Learning Management System with pre-service teachers. I would like, with your permission, to have the 5th grade students participating in the study, take the MRQ to examine the relationship between pre-service teachers' perceptions and students' motivation for reading.

Thank you,

Jennifer Miller, M.Ed.

 Reply  Reply All  Forward



Wed 3/6/2019 5:57 AM

Allan L. Wigfield [REDACTED]

Re: Request to use MRQ

To Jennifer Miller

You have our permission, Jennifer.

Allan Wigfield

On Tue, Mar 5, 2019 at 8:53 PM Jennifer Miller [REDACTED] wrote:

Dr. Guthrie and Dr. Wigfield,

I would like to ask permission to use the Motivations for Reading Questionnaire as a part of my dissertation study at Gardner-Webb University. My study, "Digital Literacy: The impact of a blended learning model on student motivation and achievement," will seek to determine whether student engagement and achievement in reading is affected when 5th graders participate in a book study through the use of a Learning Management System with pre-service teachers. I would like, with your permission, to have the 5th grade students participating in the study, take the MRQ to examine the relationship between pre-service teachers' perceptions and students' motivation for reading.

Thank you,

Jennifer Miller, M.Ed.

Appendix B
Interview Questions

Script: As a reminder, this is not for a grade, your participation is voluntary and will be strictly confidential.

20-minute interview

Teacher Cadets

1. What were your perceptions about students' motivation to read before you started the study about reading instruction?
2. Now that the study is over, what are your perceptions of teaching students to read?
3. During the book study, you were in the teaching role. What aspects do you feel strengthened your future career as a classroom teacher?
4. What area(s) do you feel were an area of growth for you as a pre-service teacher?
5. How do you feel that digital collaborative literacy contributed to the motivation of the students?
6. Do you think the use of a blended learning model affected student responses during the novel study?

5th graders

1. How do you think about yourself as a reader?
2. After working with your high school buddy, has anything changed about your reading?
3. Describe the interactions you had with your high school buddy.
4. Would you like to participate in a book study again in the same way? Why or why not?
5. In what environment do you most enjoy reading?
6. What did you think about using Canvas to communicate with your college buddy?
7. How did you feel about using different forms of media (technology, paper, books) during the novel study?

Appendix C
Pre-Assessment

Danny's Piano

1. Danny wanted to play the piano more than he wanted almost anything in the world. At night he'd listen to his father play, filling the hall with vibrant music. Sometimes the music was soft, almost a whisper.
Sometimes it reminded Danny of a cat, running and bouncing about all over. And always it was like sunshine, making the house glow with music.
2. Can I learn to play? Danny would ask his father.
3. His father grinned at him. You can start lessons once a spot opens up with Mrs. Schuster. Could be any month now.
4. Some quiet afternoons when Danny's mother was reading or preparing the family's dinner in the kitchen, Danny would sneak into the warm living room and sit on the padded piano bench. He'd press a few of the white keys and then press a few of the black keys. Sometimes he would play them all one after the other in order, going all the way up the piano keyboard and then going all the way down.
5. His mother might poke her head into the room to see what he was doing. She would smile at him. If all his homework was finished, he could play the piano until dinner.
6. Danny's father would come home from work, and they would all have dinner together. Then, Danny's father would usually play a few songs before Danny's bedtime.
7. Today Danny picked out a simple song note by note that he'd heard his neighbor sing to her baby: Where is Thumbkin? Where is Thumbkin? Here I am! Here I am! The notes sounded simple and clunky to Danny, nothing like the complicated melodies his father played. Danny shrugged; it seemed he'd been on Mrs. Schuster's wait list forever. He wanted so badly to learn how to play as well as his father.
8. Danny opened the piano bench and pulled out a music book. Big and fat, the book rested heavy in his hands with dog-eared pages. Danny set it on the piano and flipped to a page called Fantasy Impromptu. Black lines ran all across the pages, with notes hanging from the lines like berries. The notes looked to Danny as though a pen had exploded, splattering ink across the page. Danny traced the lines that carried the notes with his fingers. He set both hands on the keys with all five fingertips resting on the piano and closed his eyes. He imagined himself playing.
9. Without pushing the keys down, he moved his hands lightly around the keyboard. His fingers hardly brushed the keys, but in his mind he heard the songs his father played at night. He imagined pedestrians out on the street listening to the music.

- Maybe people driving past with their windows down would stop and park by the curb to listen. The music would be so beautiful they would feel a little taller now. They would feel as though sunshine had broken through the clouds.
10. Mr. Lee sure has a gift for music, they would think, not knowing that it was actually Mr. Lee's son, Danny, who was playing.
11. Danny rested one hand peacefully on the keys and the other on his lap. He sat still for a long time. He felt a hand on his shoulder. Startled, he opened his eyes. His father was home early! Picking up the fat book with dog-eared pages, his father closed the volume and held it in one hand.
12. Stand up, said Danny's father. Danny frowned. He hadn't been bothering anything. Danny got up off the piano bench. His father opened the bench, put the fat book away and left the room. Grumpily, Danny headed for the door. But his father was returning with a skinny white piano book. Danny's father set the book on the piano. It was titled Beginning Piano. Seating himself on the end of the piano bench, Danny's father patted the seat next to him for Danny to sit down.
13. I'm not much of a teacher, Danny's father said apologetically, but we have a few minutes before dinner. And he opened the book. The notes in this book were larger and easier to pick out than the ones in the fat book. These notes had white letters on them. Danny's father played a note from the middle of the keyboard with his thumb.
14. This is middle C, he said, and pointed to a note on the page. Smiling broadly, Danny played middle C.

Part B

Questions #1

Which detail from the passage supports the answer in Part A?

A “Danny shrugged; it seemed he'd been on Mrs. Schuster's wait list forever.”

B “He wanted so badly to learn how to play as well as his father.”

C “Danny got up off the piano bench.”

D “Grumpily, Danny headed for the door.”

Without Warning

1. We decided to go down to the pond to do a little fishing. It was one of those really hot and humid North Carolina afternoons when the wind that blew was oppressive and made you feel more lifeless and bored than a Monday afternoon in your last class of the school day. We were spending the week with our Grandma because our parents were on a cruise somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. It wasn't that we didn't love being with Grandma. We did, but all she did was watch TV, talk to her friend Sarah Rose on the phone, work in the vegetable garden, and cook. After about three days, the newness of the country life had waned for me and my younger brother Joey.
2. We made our way down from the farmhouse, past the tobacco barns, to the fishing pond that was tucked away in a shady corner beneath the green pines and maples. Typically, we took the four-wheeler that Grandma kept for us, but this time we decided to walk just to waste some time. We had only been there about thirty minutes when my brother said, I'm tired of fishing. He was ten and had the attention span of a gnat.
3. Well, what do you suggest we do? I inquired with an eye roll implying I couldn't believe we had spent an hour packing up fishing gear, getting some of Grandma's fresh corn to use as bait and walking the ten minutes that it took to make it to the pond.
4. Let's go exploring in the woods, he said with a sneaky look in his eyes.
5. That was Joey for you. He was never going to stay in the boundary lines. He always had to be daring and tempt fate. You know as well as I do that Grandma doesn't like for us to go into the woods. There are hunters, snakes, and who knows what else out there. Maybe even a bear. I turned my back to him and kept fishing.
6. I see. I've got an older brother that's a B-I-G chicken, he said with a taunt.
7. I angrily snapped back, You know I'm not scared. It's just not a safe place to be. We don't know our way around these woods. We could get lost. My reply to him only incited his teasing even more.
8. Lost! Did you say lost?!! Don't make me laugh! His voice went up a few octaves in disbelief. Grandma's farm is NOT that big! We couldn't get lost if we tried.
9. I stared at the water for a few seconds watching a dragonfly skim the surface and then flit away. I glanced over my shoulder at the woods. They beckoned to me it

- seemed with the coolness of their shade. The fields were full of green vines that would eventually turn into cotton in the fall. It was hot and dull here by the pond. Why not, I thought to myself. We don't have to go far. There was a little creek back there somewhere that our dad had taken us to one time. It would be a summer adventure. We could keep a close eye on our trail and we didn't have to venture far. Besides, the sun had come out even more intensely and the air was heavy like it was about to burst open. The creek might be a cool place to sit by for a little while. Okay, I said, but we can't let ourselves wander too far.
10. Joey popped up and shot off like a scared cat. He was headed for the woods zig-zagging in a galloping run. Joey, wait up! We need to walk slowly so we know where we're headed, I yelled. It was too late. His impulsivity had given way to any rational thought process. I took off after him just hoping I could catch up.
 11. I told you to wait up and slow down, I said after I had been running after him for what seemed like miles. There was a stitch in my side, and I was breathing heavy. Sweat was pouring off of me and all I could think about was how good that cold creek water would be.
 12. Why ya outta breath, Stevie? Joey said with a grin. He could be so incredibly annoying sometimes. He started walking slower now, pulled off a small twig from a tree and used it like a sword. What do we do now?
 13. I stood for a moment and looked back where we had cut a path through the trees and underbrush. It would be easy to find our way back it seemed, so I relaxed. We pushed our way through briars and large clumps of tall grass, and we finally reached the creek. It was a sight to my eyes with its crystal clear water that gurgled and trickled over tiny logs and rocks. It was so peaceful. The dense foliage above our heads was like a canopy that almost shut out the sun completely in green. It was an oasis in the desert of our monotonous summer day.
 14. I told ya you'd have fun, Joey said with a sly smile. He had taken off his tennis shoes and was standing ankle deep in the creek.
 15. I'll never tell you that you were right, I said, but I couldn't help but be a little thankful that he had been so relentless about it. I had just bent down to scoop up a handful of water when we heard something. A rustling sound that came from behind us. We froze in fear afraid of what might be making the tall grass and undergrowth move. Our mom had warned us about rabid foxes and wild dogs. It was then that I realized perhaps we may have been better off by the pond.
 16. Whatever it was, it was coming closer. I had to think quickly. Run Joey! Grab your shoes and run! Joey snatched up his shoes, and we tore off in a flash. We cut across

- the creek, and the woods became nothing but a green and brown blur as we streaked through. All of a sudden Joey tripped and fell. I knew by the sound of it that it wasn't going to be good. When I turned back, he had sat himself up and was holding his foot and crying.
17. Im cut! Im cut! he screamed. Joey was all about being tough, but the first sight of blood and it was all she wrote.
 18. Let me see, I said, trying to stay calm like a big brother should. I looked at his bare foot. It was cut deep on the heel and he was bleeding pretty quickly, but I knew I had to stay focused and think.
 19. At about the same moment that I got ready to offer words of reassurance, we heard it. This time it wasn't anything in the bushes; it was worse. It was the loud crash of thunder. In all our running and panic, we had failed to notice the change in atmosphere. The wind had picked up, and the leaves in the treetops were beginning to flap like the flags on the beach prior to a hurricane. This is not good, Joey blubbered between sobs. I wanted to give him some really smart come back, but I was too worried at the moment to take any pleasure in the rare opportunity.
 20. Can you walk? I asked him. I pulled him up, but he plopped back down and put his head down on his knees.
 21. No, and a storm's coming and lightning strikes people under trees. We're doomed! he cried. The storm was getting closer. I could see the clouds through the leaves, and they were dark gray and rolling over us. We were never going to make it back before the storm broke. I could hear the rain beginning to splat on the ground and leaves. I wasn't even sure how far in the woods we were now since we had been running wildly from whatever was out there. A streak of jagged lightning lit up the sky. This was bad, very bad.
 22. At that moment, I was in the depths of despair. We were really in danger this time, and Grandma didn't even know where we were. No one knew where we were. I could see the headlines, Brothers go missing in countryside. Bodies never found.
 23. Then, something unusual made my ears prick up. It was a very faint roar of what sounded like a motor. Between the thunder claps and wind gusts, the sound grew closer and then seemed to fade away again. I put my arms protectively around Joey and tried to shield him from the rain that was now pouring. I took off my T-shirt and wrapped it like a bandage around his foot hoping to stop the bleeding.
 24. Unexpectedly from out of a distant clearing in the woods, I saw it, speeding in our direction. What was it? The closer it got, the louder the roaring sound became. I couldn't believe my eyes. We're saved Joey! It's someone on a four-wheeler!! I leapt

- up and started screaming and waving my arms. Over here! Over here! I yelled frantically. The closer it got, the more I tried to make out who was on it, but the sheets of wind and driving rain made it hard to see. Who cares, I thought, as long as someone can get to us. Hunters were always out around here. They must have seen us.
25. Finally, the driver caught sight of us, and it sped up full throttle. The driver was racing wildly, hitting holes and underbrush at top speed. If I hadn't been so scared, it would have been almost comical the way it was bouncing through the woods dodging trees in a very awkward and jerky manner.
26. Joey finally looked up as the four-wheeler got about 50 yards from us. Stevie, is that Grandma? he said in a state of shock and disbelief. I squinted my eyes and focused harder on the driver of the four wheeler. With her green garden boots on and her plastic rain bonnet covering her grey hair, it was our ordinary little grandma on a dramatic rescue.

Question #2

The selection is *best* classified as?

- A fiction
- B nonfiction
- C biography
- D autobiographical

A New Island Home

1. Mrs. Plumlee lived on a beautiful Caribbean island near the equator. She lived her dream, and she had a wonderful life. She loved the view of the boats floating in the harbor, the sound of the island birds, and the smell of the fresh fried plantains drifting in and out of her window every afternoon.
2. Her life was complete because she had her loved ones with her: a cat Dara, a dog named Dury, and two parrots named Mai and Maddie. Every morning they would take their tea under the leafy banyan tree and look out over the billowy sea.
3. She kept busy in the morning by tending to her garden. She lovingly watered the spectacular flowers she had planted and carefully removed all the weeds from her vegetable garden. She would often stand back and admire the fruits of her labor.

4. Later in the afternoon, she would take a nap on the little open porch in her hammock, which was stretched between two poles holding up her thatched roof. She kept herself busy cooking exotic meals that she would share with her pets.
5. They were all extremely happy and content until one day a stray thought crossed Mrs. Plumlees mind. I wonder if there might be another little island out beyond the sea somewhere, perhaps a calmer little cove, or a garden filled with sweeter plantains. The more she gazed out over the sea, the more she wondered.
6. One day, much to everyones surprise, she said, Thats it. Lets go. Today is moving day, and that is what we are doing! Everybody pack! Without wasting a moment, she started putting all her belongings into boxes, baskets, and bags. She then carefully packed her sturdy little boat. As they sailed out of the harbor and set off on their adventure, they waved goodbye to the house, the garden, and the banyan trees. They took one last whiff of the fragrant plantains. Oh, how she hoped the plantains would be sweeter, the garden more productive, and the view more inspiring where they were headed. With her thoughts pinned to the sail, they slowly made their way out of the harbor and out to sea.
7. I cant wait to find a new island home! she cried out to her crew. However, Dury just kept his gaze focused on the island home they were leaving, and a tiny tear dropped into the sea.
8. They sailed for many days with the hot sun kissing their cheeks. They sailed for many more days with the rain hitting them so forcefully that it felt like needles. Some days the wind was with them, and some days against them.
9. Mrs. Plumlee, what do you think of that little island over there on our right? Dara asked.
10. It doesnt have a calm enough cove, she replied. And they sailed on.
11. Mrs. Plumlee, I like that little island over there on our left. Look at the peaceful little harbor! Dury said.
12. Nope, she replied. I dont see a spot for a garden. And they sailed on.
13. Their noses were burning, their cheeks were stinging, their tempers were flaring, and they still sailed on. They sailed through gentle winds, blustery winds, and storms that were so bad they were tossed and turned by the waves for days on end. They had no idea where they were or where they had been!
14. And then one day there it was!
15. Oh, my! she gasped. This is it! It is just how I pictured it! She loved the boats floating in the harbor, the sound of the island birds, and the smell of the fresh fried plantains drifting in and around the boat. She even found an abandoned house that

- looked just like the one they had left, and they were able to move right in. Upon walking in, Maddie looked at Mai, and Mai looked at Maddie. Dara looked at Dury, and Dury looked at Dara, but nobody said a word.
16. Each evening Mrs. Plumlee remarked that this new island was just like home, only much nicer a calmer cove, more delicious plantains, and a view that brought tears to her eyes. Every day when she said this, Dara, Dury, Mai, and Maddie just looked at each other and smiled.

Question #3

Which event came first in the passage?

- A Mrs. Plumlee tended her garden.
 - B The characters ran into storms.
 - C Mrs. Plumlee packed the boat.
 - D The characters went sailing.
- A Special Snow Dog
1. I did not want to move to Alaska, but my mom said it was beautiful. She loved the beauty of the barren Arctic tundra and the jagged mountain ranges filled with spruce trees. I did not care for the months and months of sub-zero weather because I was an outdoor girl, and I loved activities like playing baseball and basketball. What was I going to do in Alaska?
 2. The only tolerable part of moving was that my Aunt Libby lived in Alaska, and I adored her. She is a famous musher and had been racing dog sled teams for many years. It was difficult making friends at school, so I spent most of my free time with my aunt and her dogs. They were sturdy, wolf-like dogs, bred especially to be able to stand the harsh Arctic cold. They had the endurance to run long distances.
 3. After I had been in Alaska a few months, my aunt came over with a gift it was a bright-eyed, playful-looking dog! Not just any dog, but a beautiful black and white snow dog, a malamute!
 4. He is the runt of the litter. I wont be able to use him on the team because he is too small and not athletic enough to sustain the challenges of dog sled racing, she said. I didnt care what size he was at all; I was so happy to have a dog! Now, I had a companion to help relieve some of my loneliness. I changed my mind and decided right then to embrace my stay in Alaska, instead of wishing I were back in sunny

- California, so I gave him an Alaskan name. I chose Miki, which is Inuit for small one.
5. I really treasured my time with Miki because things weren't going so well in school. I liked my teacher, but I had a hard time making friends. I often found myself eating lunch alone, comforting myself with thoughts of being able to spend time with my dog after school. Aunt Libby was aware of this, so one day she invited me to go out with her on a short practice run with her dog sled team. She thought that might cheer me up. She knew that I had always wanted to go with her. Now I was old enough, but I was torn because I did not want to leave Miki. At that point in time, he was my only friend. I think Aunt Libby read my mind, because the next thing she said was, Why don't we take Miki, too? He should be able to keep up with us on such a short run. I think he will enjoy it.
 6. I couldn't believe it was going to happen. I picked out special boots for Miki so that his paws wouldn't freeze or get cut by the ice; but I didn't have anything warm enough to protect me from the cold. Aunt Libby gave me an old thin parka of hers and explained that it would be fine since we wouldn't be out in the cold for very long.
 7. Enjoying the beautiful scenery, we traveled through the Alaskan tundra. Aunt Libby called out, Mush, mush! and the dogs sped up. Faster and faster we went. We were like wolves with wings running through the forest! An Alaskan snow is unlike anything you have ever seen; and all we could see was whiteness. Just then, Aunt Libby rounded a corner a little too fast. Perhaps she wasn't used to my extra weight onboard. The sleds steel blades veered to the right, and then down a steep hill we tumbled.
 8. It felt like I tumbled for days, but it was actually only minutes. However, it was long enough for me to get myself wedged in between two trees head-first! My face was buried in the snow, and I couldn't see a thing. I shouted, but I was sure no one could hear the muffled sound of my voice through the snow and brush. I calmed myself though, knowing Aunt Libby would soon come help me.
 9. However, as time went on, I started to worry. I knew my coat was not warm enough to protect me from the cold much longer. Where were they? I wondered. I tried and tried to get myself free, but I couldn't move any part of my body, so I figured the best thing to do was remain calm and not panic. I focused on being reunited with Miki and Aunt Libby.
 10. I am not really sure what happened next. I might have dozed off for a minute because the next thing I knew I felt something rustling near my feet. Aunt Libby, I

- called out, Is that you? There was no answer. Because I couldn't see my feet, an awful idea entered my mind. I felt terror surge through my body as I realized it might be a bear. We had already seen a moose and a red fox earlier in the day.
11. Meanwhile, unknown to me, Aunt Libby was frantically looking everywhere for me on the other side of the hill. She and the dogs had fallen to the left of the trail, and I had fallen the other direction off a steep cliff. All of her dogs were accounted for, but she could not find Miki or me. Aunt Libby understood the importance of time and did not want to waste one second. She was desperate to find us; however, she was blinded by the snow and didn't realize she was searching for me in the wrong location.
 12. I heard the rustling sound near my feet again, but I still couldn't turn my head to look. I hoped I could scare it away if I yelled loud enough. Just when I started to scream, I heard barking! Beautiful, beautiful, barking!
It was Miki I knew his voice! I felt I had been rescued even though I was still stuck between the trees.
Hoping my screaming had not scared Miki away, I called, Come back! Come here Miki! I need you to go get help! I yelled and pleaded, but there was not another sound. He was gone.
 13. The sun was setting, and I had just about given up hope when I heard some voices in the distance. It was Aunt Libby, all the sled dogs, and a rescue team led by Miki! Even some of the girls from school came to look for me. The rescue team was able to free me from the trees by using special tools and working carefully for a few hours. They never would have found me without Miki's help.
 14. Once I was free, Sam, one of the rescue workers, wanted to know what my dog's name was. He thought Miki was going to be famous when everyone found out how he had rescued me. I thought for a minute and then said, He used to be called Miki, or small one, because he was too small to be a team dog. However, I have just changed his name to Sangilak, which means biggest and strongest of all because he has proved he is big where it counts in character, intelligence, and bravery.
 15. We had to hurry home because one of the girls from school invited me over for pizza. So Sangilak and I hopped into the car, looking forward to more snowy adventures with our new friends in Alaska.

Question #4

What question is the reader *most likely* going to ask after reading this selection?

A What was rustling at the main character's feet while she was stuck?

B Was the rescue team able to free the main character from the trees?

C What was the new name that the main character gave to Miki?

D What adventures will the main character have with her new friends?

Question #5

What caused the main character to change Miki's name at the end of the story?

A The main character did not like Miki's name because she was not the one who named him.

B The main character felt that Miki's name no longer fit him because of his act of bravery.

C The main character learned that she had been calling Miki by the wrong name.

D The main character chose a new name that would be easier for her to remember.

Question #6

Why did Aunt Libby take the main character out for a practice run with her dog sled team?

A Aunt Libby was trying to make her feel better because she was having a difficult time making friends_{in Alaska}.

B Aunt Libby needed her help steering the sled through the Alaskan tundra.

C Aunt Libby needed her help finding a lost dog.

D Aunt Libby was training her to become a musher for the next big dog sled race in Alaska.

Question #7

Which experience is *most* similar to the main character's?

A skiing quickly down a steep mountain during a snow storm

B performing in a play at your elementary school

C getting lost while hiking in the woods and being saved by your best friend

D playing in a big basketball game and scoring the winning shot

Attic Magic

from *Caddie Woodlawn*

By Carol Ryrie Brink

1. Caddies wandering feet took her upstairs to the attic. Here were old boxes from Boston, and a beautiful round-topped trunk, lined with colored paper, with pictures of smiling children decorating the various compartments. And on a low shelf was a row of clocks, waiting for Fathers expert hand to mend them. The attic was drafty, but, near the head of the stairs, a big brick chimney came up from the kitchen, and there it was warm. Caddie drew some of the boxes over to the chimney and sat with her back against it, while she looked through them. Most of the things she had seen often enough. There were too many people in the family to allow old things to accumulate,¹ unused
2. Now she turned her attention to the clocks. They had been at the back of her mind all the time. She had been reserving them as a sort of final treat, as she often did with the things she liked best. She picked them up, one by one, and shook them to see if they would come to life. Among the others, stood the circuit riders² clock. Caddie remembered what he had said it was the face of a dead friend. Surely it would soon be time for the circuit rider to return, and Father had not yet started work upon the clock. How dreadful it would be, if the circuit rider should return and find his clock unmended! Caddie turned the clock thoughtfully in her hands. She had seen Father mend so many of them! Of course, they were not all alike inside, but she knew how the little screws came out and how the back came off, and then inside you saw all of the fascinating wheels and gimcracks.³ Why shouldnt she mend it herself? She was sure that she could. She sat down with her back against the chimney and began to loosen the screws.
3. It was more of a task than she had supposed. But Fathers tools were there on the shelf, and she found a screw driver of just the size she needed. The back came off, revealing the wheels and springs. Caddie knew enough about clocks to see what the matter was. The circuit rider had wound his clock too tightly, and in some way the spring had caught so that it could not unwind as it should have done. Caddie looked it over carefully. Then she began to loosen the screws which held it in place. She had to loosen several before she found the right ones. Time slipped

- away unheeded, she was so deeply absorbed in the clock. Her cheeks were flushed and her face, bent low over her work, was curtained by her dangling curls.
4. And then at last she loosened the right screw! Whizz! Bang! The spring flew out with a whirr and hit the low ceiling. Screws and cog wheels flew in every direction. It was like an explosion. The circuit riders clock had suddenly flown to pieces! Caddie uttered a cry of despair and looked wildly about her. What would Father say?
 5. There was a low chuckle from the stairway. Caddie followed the sound with startled eyes. Standing on one of the lower steps, so that his eyes were just above the level of the attic floor, stood her father. How long he had been watching her, she had no idea.
 6. Father, she wailed, it went to pieces! The circuit riders clock! Her father leaned against the wall of the staircase and laughed. Caddie had almost never seen him laugh so hard. She, herself, did not know whether to laugh or cry.
 7. Father, she repeated, it went to pieces!
 8. Still laughing, Mr. Woodlawn came up the stairs.
 9. Lets pick up the pieces, he said. Were going to put that clock together, Caddie. Ive been needing a partner in my clock business for a long time. I dont know why I never thought of you before!
 10. A partner! gasped Caddie. She began to race about the attic, picking up screws and springs, A real partner?
 11. If you do well, said her father. Clara is too busy with Mother, and Tom hasnt the patience nor the inclination. Yes, Caddie, I believe youll be my partner.
 12. Together they sat on the attic floor and put the circuit riders clock in order. Mr. Woodlawn explained and demonstrated while Caddies eager fingers did the work. Together they cleaned and oiled the parts and made the nice adjustments that were required. By the time the work was finished, it was growing dark in the attic.
 13. Now take that down and show your mother, Caddie, said Mr. Woodlawn. Together they marched downstairs, one as proud as the other, and Caddie set the circuit riders clock in the middle of the dining-room table.
 14. So you mended Mr. Tanners clock, did you Johnny? said Mrs. Woodlawn carelessly.
 15. No, not this time, said her husband, with a twinkle in his eye. Caddie did it.
 16. Caddie did it? Mrs. Woodlawn and Clara and the children, who had just come in from school, crowded around to see.
 17. It runs, marveled Tom, and Warren uttered an admiring Golly!

18. The circuit riders clock no longer looked like the face of a dead friend. It appeared to be very much alive and spoke up with a cheerful tick.

19. Caddie never forgot the lesson she had learned that day in the attic. Wherever she was, all through her long and busy life, clocks ticked about her pleasantly, and, if they didnt, she knew the reason why and fixed them.

¹accumalate- to pile up or collect

²circuit rider- a judge who travels and hears legal cases in various towns

³gimcracks -small parts

Attic Magic from Caddie Woodlawn by Carol Ryrie Brink. Copyright 1935 by

Macamillan PublishingCompany.

Question #8

How did Mr. Woodlawn react after Caddie accidently broke the circuit rider's clock?

- A Mr. Woodlawn took the clock from Caddie in order to fix it himself.
- B Caddie's father was angry with Caddie for trying to fix the clock.
- C Caddie was relieved when Mr. Woodlaw did not find out she had broken the clock.
- D Mr. Woodlawn used his laughter to reassure Caddie.

Brushes and Ashes

from Seesaw Girl
by Linda Sue Park

Jade Blossom is growing up in seventeenth-century Korea. Despite the strict expectations of a girl her age, Jade creates fun and mischief for herself inside the Inner Court.

1. Is anyone coming? Jade Blossom whispered.
2. Graceful Willow peeped around the edge of the sliding paper door. She looked back at Jade and shook her head, putting her finger to her lips.
3. Jade felt her insides trembling as she stole quietly to the opposite side of the room. Two dozen rabbit-hair writing brushes lay on the tidy shelf in an orderly row. The brushes were arranged by size, the smallest with the merest wisp of tip, the largest as wide as two fingers.
4. Jade snatched them up as quietly as she could. She hurried back across the room to where Willow stood guard by the door.
5. Hurry! begged Willow, handing her the bowl of ashes. They might come back at any moment.
6. Jade unrolled a pile of old rags. She emptied the bowl of ashes and soot onto the rags and piled the brushes on top. Then she wrapped the rags carefully around the brushes. Rolling the untidy parcel around and around in her hands, she made sure that inside, every brush was well covered in soot.
7. Jade tiptoed back to the shelves, opened the parcel, and gingerly put the brushes back in their places. She stepped back, eyeing them for a moment. Both the handles and brush tips were black to begin with; the black of the soot could not be seen. Jade grinned, pleased with her work. This would surely be one of their best pranks ever.
8. From her lookout post, Willow gasped. They're coming! She turned back to Jade, beckoning wildly.
9. Jade darted to her side, and together they almost fell over the one-step threshold of the room. Hand in hand, breathless and laughing, they ran across the Inner Court to the safety of the womens quarters just as the boys came into view.
10. Schoolmaster had taken Jades brothers and cousins to the Garden of Earthly Peace that afternoon. It was a beautiful spring day, and the plum trees were in bloom. The eight boys were then going to write poetry about what they had seen. Jade and Willow had been waiting for this opportunity to steal into the Hall of Learning while the boys were away.
11. The boys would fetch the brushes and pots of ink from the shelves and begin to write on scrolls of fine rice paper. Their hands would be covered in soot, and they would blotch and smear their work. They would not be able to form the graceful characters demonstrated by Schoolmaster.
12. Jade and Willow knew well that none of the boys would utter a word of surprise and dismay: It was considered extremely rude to interrupt Schoolmasters lessons.

- Rather, they would have to struggle along as best they could and when their work was inspected the girls could hardly wait for the reaction.
13. Hastily, they wiped out the bowl, discarded the rags, and washed their hands. Then they gathered up their embroidery projects and joined the other women and girls of the household in the womens hall.
 14. After a little while a loud voice could be heard from across the Inner Court. The women and girls raised their heads from their work and listened for a moment. Jades mother shook her head, saying, Schoolmaster is not pleased with the boys work today. Tiger Heart and the others must work harder on their studies.
 15. Willow let out an odd sound, like a snort, and quickly brought her hand to her mouth, as if to hide a cough. Jade felt as though she were strangling. She bent her head farther over her work and felt her stomach shaking with smothered laughter.
 16. The rest of the afternoon passed pleasantly enough. At last Jades mother folded her work, which was the signal for the other women and girls to put their work away as well. The gong sounded; dinner preparations would begin.
 17. Just then the boys could be heard, calling out and running across the Inner Court. The whole group of them clamored around the door to the womens hall. They could not, of course, enter without permission from Jades mother.
 18. Jades mother slid the paper door open. What is it, Tiger Heart? she asked, addressing Jades older brother.
 19. Someone did something to the writing brushes! he exclaimed breathlessly. Our hands got all black we couldnt write The other boys joined in, speaking all at once indignantly and holding up their hands for everyone to see.
 20. Eldest Aunt began to scold the boys. They had been in the garden, hadnt they? They had probably gotten their hands dirty fooling around, rather than paying attention to Schoolmaster. Besides, what did they expect to find in the womens hall? The girls had been busy all afternoon!
 21. Now, be on your way, said Eldest Aunt. We have the evening meal to prepare. The women shooed the boys away from the door and left the room, with the girls following. Jade and Willow hung back and, when everyone else was out of earshot, finally gave in to their laughter. They shrieked until tears rolled down their cheeks. It was a good thing no one saw them. They too would have been scolded; such laughter was not proper for women or girls.

Brushes and Ashes from *Seesaw Girl* by Linda Sue Park. Copyright 1999 by A Yearling Book.



Question #9

Which quote from the passage supports the inference that girls were expected to follow certain rules?

A “Hand in hand, breathless and laughing, they ran across the Inner Court to the safety of the women’s quarters just as the boys came into view.”

B “Hastily, they wiped out the bowl, discarded the rags, and washed their hands. Then they gathered up their embroidery projects and joined the other women and girls of the household in the women’s hall.”

C “Eldest Aunt began to scold the boys. They had been in the garden, hadn’t they? They had probably gotten their hands dirty fooling around, rather than paying attention to Schoolmaster.”

D “It was a good thing no one saw them. They too would have been scolded; such laughter was not proper for women or girls.”

Can I Become Invisible?

1. I'm sitting here, reading silently during quiet reading time. My book about famous sports people isn't as interesting as I thought it would be, and I'm having a hard time paying attention to it. What can I think about, I wonder?
2. What if I had an invisibility cloak like Harry Potter? No, that would be too much trouble. How could I put it on without anyone seeing it? I need to be able to become invisible without letting anyone else see how it happens. I know. I should have invisible powers. I can make myself invisible when I tap my teeth together. No one would see that, and I'd become invisible all of a sudden.
3. If I can become invisible, what can I do? I'll have to think about this. The first thing I could do is to go to the class library and find a more exciting book to read. Maybe there's a book about a superhero who can become invisible, and I can get more ideas about what to do when I'm invisible.
4. While I'm walking my invisible self across the room, what can I do? I know, I can switch Marks and Kennys papers. I can tap their left shoulders and switch papers on their desk on the right. I wonder if they would notice. I'm sure they'll think that the tap is just something weird when they don't see anybody doing it. Won't it be funny when they notice that they have each other's papers?
5. What if I take Saras math book and put it in her cubby? It will make her wonder how it got there when she thought it was in her desk. I'll sit here laughing to myself.
6. I'll have to figure out how to move very quietly while I'm invisible. If my classmates can hear my footsteps, they may look around for me. How can I creep silently as a mouse? I know, I can take turtle steps and carefully place my feet down as I take each step.
7. I just realized it won't be any fun if I can't tell anyone else about being invisible. But if I tell someone, it won't be as much fun because they'll know who is playing the tricks and making peculiar things happen. I just thought of another problem. Won't my classmates notice books and papers floating in the air? They might be able to figure out that someone's invisible.
8. Maybe I'll look through my book again. Oh, here's a story about the point guard on my favorite basketball team. That should be interesting. Rats, quiet reading time is over.

Question #10

Who is the narrator in this selection?

- A an invisible student
- B the fifth grade teacher
- C a fifth grade student

D an observer in the class

Question #11

What is the *main* reason that the character thinks about different things to do if he was invisible?

A He wants to see if it is possible to become invisible.

B He wants to think of a funny story to tell his friends.

C He wants to trick his friends and make them laugh at him.

D He is daydreaming during quiet reading time.

Come Again Another Day

Clink! Clink! Clink!

2. Rain water rushed through the gutter above Terrell's room and was now overflowing, dripping down onto the metal awning below. Terrell sat at the edge of his bed and stared out the window. The dark, gray clouds were sponges in the sky, tightly squeezed to release rainwater all over town.
3. Splat! Splat! Boom!
4. Flashes of lightning lit up the gloomy sky as thunder shook his house like an unwanted earthquake. The wind howled through the neighborhood, and the leaves clung to the tree branches with all of their might.
5. Just as the storm raged outside his room, another storm was brewing inside Terrell's stomach. Terrell buried his face in his hands and lay back on his bed, rolling over his baseball glove in the process.
6. Today was the day of the big game. Terrell was the shortstop for a little league baseball team called the Cubs. With Terrell's help, the Cubs won most of their games during the spring season and stormed through the playoffs, winning every playoff game that they played. Today was supposed to be the day that they played their rival, the Tigers, in the World Series.
7. The Tigers were the best team in the league. They were undefeated, having handed the Cubs their only two losses of the season. Terrell's best friend, Ronny, was the starting pitcher for the Tigers. The last time the two teams played, Ronny struck Terrell out twice. Terrell was looking forward to getting his revenge in the World Series game.
8. But now it looked like that would not happen. With the way it was raining, the league was surely going to cancel the game. To make matters worse, Terrell was leaving for a summer vacation with his family the next day. If the game was rained out, it would likely get rescheduled while he was away, and he would not get to play.
9. Terrell pulled his glove out from under him and pounded the inside webbing three times.
10. Slap! Slap! Slap!
11. This brought back a memory of the last playoff game when he made the game-winning catch. It was the bottom of the ninth. There were two outs and runners on 2nd and 3rd bases. The Cubs were winning by one run. The Cubs pitcher threw a fastball, and the batter slammed a line drive between 2nd and 3rd. Terrell ran to his right, dove into the air, stabbed at the ball, and caught it. His teammates crowded around him and celebrated his amazing catch. Terrell let the memory wash over him like the rain on the roof of his house.
12. Tap! Tap! Tap!

13. It was his dad knocking on the open bedroom door. He stepped into Terrell's room and placed his hand on his shoulder.
14. How are you doing, Champ? asked his dad.
15. Not too good, Terrell replied.
16. What's up? inquired his dad.
17. Looks like the big game is going to get washed out, mumbled Terrell.
18. That's okay, son. It will be rescheduled.
19. Yeah, but I'll be in Tennessee, grumbled Terrell.
20. Oh, I guess you're right. Well, the game is not for a few hours. Maybe the rain will stop, suggested his dad.
21. Terrell sighed and looked up at his dad with his sad, green eyes.
22. It looks pretty bad out there, Dad. The game will be cancelled, Terrell moaned. They will play next week, and I won't be here. And if we lose, I'll never hear the end of it from Ronny.
23. You never know, Champ. You have to stay positive, declared his dad. You look gloomier than the sky does. Nothing good can come from negative thoughts. Be positive!
24. Terrell's dad rubbed his head and left the room, closing the door behind him. Terrell knew that his dad was right. There was no sense in being negative. There was really nothing he could do about the weather. It was completely out of his control.
25. Terrell looked around his room. The walls were decorated with posters of his favorite baseball players. Staring at his heroes, Terrell noticed one thing that they had in common. All of the baseball players were smiling. Be positive! His dad's words bounced around his head like a sphere in a pinball machine.
26. Terrell rolled over and picked up his Cubs cap from his nightstand. He placed it snugly on his head and pulled the brim over his eyes. He thought about the joyful baseball players on his wall. He pictured them altogether on one field. They were swinging bats, running bases, and catching balls, all with smiles on their faces. Before long, Terrell saw himself on the field with his heroes, wearing his Cubs cap and smiling.
27. He watched himself step up to the plate with the sun shining in his eyes. It was so bright; he could barely make out Ronny on the mound, who was getting ready to pitch to him. The smell of freshly cut grass filled his nose as he firmly placed the bat in his hands. Ronny wound up to pitch the ball and threw a fastball towards the plate. Terrell took one swing and launched the ball into the sun-filled sky. With this happy vision in his mind and a grin on his face, Terrell drifted off to sleep, his dad's words echoing off in the distance. Be positive! Be positive! Be positive!
28. Thud! Thud! Thud!

29. Terrell woke up to his dad pounding on the door. As he shook the cobwebs from his head, he saw his father charge into the room.
30. Get dressed! Your coach just called! The game is on! It's time to go! exclaimed his dad.
31. Terrell jumped out of bed, put on his baseball uniform, and grabbed his glove. He looked out the window and saw the sun shining through the trees and shimmering off of the moist grass.
32. Be positive! Terrell whispered to himself.
33. Grinning from ear to ear, he skipped down the stairs, out the door, and down to the baseball field.

Question #12

What will *most likely* happen next?

- A Terrell will imagine himself dropping the ball while he is playing.
- B Terrell will picture himself hitting the ball before he comes up to bat.
- C Terrell will worry that it will begin to rain at any moment.
- D Terrell will think about striking out before he bats against Ronny.

How the Tortoise Got His Cracked Shell

There is an old Nigerian legend about how the tortoise got his cracked shell.

- Grandparents and greatgrandparents have sat around the tribal fire and have told the story to hundreds of little children. They use the story as a lesson about what happens when people become overconfident. Here is how the story was told to me.
2. Tortoise and all of the other animals lived on earth. Above them was the Sky God who lived in the clouds and held special feasts that only the most important creatures were invited to. As it happened one day, all of the birds were invited to fly up and have a great feast with the Sky God, and the tortoise was envious of their opportunity. Being that he was a sweet talker and used flattery to get what he wanted, he went to each of the birds and told them how beautiful they were. He asked each of the birds for one of their feathers so that he could also fly with them and be their spokesperson to the gods. He told them that the gods would want someone who spoke as eloquently as he did. He told them that the gods would want someone who could flatter them, and he could. He also said he knew what the gods would ask when they came to the feast, and he knew how to answer. He

- would say, All of you had come to the feast. Although the birds did not exactly trust the tortoise, he had made them feel as though they needed someone to speak as none of them really wanted to do it, and they were shy. Giving him one of each of their feathers, the tortoise suddenly became one of the most beautiful of the birds in the group.
3. The day finally came, and they flew into the heavens where they were met by the gods. The Sky God came forward and said, Welcome. Who will eat first at the feast?
 4. The tortoise stepped forward and slyly said, My name is All of You.
 5. The Sky God said, Come, All of You, and be the first to feast at our table. The gods allowed the tortoise to come to the feasts while all of the birds had to wait outside and were only given the leftovers.
 6. When the tortoise came out fat and full, each one of the birds walked up to him and snatched away the feather they had given him. One by one, they took them until he had nothing left but his hard shell. But how will I fly home, he asked the birds as he peered down from the clouds to their village below.
 7. We do not care, said the birds, You tricked us. Again the tortoise tried to be a sweet talker and persuade them into giving him back a feather, but the birds had learned their lesson.
 8. Right before the last bird flew off to leave him behind, the tortoise begged, At least, tell my wife to put all of the soft things in the house outside in the yard so I may land safely below. With a flying leap, the last bird flew from the cloud.
 9. The tortoise peered down below and saw that his wife began moving items out of their home and into the yard. Surely, they told her to put the soft things out. I will be able to get back home after all. Finally, he felt that his wife was finished and although he could not make out what was outside his home, he knew he had no choice but to jump if he were to get back.
 10. Tumbling through the sky, he landed with a crash on his back and his shell shattered into a million pieces. The tortoise realized that the birds had indeed given his wife a message, but they had told her to put hard and sharp object outside not the soft. Although the tortoise did survive the fall, his shell was cracked and had to be pieced back together like a puzzle by the village medicine man. It was a constant reminder to him that pride and sweet words will get you nowhere.
 11. So little children, be wise and learn your lesson. When you see a tortoise with his shell all ridged and bumpy, let it remind you that arrogance goes before a fall and that deception will only cause you pain.

Question #13

Why does the tortoise give himself the name "All of You"?

A so he will be respected by the gods

B so he will be last to eat

C so he will be first to eat

D so he will impress the gods

Mushing through the Snow

The biggest and most awaited annual dogsled race was about to begin in Mark's hometown of Anchorage, Alaska. Mark was proud of his team of dogs which he had trained for several months. Mark and his team of twelve were lined up at the starting gate. Mark stood behind them with his heart racing. His eyes were glued to the big bell tower clock in front of him. Each team showed its eagerness for the race to begin by its body language. The excitement of each team was contagious and shared with the others. It was so cold outside that Mark could see his own breath along with the breath of all twelve of his dogs.

2. The spectators were beginning to clap with their thick-gloved hands and to yell words of encouragement to the racers on this cold, snowy morning. He could see his parents smiling and waving to him in the crowd. They made a seven-hour drive from Fairbanks to see Mark and his team off. The bell tower clock's first bell rang, and all the sled drivers yelled, *Mush!* The race began. The dogs leaped forward and barked loud sounds of encouragement to each other. The race had finally begun after months of hard work and anticipation of this moment.
3. The racing teams ran over snowy mountain ranges, through dense evergreen forests, across the open tundra, and over frozen lakes. They ran in temperatures below zero and through many hours of the winter darkness to avoid the blinding conditions during the day. Alaska had some of the roughest and most beautiful terrain Mother Nature had to offer.
4. Mark and his team only stopped to rest and to eat. They wanted to stay ahead of the other teams. The racers had to go more than a thousand miles across Alaska ending in Nome, Alaska. Even though Alaska felt like the coldest place on Earth during the winter, the dogs' thick fur coats helped to keep them warm in the blustery wind and snow.
5. In many places along the route, the snow was deep. Pieces of hard packed ice as sharp as knives could cut the dogs' feet. Mark had packed special booties for his team to protect their paws and had put them on the dogs the third day out. He had also prepared special meals and snacks for his dogs made from high protein meats to provide them with the energy they needed for the race.
6. During the first couple of days, it seemed that the dogs were not pulling the sled as fast as when they had practiced. Mark realized they were probably still getting used to the race and to the tough backcountry. He was patient with his team because he knew his dogs were strong finishers. The dogs seemed to pick up speed on the fourth day, and they began to pass many of the other teams over the next several

days. Several of the racers had to drop out of the race due to a sled accident or a dog injury.

7. Mark made his last stop at midnight. He could tell his team was tired, but he knew they would be ready to head out for the races final stretch. Mark built a fire, fed his team, and then rested a few hours.
8. It was 4:00 a.m. when he woke. He got his team in line, gave them a snack, and petted them as he spoke words of kindness to each dog. He gave a special wink and an extra rub behind the ears to his team leader, Juneau, named after Alaskas capital city. Juneau knew the importance of this final day, and the confidence exhibited in his posture was seen by all of his team.
9. The team was excited and could feel the finish line was near. The Alaskan skies in the winter were beautiful on that clear night. A full moon in the clear, cold Arctic sky was just an added bonus when Mark started the team for their final days run. Mark yelled, Mush! The dogs jumped forward, and the sled began to move. He was not sure what place he was in but knew he was near the front. His team seemed to work well together on this final run. When they finally reached the finish line in Nome, he found out that they had come in first place! It was a great day for Mark and his dogs because they had just won the Alaskan Iditarod Dog Sled Race which many refer to as the The Last Great Race on Earth.

Question #14

Which statement about Alaska is a fact?

- A Alaska has some of the roughest and most beautiful terrain Mother Nature has to offer.
- B Juneau is the capital city of Alaska.
- C Alaska feels like the coldest place on Earth during the winter, with temperatures well below zero.
- D Alaskan skies are beautiful on a clear, cold night.

“My Uncle’s Dog”

1. “Hey, Josh. I need some help, and I’m betting you’re the man to do it,” announced my Uncle Kevin.
“Remember my puppy, Otis? Well, he’s about 9 months old now. I have to go out of town on business, and I need someone to take care of him. Could he stay with you for a week?”
2. “Yes!” I exclaimed. “I’d love to have that sweet little puppy here. Bring him on over to the house as soon as you can.” That was when I noticed my uncle’s unusual silence.
3. “Well, he’s grown a bit since you’ve seen him last,” Uncle Kevin replied. “But I think you’ll have a blast with him. I’ll bring him over tomorrow morning.”
4. The next morning, I was thinking about the new tricks I could teach Otis when Uncle Kevin arrived. Perhaps I could train him to balance a treat on his nose, then toss it up in the air and catch it with his mouth.
5. Suddenly, Uncle Kevin and Otis arrived, and I rushed to the door like a locomotive to let them in, but all of a sudden I was on the floor. I had been run over by a furry gray battering ram. As soon as the door was open, a huge head was pushing through the doorway, and I was in the way. He seemed to weigh as much as I did, and he was pushing forward so fast that I had no choice but to go down like a house of cards. The next thing I realized, I was being covered with wet, slimy kisses as Otis licked my face in greeting.
6. “Wow! Otis has grown much taller...and heavier...and friendlier since I last saw him!” I said from the ground.
7. “Are you going to be okay with this?” asked Uncle Kevin.
8. “Oh, I’ll be fine. Right, boy?” I replied, scratching Otis behind the ears.
9. He dropped Otis’s food and equipment in the kitchen, gave him a big hug, and strolled out the door. So, now Otis and I were on our own. Otis looked at me with a strange gleam in his eye. I was beginning to think that I might be in trouble.
10. My first idea was to take Otis on a walk around the neighborhood and show him off to my friends. I snapped on his leash and led him out the front door. As soon as we reached the sidewalk, Otis took off running. Instead of me walking Otis, he was dragging me as he galloped down the street, going much too fast to stop. It was all I could do to hang on and hope he would not pull me into the middle of the street. After three times around the block, I managed to get him to slow down enough so I could direct him back into the yard. I decided, for my own safety, that I would walk him inside the yard from then on.

11. Next, I thought we could play fetch with a soft rubber ball. The only trouble was that Otis did not understand how to play fetch. When I threw him the ball, he leaped in the air to catch it and then sprinted back to me. Then he jumped up on my shoulders, knocking me down and knocking the air out of me. Then he dropped the ball on my stomach.
12. We went back inside, and I hoped that Otis might need a nap. I decided to play a video game, and Otis sat down beside me. It was quiet for a little while until I heard a strange chewing sound. I looked down to see Otis devouring my favorite pair of sneakers. It took me a while to get them away from him. They would never be the same again.
13. At that moment, Mom came home from work. She was excited to have Otis visiting and asked me how my first day was going. I looked at her and sighed.
14. "It's going to be a long week," I told her.



Question #15 Part B

Which quote from the passage supports the answer in Part A?

- A "“Well, he’s grown a bit since you’ve seen him last,” Uncle Kevin replied.”
- B "“But I think you’ll have a blast with him. I’ll bring him over tomorrow morning.””
- C "“The next morning, I was thinking about the new tricks I could teach Otis when Uncle Kevin arrived.”
- D "“He dropped Otis’s food and equipment in the kitchen, gave him a big hug, and strolled out the door.”

Question #16

Which quote from the text supports the inference that Uncle Kevin was slightly concerned about leaving Otis with Josh?

- A "Remember my puppy, Otis? Well, he's about 9 months old now."
- B "That was when I noticed my uncle's unusual silence."
- C "But I think you'll have a blast with him. I'll bring him over tomorrow morning."
- D "He dropped Otis's food and equipment in the kitchen, gave him a big hug, and strolled out the door."

The Healing Power of Dance

1. Emily stumbled into her room with the weight of the world on her shoulders. She dropped her book bag on the floor and fell onto her bed. She had not been feeling well all day. Her nose was runny, her throat was sore, and her forehead felt warm. She had been trying to convince herself that she was not getting sick, but at this point, it seemed hopeless. Her mom walked by her room just as the tears began to roll down her face.
2. Whats wrong, honey? asked Mom.
3. I think Im getting sick, Emily mumbled.
4. Her mom entered her room and placed her hand on Emilys forehead.
5. You do feel warm, reported Mom.
6. She covered Emily with a blanket and wiped the tears from her cheeks.
7. I know you feel bad, honey, but Ive never seen you cry when you were sick. Why are you so upset? inquired Mom.
8. Tomorrow is my first dance recital. If I am sick, you wont let me go, Emily pouted.
9. From the moment she brought home the purple flyer for the class, Emily wanted to dance. She begged her mom non-stop through the summer to let her do it. Finally, her mom agreed, and she started class in the fall.
10. Although she was a beginner, Emily was an enthusiastic student. She had not missed one of her dance lessons. She concentrated during class and followed her teachers every word. She participated in all activities and even stayed late to get a few more minutes of practice before going home.
11. While at home, Emily rehearsed her routines outside every day after school. Step by step, minute by minute, day by day, Emily could feel herself improving. In just two months, Emilys ability grew like a sunflower in a spring garden. Her commitment to dance was unbroken.
12. Her teacher had never had a student who improved so rapidly. In fact, she included Emily in the big routine that would close the show. This was an honor usually

- reserved for experienced dancers. She told Emily that her dedication would pay off at the recital. But now all that effort was for nothing.
13. But Ive worked so hard! moaned Emily.
 14. I know you have, honey. Im really proud of you, replied Mom.
 15. And I am all prepared. Even my costume is ready, sniveled Emily.
 16. For weeks her recital wardrobe had been hanging by her bed. To reward her commitment, her mom had taken Emily to the store and bought her a pink leotard, purple tutu, and white tights. Together with her pink pointe shoes, her clothes teased her as they hung beside her.
 17. I know that you are upset, sweetheart. Lets not get too disappointed just yet. Maybe if you take your medicine, get some rest, and drink plenty of water, you will feel better tomorrow, suggested Mom.
 18. With renewed hope, Emily swallowed her medicine and gulped down three glasses of water. Then she curled up in her bed to sleep for the night. At first she found it difficult to fall asleep, but exhaustion eventually weighed down her heavy eyelids until they closed.
 19. As she slept, Emily reviewed her dance steps, combining ballet routines with her dreams. She swirled and leapt across an evening sky, perfectly executing a series of battlements, pirouettes, and plies. All night long she actively practiced ballet in her mind, while her body rested. It was as if the more she thought about dance, the quicker her body recovered.
 20. When she awoke, Emily immediately checked her symptoms. She first noticed that her nose was no longer running. Then, she swallowed, and there was no pain in her throat. Lastly, she touched her forehead, and it did not feel warm. Emily was so excited that she flung the covers off of her bed. To her surprise, she found herself lying there dressed in her pink leotard, purple tutu, white tights, and pink pointe shoes.
 21. Emily thought for a moment about how all of this could be possible. She was no longer sick, and she was wearing her ballet costume. After entertaining a few possibilities, she decided to give up and credit it to the healing power of dance.
 22. Her amazement soon turned to excitement. She was going to go to the recital after all! Emily was not going to let down her teacher or classmates. She jumped out of bed, ran down the stairs, and found her mom in the kitchen.
 23. Mom, Mom, Mom! I feel better! I feel better! shouted Emily.
 24. I see, replied Mom, looking her up and down.

25. I did exactly what you said. I took my medicine, I drank plenty of water, and I got good nights rest, Emily reported. Now I feel great!
26. You look wonderful, offered Mom with a smile.
27. Emily smiled back and hoped that her mom would say she could go to the dance recital. She twirled across the kitchen floor, leaping once before giving her mom a giant hug.
28. Can I go to the recital? Can I go to the recital? Please!? Please!? begged Emily.
29. Well, I guess so, Mom chuckled. You are already dressed for it.
30. Both Emily and her mom looked down at her leotard and started to laugh. Soon after, they were on their way to the dance recital.

Question #17

What is another meaning for the word *dedication* in paragraph 12?

- A excitement
- B expertise
- C hard work
- D tiredness

Question #18

What will *most likely* happen next?

- A Emily will feel sick again on the way to the recital.
- B Emily will perform in the recital with her classmates.
- C Emily's mother will change her mind and not allow her to participate.
- D Emily's teacher will not let her dance when she learns that she was sick.

The Intruder

from *Go Big or Go Home*
by Will Hobbs

Brady Steele was home alone watching a meteor shower from the roof of his garage.

Soon after the meteor shower ended, something unusual happened.

1. It was late in the evening at the end of the first week of August. I was home alone and sitting on the edge of my bed, only seconds from crashing. I let out a huge yawn.
2. Do what, Brady?
3. Then I remembered. I'd been checking out the Perseid meteor shower off and on since the middle of July, and this was the night it was going to peak. I threw open the window, swiveled outside onto the flat roof of our garage, and pulled up the lawn chair I keep out there.
4. The sky was inky black and blazing with stars, which is nothing unusual for the Black Hills of South Dakota. Most nights are cloud-free, and our dry mountain air makes for excellent stargazing. Living out of town helps, too no lights.
5. I'd barely found where to look for the Perseus constellation when the first shooting star fell, then another, and another.
6. What a show. I could read my watch by starlight alone, and I started timing them. Five to seven a minute.
7. Mars was hovering just above the treetops, brighter than any star and twinkling blood red. Mars hadn't passed this close to Earth in a couple of hundred years.
8. Too bad Quinn is missing the show, I thought. My cousin lived forty miles north in the town of Lead, which rhymes with speed. On Quinn's block the streetlights make for lousy stargazing.
9. I'd been outside awhile, long enough to feel the chill, and was about to crawl back inside and hit the sack. My dad might be getting home soon, but he wasn't expecting me to wait up.
10. All was quiet except the burbling of Spring Creek and a slight breeze in the pines. Nothing unusual was happening. Then, in a split second, something totally unusual was happening: the sky was changing from black to blue.
11. Horizon to horizon, the night sky was glowing a brilliant blue. My jaw was on the ground. Strange, beautiful, bizarre, eerie, weird, awesome words can't begin to describe the light.

12. Then suddenly, BOOM! BOOM! Two tremendous explosions rocked the sky, so powerful they rattled my bedroom window. What in the world?
13. I didn't know what to make of the blue light, but I wondered if the booms had come from the Crazy Horse Memorial five miles south, where they're carving a mountain into the biggest statue in the world. Lately my dad and his crew had been widening the gap between Crazy Horses pointing arm and the mane of his warhorse. Saturday evenings in the summer, like this one, they do a night blast for the tourists. It's totally spectacular. From home we sometimes hear a muffled rumble, but nothing like this.
14. I didn't have time for another thought. All at once, a roar and a blinding fireball were coming down on me like a freight train strapped to a runaway skyrocket. I hit the deck, and as I did, WHAM! Something crashed right into the house. From the earsplitting sound of it, I'd nearly got hit.
15. Blinking and stupefied, I got to my feet, amazed to discover I was among the living. The sky was black again and lit with stars. Except for the burbling creek, everything was dead quiet.
16. Meteorite? I wondered. Could that be possible?
17. I climbed back through the window into my bedroom. When I switched on the light, more strangeness awaited. My bed was littered with debris bits of wood, chunks of plasterboard, shreds of asphalt shingle. My eyes went to the ceiling over my bed and found a ragged hole, big as a softball.
18. I glanced back to my bed. The sheet was ripped open and scorched, right where I would have been lying. I stuck my fist into the hole and pushed it all the way through my foam mattress. Whatever had done this had punched a hole between two of the slats spanning my bed frame. I couldn't reach any farther, so I dropped to my knees and looked under the bed. And there it was, among splinters on the floor unbelievably real. A meteorite!
19. Heart hammering, I sat on the edge of my bed with my prize in one palm and then the other. The space rock looked like a baked potato, all burned shiny, but with rougher edges, pits, and sparkles. It was heavy, and almost too hot to handle, as well as it might be after blazing a fiery hole through the atmosphere. We'd been hit by an intruder from outer space! I couldn't think of anything cooler that had happened in my entire life.

Excerpt from *The Intruder from Go Big or Go Home* by Will Hobbs. Copyright 2008 by Harper Collins Publishers.

Question #19

Part B

Which detail from the passage helps the reader understand the meaning of "The sky was inky black and blazing with stars"?

- A "I'd been checking out the Perseid meteor shower off and on since the middle of July, and this was the night it was going to peak."
- B "Most nights are cloud-free, and our dry mountain air makes for excellent stargazing."
- C "On Quinn's block the streetlights make for lousy stargazing."
- D "I'd been outside awhile, long enough to feel the chill, and was about to crawl back inside and hit the sack."

Question #20

Part B

Which phrase supports the answer to Part A?

- A "...first week of August."
- B "...was home alone..."
- C "...sitting on the edge..."
- D "...a huge yawn."

Appendix D

Motivations for Reading Questionnaire

Name _____ Date _____

Motivations for Reading Questionnaire

We are interested in your reading. The sentences tell how some students feel about reading. Listen to each sentence and decide whether it talks about a person who is like you or different from you. There are no right or wrong answers. We only want to know how you feel about reading.

For many of the statements, you should think about the kinds of things you read in your class.

Here are some ones to try before we start on the ones about reading:

I like ice cream.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

If the statement is **very different from you**, circle a 1.

If the statement is **a little different from you**, circle a 2.

If the statement is **a little like you**, circle a 3.

If the statement is **a lot like you**, circle a 4.

I like spinach.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

If the statement is **very different from you**, what should you circle?

If the statement is **a little different from you**, what should you circle?

If the statement is **a little like you**, what should you circle?

If the statement is **a lot like you**, what should you circle?

Okay, we are ready to start on the ones about reading. Remember, when you give your answers you should think about the things you are reading in your class. There are no right or wrong answers, we just are interested in YOUR ideas about reading. To give your answer, circle ONE number on each line. The answer lines are right under each statement.

Let's turn the page and start. Please follow along with me while I read each of the statements, and then circle your answer.

1. I like being the best at reading.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

2. I like it when the questions in books make me think.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

3. I read to improve my grades.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

4. If the teacher discusses something interesting I might read more about it.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

5. I like hard, challenging books.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

6. I enjoy a long, involved story or fiction book.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

7. I know that I will do well in reading next year.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

8. If a book is interesting I don't care how hard it is to read.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

9. I try to get more answers right than my friends.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

10. I have favorite subjects that I like to read about.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

11. I visit the library often with my family.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

12. I make pictures in my mind when I read.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

13. I don't like reading something when the words are too difficult.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

14. I enjoy reading books about people in different countries.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

15. I am a good reader.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

16. I usually learn difficult things by reading.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

17. It is very important to me to be a good reader.

Very Different	From Me	A Little Different	From Me	A Little	Like Me	A Lot	Like Me
	1		2		3		4

18. My parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading.

Very Different	A Little Different	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

19. I read to learn new information about topics that interest me.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

20. If the project is interesting, I can read difficult material.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

21. I learn more from reading than most students in the class.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

22. I read stories about fantasy and make believe.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	------------------

28. I like having the teacher say I read well.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

29. I read about my hobbies to learn more about them.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

30. I like mysteries.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

31. My friends and I like to trade things to read.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

32. Complicated stories are no fun to read.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

33. I read a lot of adventure stories.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

34. I do as little schoolwork as possible in reading.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

35. I feel like I make friends with people in good books.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

36. Finishing every reading assignment is very important to me.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

37. My friends sometimes tell me I am a good reader.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

38. Grades are a good way to see how well you are doing in reading.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

39. I like to help my friends with their schoolwork in reading.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

40. I don't like it when there are too many people in the story.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

41. I am willing to work hard to read better than my friends.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

42. I sometimes read to my parents.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

43. I like to get compliments for my reading.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

44. It is important for me to see my name on a list of good readers.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

45. I talk to my friends about what I am reading.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

46. I always try to finish my reading on time.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

47. I am happy when someone recognizes my reading.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

48. I like to tell my family about what I am reading.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

49. I like being the only one who knows an answer in something we read.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

50. I look forward to finding out my reading grade.

Very Different From Me		A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2		3	4

51. I always do my reading work exactly as the teacher wants it.

Very Different From Me	A Little Different From Me	A Little Like Me	A Lot Like Me
1	2	3	4

52. I like to finish my reading before other students.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

53. My parents ask me about my reading grade.

Very	A Little		
Different	Different	A Little	A Lot
From Me	From Me	Like Me	Like Me
1	2	3	4

Appendix E

Teacher Beliefs about Reading Motivation Questionnaire

This survey is anonymous. Please answer the questions as they most closely align to your current beliefs regarding students' motivation to read.

On a scale of 1-7:

1= Not at All, 3 = More NOT true than true, 5= More TRUE than not, 7= Very much true

1. I believe it is important for students to feel that they can improve as readers while they are in my class. * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

2. I believe it is important for students to feel that they can learn from reading in class. * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

3. I believe it is important to encourage students to generate questions rather than answer the teacher's questions. * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

4. I believe it is important for students to have access to readings that challenge them at their level. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

5. I believe it is important to give students opportunities to learn difficult things through reading. * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--

Not at All Very Much True

6. I believe it is important for students to read new information about topics that interest them. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

7. I believe it is important to select readings that are likely to draw students into a story's narrative. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

8. I believe it is important that students look forward to finding out their reading grades. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

I believe it is important that students think that grades are a good way of finding out how they are doing in reading. * *Mark only one oval.*

2 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

9. When I see that a student has an interest in a topic, I believe it is important to give that student readings that are centrally related to that topic. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

10. I believe it is important to ask students what they want to read. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. I believe that it is important that students are driven to work hard in order to get better at reading than their friends. * *Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

19. I believe it is necessary for students to view reading as one of the most important activities that they do. * *Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

20. I believe it is important that students see themselves as a good reader. * *Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

21. I believe it is important for students to feel that they can succeed in reading in the classroom. * *Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

22. I believe it is important that students value finishing every reading assignment. * *Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

23. I believe it is important to give students questions about their reading that make them think. * *Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Not at All Very Much True

24. I believe students will read more difficult material when it is interesting to them. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

25. I believe it is important to verbally encourage students to find out what interests them. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

26. I believe it is important for students to read about new things that interest them. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

27. I believe it is important for students to be so interested in what they are reading that they lose track of time. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

28. I believe it is important for students to read about a wide variety of topics. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

29. I believe it is important to encourage students to enter the world that the author has created. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

30. When I don't know students' interests, I believe it is important to choose readings on topics that will arouse their interests. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at All Very Much True

31. I believe it is important to encourage students to make pictures in their minds when they read. * *Mark only one oval.*

32.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at All Very Much True

33. I believe it is important that students read to improve their grades compared to other reasons for reading. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at All Very Much True

34. I believe it is important that students' parents ask about their reading grades. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at All Very Much True

35. I believe grading is an important way to foster reading development for students. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at All Very Much True

36. I believe it is important to provide time for students to read independently. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not at All Very Much True

37. I believe it is important to explain to students why a strategy being taught to them will be useful. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 Not at All Very Much True

38. I believe that it is important for students to enjoy being the only one who knows an answer in something they read. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 Not at All Very Much True

39. I believe that it is important for students to strive to get more answers right than their friends.

*

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 Not at All Very Much True

40. I believe that it is important for students to like finishing their reading before other students in the class. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 Not at All Very Much True

40. I believe it is important that students tell their family about what they are reading. * *Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 Not at All Very Much True

41. I believe it is important that students visit the library often with their family. * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at All	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Much True

Appendix F
Post-Assessment

A Special Snow Dog

1. I did not want to move to Alaska, but my mom said it was beautiful. She loved the beauty of the barren Arctic tundra and the jagged mountain ranges filled with spruce trees. I did not care for the months and months of sub-zero weather because I was an outdoor girl, and I loved activities like playing baseball and basketball. What was I going to do in Alaska?
2. The only tolerable part of moving was that my Aunt Libby lived in Alaska, and I adored her. She is a famous musher and had been racing dog sled teams for many years. It was difficult making friends at school, so I spent most of my free time with my aunt and her dogs. They were sturdy, wolf-like dogs, bred especially to be able to stand the harsh Arctic cold. They had the endurance to run long distances.
3. After I had been in Alaska a few months, my aunt came over with a gift it was a bright-eyed, playful-looking dog! Not just any dog, but a beautiful black and white snow dog, a malamute!
4. He is the runt of the litter. I wont be able to use him on the team because he is too small and not athletic enough to sustain the challenges of dog sled racing, she said. I didnt care what size he was at all; I was so happy to have a dog! Now, I had a companion to help relieve some of my loneliness. I changed my mind and decided right then to embrace my stay in Alaska, instead of wishing I were back in sunny California, so I gave him an Alaskan name. I chose Miki, which is Inuit for small one.
5. I really treasured my time with Miki because things werent going so well in school. I liked my teacher, but I had a hard time making friends. I often found myself eating lunch alone, comforting myself with thoughts of being able to spend time with my dog after school. Aunt Libby was aware of this, so one day she invited me to go out with her on a short practice run with her dog sled team. She thought that might cheer me up. She knew that I had always wanted to go with her. Now I was old enough, but I was torn because I did not want to leave Miki. At that point in time, he was my only friend. I think Aunt Libby read my mind, because the next thing she said was, Why dont we take Miki, too? He should be able to keep up with us on such a short run. I think he will enjoy it.
6. I couldnt believe it was going to happen. I picked out special boots for Miki so that his paws wouldnt freeze or get cut by the ice; but I didnt have anything warm enough to protect me from the cold. Aunt Libby gave me an old thin parka of

hers and explained that it would be fine since we wouldn't be out in the cold for very long.

7. Enjoying the beautiful scenery, we traveled through the Alaskan tundra. Aunt Libby called out, Mush, mush! and the dogs sped up. Faster and faster we went. We were like wolves with wings running through the forest! An Alaskan snow is unlike anything you have ever seen; and all we could see was whiteness. Just then, Aunt Libby rounded a corner a little too fast. Perhaps she wasn't used to my extra weight onboard. The sleds steel blades veered to the right, and then down a steep hill we tumbled.
8. It felt like I tumbled for days, but it was actually only minutes. However, it was long enough for me to get myself wedged in between two trees head-first! My face was buried in the snow, and I couldn't see a thing. I shouted, but I was sure no one could hear the muffled sound of my voice through the snow and brush. I calmed myself though, knowing Aunt Libby would soon come help me.
9. However, as time went on, I started to worry. I knew my coat was not warm enough to protect me from the cold much longer. Where were they? I wondered. I tried and tried to get myself free, but I couldn't move any part of my body, so I figured the best thing to do was remain calm and not panic. I focused on being reunited with Miki and Aunt Libby.
10. I am not really sure what happened next. I might have dozed off for a minute because the next thing I knew I felt something rustling near my feet. Aunt Libby, I called out, Is that you? There was no answer. Because I couldn't see my feet, an awful idea entered my mind. I felt terror surge through my body as I realized it might be a bear. We had already seen a moose and a red fox earlier in the day.
11. Meanwhile, unknown to me, Aunt Libby was frantically looking everywhere for me on the other side of the hill. She and the dogs had fallen to the left of the trail, and I had fallen the other direction off a steep cliff. All of her dogs were accounted for, but she could not find Miki or me. Aunt Libby understood the importance of time and did not want to waste one second. She was desperate to find us; however, she was blinded by the snow and didn't realize she was searching for me in the wrong location.
12. I heard the rustling sound near my feet again, but I still couldn't turn my head to look. I hoped I could scare it away if I yelled loud enough. Just when I started to scream, I heard barking! Beautiful, beautiful, barking!

It was Miki I knew his voice! I felt I had been rescued even though I was still stuck between the trees.

Hoping my screaming had not scared Miki away, I called, Come back! Come here Miki! I need you to go get help! I yelled and pleaded, but there was not another sound. He was gone.

13. The sun was setting, and I had just about given up hope when I heard some voices in the distance. It was Aunt Libby, all the sled dogs, and a rescue team led by Miki! Even some of the girls from school came to look for me. The rescue team was able to free me from the trees by using special tools and working carefully for a few hours. They never would have found me without Miki's help.
 14. Once I was free, Sam, one of the rescue workers, wanted to know what my dog's name was. He thought Miki was going to be famous when everyone found out how he had rescued me. I thought for a minute and then said, He used to be called Miki, or small one, because he was too small to be a team dog. However, I have just changed his name to Sangilak, which means biggest and strongest of all because he has proved he is big where it counts in character, intelligence, and bravery.
 15. We had to hurry home because one of the girls from school invited me over for pizza. So Sangilak and I hopped into the car, looking forward to more snowy adventures with our new friends in Alaska.
1. Why does the main character change the name of the dog from Miki to Sangilak?
 - A After demonstrating that he was scared of the snow, he became the strongest dog on the sled team.
 - B He introduced the main character to new friends with which to play.
 - C He was the fastest dog on the sled team and helped the team win the race.
 - D Although he was a small dog in size, he proved to be the biggest and strongest through his bravery and character.
 2. What does Miki do that suggests he is brave?
 - A He moves from sunny California to frozen Alaska.
 - B He is part of the dog sled racing team.
 - C He saves the main character from freezing in the Alaskan tundra.
 - D He is a famous dog sled musher.

A Wonderful Chef

1. It was Kellie's first time in the kitchen, and her family was nervous. Would their dinner consist of disgusting, overcooked combinations of mismatched ingredients? Was it really a good idea to let Kellie cook? Kellie, however, was not worried. She had seen every episode of *Cooking with Gina*. She read and learned by heart the recipe she planned to follow, *memorizing* the steps for making chicken and dumplings.
2. She stepped into the kitchen slowly, scanning every surface with her eyes. She took a deep breath and tied her apron tightly around her waist. This meal was like a test for her. Should she pass, she knew her family would permit her to cook more dinners, but should she produce an unappetizing meal, they would be hesitant to give her reign over the kitchen. As such, she was determined to prepare her chicken and dumplings with care.
3. Although nervous, Kellie kept her hands steady. She reached for the chicken and began to rinse it. Chef Gina had made it clear that chicken should be thoroughly washed before being cooked. As she patted the raw poultry dry, Kellie glanced at the ingredients she had set out on the counter earlier. She noticed that they stood like people, aligned and ready to fight for flavor.
4. A few minutes later, the ingredients really did come to life, as Kellie chopped, mixed, spread, cut, and seasoned them with the same care and ease she had seen Chef Gina display on her show. The ingredients slowly became more recognizable as chicken and dumplings, but Kellie was so engrossed in the process that she did not realize she had been distracted by all of the tasks involved in cooking and had forgotten to set a timer for the baking chicken.
5. Everything was going exactly as planned. Kellie's family, watching from the living room, started to gain faith in her cooking ability. Suddenly, a noise pierced through the air, causing everyone to jump. At first, Kellie could not identify the high-pitched disruption, but the source of the noise soon became clear to her. The smoke alarm had gone off.
6. In a panic, Kellie ran out of the house, trying to distance herself from the screeching noise. Kellie's father, however, recognizing the source of the smoke, walked over to the stove, and turned off the heat. He had noticed the smell of burnt chicken in the air. Luckily, the chicken had only just begun to burn and had not caught on fire.
7. Outside, Kellie stood dejectedly on the lawn, wiping tears with her floured apron. Now I'll *never* be allowed to cook, she thought to herself. I almost burned down the house! What a failure. But Kellie's parents, predicting her negative reaction to the burnt chicken, comforted her.
8. Kellie, her parents said soothingly, You did an amazing job. We never knew you could cook so well.
9. But I burned the chicken! Kellie tearfully declared.
10. Her parents' reaction surprised her. It doesn't matter. We watched you preparing dinner, and we were astounded by all the professional cooking techniques you used. The only thing you forgot to do was set the timer for the chicken. We could tell from the sounds, smells, and sights of the kitchen that you are a wonderful chef. Congratulations.

3. What is the *most likely* reason that doing a good job of cooking was important to Kellie?
 - A She wanted to impress her family with her advanced cooking ability.
 - B She wanted her family to allow her to take a class on cooking.
 - C She wanted to be allowed to watch "Cooking with Gina" more often.
 - D She wanted her family to allow her to cook more often.

4. Which resource would *most likely* give you more information about how to make chicken and dumplings?
 - A an encyclopedia
 - B newspaper article
 - C magazine
 - D cookbook

Down the Rabbit-Hole

From *Alice in Wonderland*
by Lewis Carroll

1. Alice was getting very tired of sitting next to her sister on the bank with nothing to do. She had looked at her sister's book, but it had no pictures in it. Alice did not see the point of a book without pictures.
2. Alice was beginning to wonder whether she should make a daisy-chain, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her. There was nothing strange about that, and Alice was not even very surprised when she heard the Rabbit say to itself, Oh dear! I shall be so late! But when the Rabbit took a watch out of its waistcoat pocket, Alice jumped to her feet and ran across the field after it. She was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole. Alice followed it, never giving a thought as to how she would get out again.
3. The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel. Suddenly, Alice found herself falling down what seemed to be a very large hole. Either the hole was very deep,

or she was falling very slowly, for she had plenty of time to look around her as she fell. At first, she tried to look down, but it was too dark to see anything. Then she looked at the sides and noticed they were filled with cupboards and bookshelves. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed. It was labeled, ORANGE MARMALADE, but it was empty. She put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past.

4. Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end? I wonder how many miles I have fallen? said Alice to herself. I must be near the center of the earth by now. I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth!
5. Down, down, down. There was nothing else to do, so Alice started to talk again. Dinah will miss me very much tonight. (Dinah was her cat.) I hope they give her a saucer of milk at dinnertime. Alice started to get very sleepy. She felt that she was dozing off and had just begun to dream that she was walking hand in hand with Dinah when suddenly Thump! Thump! Thump! Down she came upon a heap of dry sticks and leaves. The fall was over.
6. Alice was not hurt. She jumped to her feet and looked up to see how far she had actually fallen, but it was too dark to see anything. In front of her was another long passage. The White Rabbit was hurrying down it. Quickly, Alice followed. She heard the Rabbit say as it turned a corner, Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it is getting! Alice was close behind as she turned the corner, but the Rabbit had disappeared. She found herself in a long, low hall.
7. There were doors all around the hall, but they were all locked. When Alice had been all the way down one side and up the other trying every door, she walked sadly down the middle wondering how she was ever going to get out again.
8. Suddenly, she came across a three-legged table made of glass. The only thing on the table was a tiny golden key.
9. At the end of the story, what will *most likely* happen next?
 - A Alice will look for another book.
 - B Alice will begin to cry and scream for help.
 - C Alice will continue looking for unlocked doors.
 - D Alice will unlock a door.

How the Tortoise Got His Cracked Shell

1. There is an old Nigerian legend about how the tortoise got his cracked shell. Grandparents and greatgrandparents have sat around the tribal fire and have told the story to hundreds of little children. They use the story as a lesson about what happens when people become overconfident. Here is how the story was told to me.
2. Tortoise and all of the other animals lived on earth. Above them was the Sky God who lived in the clouds and held special feasts that only the most important creatures were invited to. As it happened one day, all of the birds were invited to fly up and have a great feast with the Sky God, and the tortoise was envious of their opportunity. Being that he was a sweet talker and used flattery to get what he wanted, he went to each of the birds and told them how beautiful they were. He asked each of the birds for one of their feathers so that he could also fly with them and be their spokesperson to the gods. He told them that the gods would want someone who spoke as eloquently as he did. He told them that the gods would want someone who could flatter them, and he could. He also said he knew what the gods would ask when they came to the feast, and he knew how to answer. He would say, All of you had come to the feast. Although the birds did not exactly trust the tortoise, he had made them feel as though they needed someone to speak as none of them really wanted to do it, and they were shy. Giving him one of each of their feathers, the tortoise suddenly became one of the most beautiful of the birds in the group.
3. The day finally came, and they flew into the heavens where they were met by the gods. The Sky God came forward and said, Welcome. Who will eat first at the feast?
4. The tortoise stepped forward and slyly said, My name is All of You.
5. The Sky God said, Come, All of You, and be the first to feast at our table. The gods allowed the tortoise to come to the feasts while all of the birds had to wait outside and were only given the leftovers.
6. When the tortoise came out fat and full, each one of the birds walked up to him and snatched away the feather they had given him. One by one, they took them until he had nothing left but his hard shell. But how will I fly home, he asked the birds as he peered down from the clouds to their village below.
7. We do not care, said the birds, You tricked us. Again the tortoise tried to be a sweet talker and persuade them into giving him back a feather, but the birds had learned their lesson.

8. Right before the last bird flew off to leave him behind, the tortoise begged, At least, tell my wife to put all of the soft things in the house outside in the yard so I may land safely below. With a flying leap, the last bird flew from the cloud.
 9. The tortoise peered down below and saw that his wife began moving items out of their home and into the yard. Surely, they told her to put the soft things out. I will be able to get back home after all. Finally, he felt that his wife was finished and although he could not make out what was outside his home, he knew he had no choice but to jump if he were to get back.
 10. Tumbling through the sky, he landed with a crash on his back and his shell shattered into a million pieces. The tortoise realized that the birds had indeed given his wife a message, but they had told her to put hard and sharp object outside not the soft. Although the tortoise did survive the fall, his shell was cracked and had to be pieced back together like a puzzle by the village medicine man. It was a constant reminder to him that pride and sweet words will get you nowhere.
 11. So little children, be wise and learn your lesson. When you see a tortoise with his shell all ridged and bumpy, let it remind you that arrogance goes before a fall and that deception will only cause you pain.
-
10. How did this experience *most likely* affect the tortoise?
 - A He learned to take pride in himself.
 - B He learned to have humiity.
 - C He learned not to trust his friends.
 - D He learned not to disrespect the gods.
 11. Why does the tortoise give himself the name "All of You"?
 - A so he will be respected by the gods
 - B so he will be last to eat
 - C so he will be first to eat
 - D so he will impress the gods

Next Time

1. It looked like a perfect day in the cattail marshes as the dragonflies were zipping overhead, the turtles were sunning on the banks, and the red-winged blackbirds were perched on top of the cattail stalks. It was time for all of the baby birds to leave their cup-shaped nests, and Reese, the smallest of all the red-winged blackbird babies, was ready for her great adventure!
2. Reese began flapping her wings ever so slightly as she had seen her parents do so many times before. On a nearby cattail, her father sang out his song, Kong-Ka-REEE! Kong-Ka-REEE! as her mother watched with a nervous eye as their last baby learned to fly. Reese closed her eyes, making a wish that she would make her parents proud of her as she took flight on her first try! When she opened her eyes, she saw the bright blue sky above her, the green plants around her, and the sparkling water beneath her. After fluffing her feathers, Reese flapped her wings, increasing her speed each time, and gave herself a little push with her feet.
3. Wow! A special feeling flooded Reese as she rose into the air. She was flying! It was hard, and her flight was awkward, but she was rising above the cattails and her nest where she had lived ever since she hatched. As she rose higher and higher, doubt and fear began to overtake her special feeling of pride. She looked for a place to land. She needed to regain her sense of accomplishment and try again. She wanted to become a smooth flying baby bird on her second attempt.
4. Reese spotted a long, thin branch that was hanging over the water. It looked like a perfect place to land and rest. As Reese put all of her weight on the branch, it drooped, and she began sliding down. Before she knew it, she fell off the branch and deep into the water below. As she rose to the surface, Reese could hear her parents calling out to her, but there was nothing they could do to help her. She had to save herself!
5. For the second time in a day, something special began to happen. Reese remembered how many times she had watched the ducks playing in the water. They had fun in the water, so why couldn't she? Reese began to swim by dipping her tiny wing tips down in the water and then moving her wings and feet as if she were flying in the air. She moved ever so slowly a little closer to the bank that she called home.
6. Unfortunately, Reese was not the only one taking a swim on that summer day. In the depths of those same waters, Terrance the Turtle was intently searching for worms. When he looked up, Terrance noticed the normally calm waters rippling a

great indication that worms were skimming the surface above. He started drifting upward in that direction.

7. Reese's parents, perched in the tree branches above, watched helplessly as their baby struggled towards the shore. As they saw Terrance slowly approaching her, they were shrieking and squawking, trying to protect her the best they could from a distance. Reese was growing more tired, and the distance to the shore seemed to get longer. However, for the third time that day, something else special happened, quite by chance. Robbie the Raccoon made a big splash and dash towards Terrance! Seeing danger heading his way, Terrance changed his course and headed back to the safety of the deep waters below.
8. This distraction gave Reese just enough time to make it to the shore where she dropped to the ground wet, winded, and worn-out! Her parents quickly flew to her side, continuing to shriek and squawk to protect her while she recovered. As the sunshine warmed her and dried her feathers, Reese grew more thankful for a happy ending to her first attempt to fly and swim! Even though she had dreamed of a longer first flight, Reese knew she would try again the next day. The lesson she learned was that a successful flight included a successful landing, too! Reese realized before she took off the next time, she would know where she would end up! Today didn't end up perfectly, but tomorrow would!

Part B

12. Which detail from the passage supports the answer in Part A?

A "She wanted to become a smooth flying baby bird on her second attempt."

B "In the depths of those same waters, Terrance the Turtle was intently searching for worms."

C "Reese was growing more tired, and the distance to the shore seemed to get longer."

D "Robbie the Raccoon made a big splash and dash towards Terrance!"

13. Why does Reese fall in the water?

- A She slips off a thin branch.
- B She wants to learn to swim.
- C She gets tired too quickly and falls.
- D She flies too high for her first flight.

Peace Outside

Lying down on my back, I sink into the warm bath of the sun.

The gentle breeze brings the green smell of growing
grass to fill my nose, and I can hear the whisper of
new leaves murmuring softly in the trees.

Clouds roam the sky above me like fluffy sheep grazing on a blue pasture.

5As if he were a lion wandering through the forest, an arrogant ant strolls unafraid
on my arm.

I leave him alone for the time being because perhaps he is enjoying the sun, too.

14. What does the speaker in the poem *most likely* do with the ant when he/she stands up again?
- A Crushes it with his/her thumb.
 - B Takes it home with him/her.
 - C Finds something for it to eat.
 - D Brushes it gently off his/her arm.
15. Which *best* explains why the speaker allows the ant to stay on his/her arm?
- A The speaker feels that he/she has something in common with the ant.
 - B The speaker is afraid of the ant.
 - C The speaker respects all life.
 - D The speaker believes that the ant is not able to harm him/her.

The Lemonade Trade

1. Lenny leaned against the lawn mower, staring at the massive yard before him. The noon day sun was beating upon his neck, and he wiped the sweat that was collecting behind his ears.
2. This is going to take forever! he complained.
3. Lenny had mowed the lawn before, but that was early in the spring when the weather was much cooler, not like the scorcher it was going to be today. Also, he knew that his friends would soon gather at the park to play baseball and swim in the lake.
4. The lawn seemed to stretch for miles in either direction of his house. It never appeared to be that large when he was playing football with his friends. They were always running out of room on what seemed to be a tiny field, but today it was a field fit for grazing cattle. Lenny calculated the number of steps he would have to take just to mow the first path from the house to the street, and he was not pleased with the number. When he multiplied this number by the number of rows, he knew that this was going to be an all-day endeavor.
5. Look at this mess! he griped.
6. The deep green blades of grass extended from the ground to Lennys knee. The tall weeds and dandelions, scattered throughout the yard, stretched above the high grass to greet Lenny with a wave and a snicker.
7. The sun, gaining power in strength, covered Lenny in a blanket of heat, haze, and humidity and he felt sick to his stomach.
8. Might as well get started, he groaned.
9. As he bent over to fill the lawn mower with gas, his younger brother Billy appeared with an ice-cold glass of lemonade.
10. What are you doing? Are you working? inquired Billy.
11. Lenny was about to snap back, What does it look like I am doing? but he thought better of it. Wiping the beads of sweat from his forehead, he stared at the cold glass of lemonade with a gleam in his eye and formulated a sneaky plan.
12. Well Billy, I am doing a very important job here, boasted Lenny. I have the honor of mowing this lawn today.
13. Billy looked at him with a sideways glance.
14. Isnt it hard work? asked Billy.
15. Oh, no, responded Lenny. It is so much fun! I get to move a powerful motor across the yard. Its like a gocart.
16. Really? questioned Billy.

17. Oh, yeah! But this is a very powerful machine, and only people who are really strong can handle it. That is why Dad asked me to do it. He knows that I am really strong, asserted Lenny convincingly.
18. But Im strong, said Billy.
19. Hmmmmm. I dont know, Billy. Youre probably going to have to wait until youre a little older.
20. Oh, come on. I can do it, argued Billy.
21. Like a boxer with his opponent on the ropes, Lenny knew that he had him right where he wanted him. Now it was time to go for the knock out.
22. Well, even if you could, I wouldnt let you do it. I want to mow the lawn myself, he blustered.
23. You do? asked Billy. I thought you hated mowing the lawn.
24. Oh, no! I love the feeling of pride I get from doing a good job. The smell of the fresh cut grass fills my nose as I look at my work, and I feel really good inside. I wouldnt give that feeling up for anything, stated Lenny, turning his head to keep from smiling.
25. Wow! That sounds great! Come on! Let me mow the lawn! Please! Billy pleaded.
26. No way. I love this job. I wouldnt just let you do it for nothing, replied Lenny, staring at the glass of lemonade longingly.
27. Billy caught the look and raised the glass to Lenny.
28. What about if I give you my lemonade? Would you let me do it then? asked Billy.
29. I dont know, Billy. That is a good offer, but I just like doing this SO much! Lenny was really laying it on thick. 30. Billy put his head down and thought really hard. As if a light bulb went on in his head, he quickly snapped his head up and looked Lenny in the eyes.
31. Okay, if you let me mow the lawn, I will give you my lemonade, AND I will clean our room, offered Billy.
32. That is a pretty good deal, Billy. Let me see. Lenny put his hand to his chin, pretending to think about the latest offer.
33. Okay, you can do it, granted Lenny.
34. Like an eager beaver, Billy handed Lenny his lemonade, started up the lawn mower, and set off with a smile. Lenny drank the lemonade and admired his accomplishment, while his excited brother mowed the massive lawn in the hot sun. Then he galloped off to the park to join his friends.
35. When he arrived at the park, all of Lennys friends were about to begin the baseball game. He had made it just in time to join in the fun. After the game, they all jumped into the cool water and played in the lake.

36. For some reason, Lenny found it difficult to have fun. A nagging feeling tugged at him the whole time he was at the park. The guilt of fooling his brother began to weigh heavily upon his mind. After a while, he found it unbearable, and he decided to go home.
37. When he got home, Lenny first noticed that the lawn was completely cut, and it looked really nice. He went inside and found his brother on the couch smiling with a tall glass of lemonade in one hand and a twenty dollar bill in the other. Billy looked up at Lenny as he entered the room.
38. You were right, Lenny, it does feel good to mow the lawn. I am very proud of the work that I did. Doesnt it look great? asked Billy.
39. It does! replied Lenny. Lenny was surprised at how energetic and cheerful Billy seemed.
40. Dad thought so, too. He came outside right as I was finishing. He was really amazed with my work. He was so delighted that he gave me 20 dollars. And Mom was so pleased that she decided to clean our room. Now I dont have to do it. She is up there now. Isnt that great? buzzed Billy.
41. Uhyeahthat is great, Billy muttered
42. Lenny. His scheme had not worked out as he had planned. Billy beamed with pride while Lenny felt crushed with guilt. Looking ragged and defeated, Lenny patted his brother on the back and headed toward their room to relieve his mom from cleaning his room.

**B**

16. Which phrase from the passage supports the answer in Part A?

A "...he wiped the sweat..."

B "...when the weather was much cooler..."

C "...would soon gather..."

D "...seemed to stretch for miles..."

adapted from "Why the Indian Loves His Dog"
from Stories the Iroquois Tell Their Children

1. The dog is the Indian's best friend. He is the comrade by day and the protector by night. As long as the Indian's dog has strength, he will fight for his friend.
2. The Indian says this is how the dog came to take his part.
3. An Indian and his dogs went into the woods to hunt. It was in the days when dogs and men could talk together, and each understood the language of the other.
4. When they reached the woods, the dogs began to talk with the Indian. They told him many wonderful things about the woods which he did not know. They taught him many tricks of the chase: how to scent and track the game and where to look for trails.
5. The man listened to what the dogs said, and he did as they told him. Soon the sledge which the dogs had drawn to the woods was piled high with deer and other game.
6. Never had the Indian's arrows brought him so much game. Never had he met with such success in hunting. He was so pleased that he said to the dogs, "Always shall I talk with you, give ear to what you say, and be one of you."
7. "Ah, but listen!" said the dogs. "If you wish to be one of us, you must live under the law of dogs, not men. Animals have laws different from those of men. When two dogs meet for the first time, they try their strength to see which is the better dog. Men do not fight when strangers meet, they shake hands. As we fight strange dogs, so you, too, must fight strange men, to see which is the best man,â€”if you are to live under the law of dogs."
8. The man said he would think it over and at sunrise give his answer. Indians always sleep before deciding a question.
9. The next morning, the man said he would live under the law of animals and fight strange men.
10. The following day, the man made ready to leave the woods. From the basswood, he made a strong harness for the dogs, so that they could draw the load of game back to the camp for him.
11. When the sun was high, the man and the dogs started with the sledge load of game. They had not gone far before they saw two strange Indians coming.
12. "Now," said the dogs to the man, "remember you are living under the dog's law. You must fight these strange men."

13. The man confronted first one Indian and then the other. At last both turned on him, and when they left him, he was badly injured. At this, the dogs took a hand. They leaped upon the Indians and drove them from the woods. Then they came back to where their friend lay on the ground and began to talk with him and lick his face.
14. The man could not speak for some time, but when his voice came to him, he said to the dogs, "No longer do I wish to live under the law of animals. No more shall I fight strangers. From this time, I shall shake hands with strangers and bid them welcome. From this time, I shall be a man and live under the law of men."
15. "Then," said the dogs sadly, "we shall no longer be able to talk with you and tell you the things that we know. But we will always stand by you. We will be your friends and will protect you when you need us as you did today."
16. This is why the Indian and his dog are now unable to speak each other's language. This is also why an Indian's dog will defend his friend.
adapted from "Why the Indian Loves His Dog" from *Stories the Iroquois Tell Their Children* by Mabel Powers. Copyright 1917 by Mabel Powers.

17. What can the reader infer about the Indian choosing to no longer live by the dogs' rules?
 - A The Indian does not care for dogs or their unnecessary rules.
 - B The Indian values the idea of living alone without the company of dogs.
 - C The Indian values the idea of respecting everyone, even strangers.
 - D The Indian does not know how to protect himself and needs dogs to help him.

from A Single Shard
by Linda Sue Park

Tree-ear lives in Chulpo, a small potters village on the west coast of Korea, in the mid- to late 12th century. Born an orphan, he lives a difficult life full of struggles. Soon he finds himself transfixed with pottery and becomes an apprentice to Min, the most brilliant (and short-tempered) potter in his village.

1. Clay today, not wood. Those were Mins orders for the tenth day.
2. Once again Tree-ear trundled the cart, this time along the river road, until he reached the digging area. Here the clay had been cut away in neat slabs, leaving a pattern of staggered rectangles in the riverbank.
3. Tree-ear paused for a moment when he reached the clay pits. He had passed by the pits many times before and had always liked looking at the scene there; the geometric pattern of the clay bank pleased him. But today he felt as though he were seeing the men and the boys working there for the first time.
4. Using spades, they slashed at the clay with movements almost too swift to follow. When a slab of clay had been outlined with the spade, it was cut away from the bank and heaved into a nearby cart or basket.

trundled push something with wheels spades digging tools with flat blades
--

5. Tree-ear watched for a while, the spade Min had given him on his shoulder. Then he slid down the muddy bank to stand in the shallow water. Raising the spade high over his shoulder, he brought it down with a dull thunk. It sliced into the wet clay, and Tree-ear noted with satisfaction the clean line made by the spades edge. He tugged at the spades handle, ready to make his next cut.
6. The spade did not budge. Tree-ear frowned, and pulled again. The head of the spade was well and truly buried. Tree-ear tried using both hands down low on the handle. The clay made squelching, sucking noises, as if it were trying to swallow the spade.
7. Finally, Tree-ear was forced to claw away the clay around the spade head in order to free it. His arms and legs were already covered in mud. He paused to brush away a mosquito and rubbed a swash of mud across one side of his face. At last, he stood up and swung the spade again.
8. It took him all morning to fill the cart with clay. The other diggers were long gone, having cut their clay with a swift skill that left Tree-ear alone and in despair. Heavy! He could not begin to lift a slab with the spade; he had to cut each slab into several pieces and lift them one at a time into the cart. Tree-ear scowled to see

the misshapen masses of clay in his cart, so different from the neat rectangles of the other workers.

9. Moreover, the spadework had torn open his blistered hand again. But it was not so painful as it had been on the mountainside, for here he could apply handfuls of cooling, soothing mud to the wound.
10. By the time the cart was loaded, Tree-ear wore mud like a second skin. Even raising his eyebrows was difficult, for his forehead was stiff with dried clay. And he was so exhausted that he could hardly bear the thought of wheeling the now-heavy cart back to Mins house.
11. Then a sudden thought came to him: dinner! He had forgotten the toil of the morning. Apprentices, assistants, the lowliest workers in every trade: no matter what their status, it was the masters duty to provide a meal for them in the middle of the workday. Now that Tree-ear was no longer working off a debt, Min was obligated to feed him. The thought broke through Tree-ears fatigue like a shaft of sunlight piercing a cloud.
12. He left the cart on the road and bounded into the river. He scrubbed and splashed and ducked under the water completely to get rid of as much grime as he possibly could. It would never do to appear for his first working meal dressed in mud.
13. Min glanced briefly at the clay-filled cart. You were long enough in returning, he said with a sniff. I will not be able to do any more work until after my midday meal.
14. He walked into the house, having said nothing about Tree-ears food. But Tree-ear barely had time to wonder before Mins wife appeared in the doorway. She held out a parcel tied up in cloth.
15. Tree-ear trotted to the door, resisting the impulse to snatch the parcel from her. He bowed his head and held out his hands, palms up and together, so was proper when accepting something.
16. Mins wife placed the cloth package in his hands. Eat well, work well, she said.
17. A hot lump rose in Tree-ears throat. He raised his hand and saw in her eyes that she heard his thanks even though he could not speak the words.
18. Tree-ear sat on a stone under the paulownia tree and untied the corners of the cloth. It held a gourd bowl filled with rice, whose whiteness was accented by a few dark shreds of savory dried fish and a little pile of kimchee pickled cabbage vivid with seasonings of red pepper, green onions and garlic. A pair of chopsticks was laid neatly across the top of the bowl.

19. Tree-ear picked up the chopsticks and stared for a moment. Of one thing he was certain: The feast-day banquets in the palace of the King could never better the modest meal before him, for he had earned it.

Excerpt from *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park. Copyright 2001 by Clarion Books.

18. Where does Tree-ear eat his meal?

A at his home

B in Min's kitchen

C by the river

D under a tree

from *Cornelia and the Audacious Escapades of the Somerset Sisters* by
Lesley M.M. Blume

Cornelia lives in a large apartment in New York. Her mother is a concert pianist who travels often, so Madam Desjardins, the housekeeper, stays with Cornelia. One evening, after going to the Magnolia Bakery for cupcakes, Cornelia meets a new neighbor and his dog, Mister Kinyatta.

1. It was dark when Cornelia strolled back to her building. Walter wasn't at the front desk, and the quietness of the lobby unnerved her even more. When she got out of the elevator on her floor, she glanced again at the mysterious blue sign on her neighbor's front door.
2. Suddenly the door opened and something shot out of the apartment. It ran full speed over her feet, and she staggered backward in surprise.
3. "Gah!!" a man shouted from inside the apartment. "Mister Kinyatta!! You little beast! Come back here immediately!"
4. And into the hallway ran a short, bearded, dark man wearing a turban and a knee-length shirt over trousers.
5. "Hello, young miss," he huffed in Cornelia's direction, and scrambled down the hallway in pursuit of the creature. "Mister Kinyatta, come here or I'll put you in a stew!" the man hollered as he ran and disappeared around the corner.
6. Cornelia followed him and peeked around the corner to see what was happening. The object in question appeared to be a small black French bulldog, who was very crafty and fast and clearly not ready to be marched back into the apartment. Every time the man leaped for Mister Kinyatta, the dog darted past him and wheeled around like a tiny bull, challenging the man to lunge for him again.
7. "Ugh!" groaned the man to Cornelia. His turban had shifted sideways on his head. "He looks like a clown but he is really a little devil! He taunts everyone except Virginia-ji, especially me." The dog was so excited by now that his eyes seemed to be going in opposite directions. "Come here. Mister Kinyatta!" the man bellowed helplessly.
8. "I know how to get him back into the apartment," Cornelia said. This was practically a speech for her, since she barely uttered a word to people she knew—much less to a stranger. She rustled the bag from the Magnolia Bakery and Mister Kinyatta snapped to attention.
9. "Oooh—what is it—food?" the little man cried hopefully. "He loves food."

10. Mister Kinyatta stood a few feet from Cornelia, looking her up and down. His ears stood up on his head like boat sails. Cornelia rattled the bag again, opening it a little bit and showing the dog what was inside.
11. “Mmmmmmm,” she said enticingly. “Cupcakes.” Mister Kinyatta took a few steps toward her, licking his chops. Cornelia backed up toward the apartment, and the dog followed her. By the time she had triumphantly lured Mister Kinyatta into the apartment, the dog was running around her ankles and leaping up into the air.
12. The man marched in after them. Now that the situation was under control, he assumed an air of authority. “Bring him into the kitchen, miss!” he instructed importantly. “Yes! Very good!” He reached up and straightened his turban.
13. As soon as all three of them were in the kitchen, the man reached into a ceramic jar that teetered on top of several unopened moving boxes and extracted a treat for Mister Kinyatta. He threw it across the kitchen floor and the dog ran after it.
14. “Quick—run out of the kitchen!” the man yelled, pointing theatrically toward the corridor. He and Cornelia ran out into the hallway, and the man snapped agate into place in the doorframe behind them, trapping Mister Kinyatta in the kitchen.

Excerpt from *Cornelia and the Audacious Escapades of the Somerset Sisters* by Lesley M.M. Blume. Copyright 2006 by Alfred A. Knopf.

Part B

15. Which detail from the passage helps the reader understand the meaning of "His ears stood up on his head like boat sails"?
- A The dog is interested when Cornelia shakes the bag and follows her.
 - B The dog likes to tease people.
 - C The dog runs full speed out of the apartment.
 - D The dog is fast and unwilling to go back into the apartment.

from Hummingbird
by Kimberly Greene Angle

March Anne Tanner lives on a watermelon farm with her father and her little brother. Her grandmother, Grenna, lives with them and helps take care of them. It is March Annes birthday, and she is thinking about her life and her worries about Grenna who has had a heart attack. When she visits the watermelon patch, she is accompanied by Nandina and Shout, two redbirds.

1. I peered up at the stain on my ceiling. Something else was bothering me. Everyone was acting like Grenna hadnt had a heart attack. When it was for certain sure that she had.
2. The telltale signs were everywhere.
3. For one thing, Keven and I were always making trays of salt-free, fat-free food and bringing them into Grennas bedroom. She was the one who had always served us before.
4. Second, a string of women from the church kept lining up at the door with casseroles for us to eat and cards or flowers for Grenna. Of course, every one of them was making goo-goo eyes at Daddy.
5. Thank goodness all he ever did was nod or tip his baseball cap and escape back into the fields.
6. But that was another thing. The watermelons were ripe, and it had always been Grenna whod inspected the melons to give the official call to begin harvest.
7. Then, yesterday, as we sat on the front porch watching hummingbirds, shed given the job to me.
8. After my morning bowl of cornflakes, I walked out into the first field. A morning glory vine was twisting into the melon vines and blooming as bright and blue as the sky at noon. The bees were already busy. Nandina and Shout were out, too, twittering at me and urging me on in my task.
9. Id watched Grenna check the melons for ripeness since I was four years old. I knew what she did, but I didnt know if I could do it myself.
10. I looked around at the hundreds of melons rising like small whales in a sea of green leaves and wondered where to begin.
11. You were born right smack-dab in the middle of watermelon harvest, I could hear Grenna say in my mind.
You grew ripe right along with those melons.
12. I scanned the first patch of vines.
13. First, check the vine tendrils closest to the melon to see if theyre curly and brown, Grenna had always told me. I kneeled down to see the tendrils tightly wound and the color of the bark on pine trees. In my mind I could also hear Grenna say,

March Anne, your red hair learned its curl from those melon tendrils. You grew up right along those rows of vines.

14. I walked to the second patch. Thump the melons, March Anne. They should sound as hollow as a gourd. I thumped a few. I knew the sound well. These melons had been my first and only drums as a small child. In early July, the sound of a Jubilee Beauty was tinny, almost as if I was hitting Comets hood. But now, in midAugust, the sound was deeper somehow, as if I were slapping a soccer ball.
15. I picked my way farther down to the next field.
16. Rub the melons, March Anne. When you can feel the slightest ridges along the stripes, youll know theyre ripe. I ran my fingers across the squiggly dark and light stripes of a Rattlesnake watermelon, and sure enough, I could feel the little lined indentations.
17. In the next patch I pondered the dark, brooding Moon n Stars watermelons. Look at the blossom end, March Anne; if the North Star is peeking out, then theyre ready to pick. I crouched down and saw how, besides the whitish-yellowish constellation of dots on the dark, almost black melon, a star was bursting out at the bloom end of the melon.
18. Then I turned over the next melon on the vine to inspect the spot where it had lain on the ground. Only when that ground spot is as yellow as the noonday sun, March Anne, are the melons red as a sunset inside. The ground spot was as yellow as a butterflys wing.
19. Most of the things that happened that day were like my other birthdays. I still lived in the tiny yellow house. I was still perplexed by my name. Other things were different, though, like the uninvited Ellie at the table when I opened my presents. And the fact that my birthday cake was from the Piggly Wiggly bakery instead of being made from scratch by Grenna.
20. But my best friends and my family were still around the table in the kitchen, smiling at me, wishing me well, and raising their voices together in song and those were the most important things, after all.

Excerpt from *Hummingbird* by Kimberly Greene Angle. Copyright 2008 by Farrar Strauss Giroux.

Part B

16. Which sentence helps the reader understand the meaning of "hundreds of melons rising like small whales in a sea of green leaves"?

A March Anne looked over the watermelon patch, and could tell it was close to harvesting time because she could see how big they were from where she stood.

B March Anne grew up in the watermelon patch, and she had curly hair like the vines on the watermelons.

C March Anne woke up that morning bothered, but she still went about her day's task to inspect the watermelons.

D March Anne still had a birthday like all her other birthdays except that her grandmother did not make her cake, her family bought it from Piggly Wiggly.

from *Ida B ...and Her Plans to Maximize
Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World* By
Katherine Hannigan

Ida finds herself in a class of disappointed students after hearing that their teacher, Ms. W, is sick. Her sore throat prevents her from reading aloud to the class. Ms. W. suggests that a guest reader help her as they begin a new book. Read the following excerpt to see if Ida was able to save the day.

1. “Ida, since I know you’ve read the book,” she said to me weakly, like it was her last request, “could you please read the first chapter today?”
2. Well, I was so shocked and embarrassed, sitting there with my mouth wide open, that I almost couldn’t tell that all the other kids were staring at me with their mouths wide open, too. Making words into story music like Ms. W. did was the one thing I wanted to do more than just about anything in the world. But telling a story out loud in front of my class at Ernest B. Lawson Elementary School was nearly the last thing I’d want to do in my entire life. I was so confused about whether I should be happy or scared, I just sat there.
3. Ms. W. got up, walked over to me, put her face next to my stunned and frozen one, and whispered, “Ida, I need your help.”
4. And there I was, hypnotized by that woman again. I was like a dog that would go fetch Ms. W.’s stick, even if it was in a snake’s hole under a thorn bush that had just been sprayed by a skunk.
5. I looked at Ms. W., just scared now, because I knew I was going to do it but I didn’t know how.
6. “I know you’ll be great,” she whispered.
7. And in my head I was already trotting off, looking for that stick, even though I could smell the stink and the thorns were pricking me.
8. “Do you want to sit there, or in my chair?” Ms. W. asked.
9. “I’ll sit here,” I mumbled.
10. She set the book down on my desk, brought her chair over, sat down next to me, put her head back, and closed her eyes.
11. “Whenever you’re ready, Ida,” she rasped.
12. I got tingly in my fingers thinking about opening up the book and reading those words out loud, making my voice go high and low, rough and smooth, like I did in my room. But my legs were shivering like they were out in a blizzard, and my stomach was flipping forward, then backward, forward, then backward, thinking about all of those people looking at me and hearing my voice.

13. I closed my eyes, put my right hand on top of the book, and passed it lightly across the cover. It was cool and smooth like a stone from the bottom of the brook, and it stilled me. A whole other world is inside there, I thought to myself, and that's where I want to be.
14. I opened the book and got ready to read the title. I could feel everybody's eyes on me, crowding me so there was hardly any air. The only sounds that came out of me were little peeps, like a baby bird chirping
"Alexandra Potemkin and the Space Shuttle to Planet Z."
15. Ms. Washington, with her eyes still closed, leaned over and whispered, "You'll have to read louder, honey, so everyone can hear."
16. "Yes, ma'am," I whispered back. I took a deep breath, filled my stomach up with air, and then made my muscles squeeze it out, so it pushed a big gust of wind over my voice box and out my mouth.
17. "Chapter One," I bellowed. My voice was so loud it surprised me, and I jumped back a little in my chair.
18. But nobody laughed. They were listening.
19. The book is about Alexandra, and her parents think she is quite difficult, but actually she is a genius who is assisting the also-genius scientist Professor Zelinski in her quest to explore the lost planet Z. Alexandra gets into some trouble, but really she is just a very focused person.
20. At first, I was worrying about all of the people watching and listening. But after a few minutes, I left that classroom and went into the story. I was in Alexandra's laboratory instead of at school, and I was just saying out loud everything I saw her do or felt her feel. I let my voice tell the way she did it and saw it and felt it.
21. And I was so looking forward to seeing what happened next, I forgot that I was reading. All of a sudden it was the end of the chapter, and it was like I was snatched out of a dream and couldn't quite recall where I was. I looked around and saw I was sitting at a desk, there was a book in front of me, kids were staring at me, and slowly I remembered.
22. I glanced over at Ms. W. and she smiled and whispered, "Thank you very much, Ida. That was lovely."
23. I handed Ms. W. the book, and we got back to work and everything was just like always, except that Ms. W. had to write all the instructions on the board instead of talking them.

24. At study time when I went to Ronnie's desk, he looked right in my eyes and said, "You read real good, Ida." And this time it was me staring down at my shoes like they might disappear if I didn't keep watching them.
25. My throat got stopped up, so I could hardly say, "Thank you."
26. Nothing was different except the warm glow that was in my belly and my arms and legs and my head and wouldn't go away. Even on the long, cruddy bus ride home.

Excerpt from *Ida B...and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World* by Katherine Hannigan. Copyright 2007 by Harper Trophy.

17. Based on the selection, who is Alexandra?
- A the main character in Katherine Hannigan's novel
 - B the main character in Ms. W.'s book
 - C the true identity of Professor Zelinski
 - D the person about whom Ida dreams
18. What *might* be inferred from Ida's statement when she mentions that Ms. W. makes words into "story music" in the second paragraph?
- A Ms. W. sings the words instead of reads them.
 - B Ms. W. plays background music as she reads the story.
 - C Ms. W. reads with expression.
 - D Ms. W. reads the words with rhythm.

from *Shiloh*
by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Marty knows that the dogs at Judd Travers's home are not well cared for, but as much as it bothers him, he cannot do anything about it. When one dog runs away from Judd Travers and into Marty's backyard, Marty is determined to protect this special dog.

1. I got to keep Shiloh a secret. That much I know. But Im not going to keep him chained. Only thing I can think of is to make him a pen. Dont like the idea of it, but Ill be with him as much as I can.
2. I take him back to the shadbush and Shiloh lays down.

shadbush—a large shrub or bush
lard bread—a kind of bread with
 cured pork baked into the dough

3. Shiloh, I say, patting his head. Stay!
4. He thumps his tail. I start to walk away, looking back. Shiloh gets up. Stay! I say again, louder, and point to the ground.
5. He lays back down, but I know hes like to follow, anyway. So I pull him over to a pine tree, take the belt off my jeans, loop it through the raggedy old collar Shilohs wearing, and fasten the belt to the tree. Shiloh dont like that much, but hes quiet. I go down the path and every so often I turn around. Shiloh is looking at me like he wont never see me again, but he dont bark. Strangest thing I ever see in a dog, to be that still.
6. Mas still on the back porch. When she washes, it takes her near all day. Dara Lynn and Beckys stuck to the TV. So I go to the shed by the side of the house and I take the extra fencing Dad used when we had us more chickens. I take me a piece of wire, too, and go back up the hill.
7. Shilohs still there, and he dont try to get up while I set to work. I string the fencing around the trunks of three small trees, four corner posts, and then back to the pine tree again where I fasten it with wire. Pen measures about six by eight feet.
8. I go back down to the shed again, and this time I get the old rotten planks Dad took out of the back steps when he put in the new. Pick me up an old pie tin, too. I take the planks up to Shilohs pen and make him a lean-to at one end, to protect him from rain. Fill the pie tin with water sos hell have something to drink.



9. Last of all, I take the lard bread from my pocket and feed it to Shiloh in little pieces, letting him lick my fingers after every bite. I wrap my arms around him, pat him, run my hands over his ears, even kiss his nose. I tell him about a million times I love him as much as I love my ma.
10. The worry part is whether or not he'll stay quiet. I'm hoping he will, cause he was a silent dog to begin with, but all the way back down the hill to the house, I put my finger to my lips and turn back.
11. Shhh! I say.
12. I'm tense as a cricket that night. Tense when Dad drives up in his Jeep, afraid the dog will bark. Tense when Dara Lynn and Becky are out in the yard playing after dinner, squealing and yelling, afraid that Shiloh will want to get in on the fun and maybe dig a hole under the fence. He never comes.
13. I manage to take a piece of potato and some cornbread up to him before it gets dark. I sit down in his pen with him, and he crawls all over me, licking my face. If he'd been a cat, he would have purred, he was that glad to see me.
14. Tell him I'm coming back tomorrow with some kind of leash for him. Tell him we're going to run all over that hill, him and me, every day. Tell him he's my dog now and then I leave, wiring that fence good. I go home and sleep a full night, first time in a long time.
15. The next morning before breakfast, as soon as Dad's gone, I take a biscuit from the kitchen and a rope from the shed outside, and run up the far hill.
16. Shiloh, boy, we're going for a run, I tell him.
17. To get in and out of Shiloh's pen, I got to unfasten the trunk of the pine, then move the fencing aside long enough to slip out. Shiloh lets me go through first, he follows, and then we're both together, like a six-legged animal, pounding along up the path, legs bumping, Shiloh leaping up to lick my hand. I let go of the rope and let Shiloh run free for a while. If he goes ahead even a few steps, he stops and looks back to see if I'm coming; if he stops to sniff at a tree or bush and I go on by, his feet pound double time to catch up.
18. Just out of the woods on the other side of the hill, there's a meadow, and I slump down in the grass to rest. Shiloh's all over me, licking my face sloppy wet. I giggle and roll over on my stomach, covering my head and neck with my arms. Shiloh whines and nudges his nose under my shoulder, working to roll me over. I laugh and turn on my back, pulling Shiloh down onto my chest, and for a while we both lay there, panting, enjoying the sunshine, belonging to each other.

Excerpt from *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Copyright 2000 by Scholastic.

19. Where is Shiloh's pen located?

A in the woods up the hill

B in the meadow in the neighbor's yard

C by the shed in the backyard

D behind the fence near the pond

from *The Janitors Boy*
by Andrew Clements

Jack Rankin has been caught making poor choices at school. When Mr. Ackerby, the principal, discovers the desk he ruined,

Jack must face the consequences. He first has to tell his father what he did.

1. John Rankin straightened up and smiled at his son, and tossed him a rag to wipe off his hand. Looking into Jack's face for the first time, he saw right away this wasn't a social visit. In a quieter voice he said, "What's on your mind, Jack?"
2. Jack looked at the floor and said, "I got myself in some trouble, Dad. And he handed his father the note from Mr. Ackerby."
3. John pulled a chair out from under a lab table and sat down. He took his reading glasses from his shirt pocket and perched them on the end of his nose. Then he tore open the envelope, unfolded the paper, and started to read. Jack watched his face.
4. John Rankin read two lines and looked up sharply at Jack, his dark eyebrows lifted in disbelief. "It was you? You're the one who messed up the desk that's down in the shop? Jack reddened, but he met his father's eyes with a sullen look and nodded.
5. His dad looked back to the note. It only took him another ten seconds to finish it. He put the paper back in the envelope and laid it on the scarred black lab table. He took off his glasses and tucked them into his pocket. Then he turned his head and looked out the window. A brisk wind was pushing the fallen leaves into heaps along the fence around the football field.
6. John Rankin cleared his throat. Hard to know what to make of this, son. There was a long pause, as if he hoped Jack would offer an explanation. Jack kept silent. Then John said, "But I guess there's time. He tapped the envelope on the lab table. According to this, seems like we've got three weeks to get to the bottom of it."
7. John stood up and walked over to the ventilator. He looked in his toolbox and picked up a wrench, squinted at it to read the size, and then turned his back to Jack, both arms down inside the cabinet again. He said, "You know that door to the right of my desk down in the shop?"
8. Jack said, "Sure," and he thought, "What, does he think?"

9. His dad continued, Go inside and look on the shelves to the left. There's a can of special solvent called OFFIT that's pretty good with the fresh stuff. And you'll need a roll of paper towels and some rubber gloves and a stiff-bladed putty knife for the hardened gum. Toss your supplies in a plastic bucket to carry 'em around. Easier that way. And you'll need a trash bag. After that folding desk is clean and back in the music room, you can move on to the tables and chairs in the library. I'll be checking your work, and I've got a feeling that Mr. Ackerby will too.
 10. John turned around and tossed the wrench back into the toolbox. The metallic clatter made Jack jump. His dad said, Any questions?
 11. No.
 12. Then get to it.
 13. John Rankin turned back to the broken ventilator, and Jack turned and headed back to the workshop for the third time today.
 14. Jack felt so relieved he practically skipped down the empty staircase. His dad hadn't even yelled at him. Maybe it was a sign, a good omen. Maybe his mom wouldn't ground him. And maybe Ackerby would lighten up and let him off the hook after a week or so.
 15. Who could say? Maybe gum patrol wasn't going to be so bad.
 16. Then Jack caught himself. What, am I nuts? Gum patrol not so bad? Yeah, right.
- Excerpt from *The Janitor's Boy* by Andrew Clements. Copyright 2000 by Aladdin Paperbacks



20. What inference can the reader make about Jack based on paragraphs 13-16?

A Jack was accepting of his punishment.

B Jack was excited about his punishment.

C Jack was in shock over his punishment.

D Jack was troubled by his punishment.