

**“Catching Reading”:
An investigation into the use of an online social book
networking platform and its influence on Grade Eight
students’ reading habits**

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Declaration

I, Mrs Irene Rose Reid, declare as follows:

1. That the work described in this thesis has not been submitted to UKZN or other tertiary institution for purposes of obtaining an academic qualification, whether by myself or any other party.

3. Signed _____ Date _____

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Table of Contents

Declaration.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Tables.....	x
List of Appendices.....	xi
Abstract.....	xii
List of Acronyms.....	xiv
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Catching Reading.....	1
1.3 Research Background and Context.....	4
1.4 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.5 Technology and Adolescent Reading.....	6
1.6 Research Focus.....	8
1.7 Research Objectives.....	8
1.8 Research Questions.....	8
1.9 Significance of the Study.....	9
1.10 Theoretical Frameworks.....	10
1.11 Summary of Chapters.....	11
Chapter 2: The Literature Review and Theory.....	13
2.1 Introduction.....	13
2.2 What is Reading?.....	13
2.3 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS): Literacy and Reading in a South African Context.....	16
2.4 Significance and Benefits of Book Reading for Pleasure.....	17
2.5 The Perceived Decline in Adolescent Reading for Pleasure.....	20
2.6 Literacy, reading and the internet.....	24
2.7 Using ICT in the Reading Classroom.....	28

2.8	Theoretical Orientations	29
2.8.1	Introduction	29
2.8.2	Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (SLT).....	30
2.8.3	Bandura’s Self-Efficacy Theory (SET).....	30
2.8.4	Ryan and Deci’s Self-Determination Theory (SDT).....	31
2.8.5	Affordances Theory.....	31
2.8.6	Conceptual and Theoretical Framework	33
2.9	Literature Review Summary.....	36
2.10	Conclusion.....	37
Chapter 3: Methodology		38
3.1	Introduction	38
3.2	Research Paradigm.....	38
3.3	Research Design –Justification for using a Mixed method Case Study.....	39
3.4	Data Collection Instruments.....	41
3.5	The Case	45
3.6	Qualitative Data Tools.....	47
3.6.1	Written Participant Reflections.....	47
3.6.2	Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile – Reading Survey (AMRPRS).....	47
3.6.3	Classroom Reader Observations	48
3.6.4	Online GR Platform Activity Records and Observations	48
3.6.5	Online Application Tools – ORIS and GR Poll	49
3.6.6	Individual Reading Conferences.....	50
3.7	Quantitative Data Tools.....	50
3.7.1	AMRPRS pre- and post-test.....	50
3.7.2	Papyrus Library System – User Statistical Data (See Appendix 4 – Borrowers Profile)	51
3.7.3	Online GR Poll.....	52
3.8	Challenges and Limitations.....	52
Chapter 4 Findings – “Catching Reading”.....		58
4.1	Introduction	58
4.2	Statement of the Problem	58
4.3	Research Question 1: What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students?	59

4.3.1 Reading Intention (Time Spent Reading and Reading Feelings and Attitudes).....	60
4.3.2 Recognising the Benefits of Reading	79
4.3.3 Value of Reading as a Leisure Time Activity	86
4.3.4 Reading Strengths and Struggles, Skills and Understanding	90
4.3.5 Reading as a Social Activity.....	96
4.3.6 Where do they Read?.....	98
4.3.7 Online Reading Interest Survey (ORIS).....	100
4.3.8 Summary of Findings for Research Question 1.....	107
4.4 Research Question 2: How do the students utilize the Goodreads (GR) platform?.....	109
4.4.1 The GR Challenge Goal	109
4.4.2 Finding and Choosing Books on GR.....	110
4.4.3 Reading Volume	110
4.4.4 Planning Reading.....	110
4.5 Research Question 3: How is the students’ view of themselves as readers influenced by using the GR platform?.....	111
4.5.1 Reader Self-Concept	112
4.5.2 Readers Perceived Value of Reading	113
4.5.2.1 Summary of Changes to students’ View of Themselves after use of the Intervention GR	114
4.6 Research Question 4: In what ways does the use of GR influence the Grade Eight students reading?	117
4.6.1 Participant Post-Intervention Reflections on the Use of GR.....	118
4.6.2 Registration and Participant Frequency of Use of GR	120
4.6.3 Summary of Findings from the GR Poll.....	120
4.6.4 Summary of Findings of General Participant use of GR.....	121
4.6.5 Participant Challenges with GR	121
4.7 Qualitative Analysis – Four Selected Participants	122
4.8. Vignettes.....	125
4.8.1. Nora - Participant 171, 13 years old	125
4.8.2 Shreya - Participant 105, 14 years-old.....	130
4.8.3 Linda - Participant 74, 13 years old.....	135
4.8.4 Naledi - Participant 147, 14 years-old	142
4.9.1 Self-Concept of Reader	146
4.9.2 Perceived Value of Reading	146

4.9.3 Time for Reading.....	146
4.9.4 Engagement, Reader Motivation, Feelings and Attitudes	146
4.9.5 Reader Strength and Struggles	147
4.9.6 Reading as a Social Activity.....	147
4.9.7 Technology and Reading	147
4.9.8 More than just Reading and Readers	148
4.10 Conclusion.....	148
5. “Catching Reading” – Directions, Implications and Recommendations.....	150
5.1 Introduction	150
5.2 Research Setting.....	150
5.3 Research Context.....	150
5.4 Summary of Instruments and Findings	152
5.5 Research Question 1: What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students?	153
5.6 Research Question 2: How do the students use the online platform, Goodreads (GR)?	160
5.7 Research question 3: How is the Grade Eight students’ view of themselves as readers influenced using the GR platform?.....	164
5.8 Research Question 4: In what ways does the use of the online platform Goodreads influence the Grade Eight adolescents’ reading?	166
5.8.1 Changes in Reader Self-Concept.....	167
5.8.2 Changes in the Readers’ Perceived Value of Reading as an Activity.....	168
5.9 Reflections on the Role of Myself as Teacher-Librarian and Researcher.....	172
5.10 Methodological Challenges.....	172
5.11 Suggestions and Recommendations for Parents, Librarians and Teachers.....	173
5.11.1 Reading Relationships and Role Models.....	173
5.11.2 Value of Reading	174
5.12 Conclusion.....	176
References.....	180
Appendices.....	198

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Annual average number of books issued to students, per grade, per month, in 2016.....	5
Figure 2.1: NLT top-level tripartite conceptualisation of what we mean by "reading".....	17
Figure 2.2: CAPS document page thirty-one.....	19
Figure 2.3: Adapted diagram showing impact and outcomes of reading for pleasure on young adolescents.....	22
Figure 2.4: Diagram of Goodreads Platform Activity Affordances Model.....	33
Figure 2.5: Combined conceptual and theoretical framework.....	36
Figure 3.1: diagram representing interactivity in the research design process.....	40
Figure 3.2: Using multiple sources of data.....	45
Figure 3.3: Data collection sequence with activity and instrument used.....	46
Figure 4.1: Grade Eight annual borrowing statistics.....	61
Figure 4.2: Comparative number of books borrowed by a sub-sample of 30 participants.....	64
Figure 4.3: AMRPRS Question 2.....	66
Figure 4.4: AMRPRS Question 14.....	67
Figure 4.5: AMRPRS Question 9.....	80
Figure 4.6: AMRPRS Question 15.....	81
Figure 4.7: AMRPRS Question 12.....	86
Figure 4.8: AMRRPS Question 16.....	88
Figure 4.9: AMRRPS Question 5.....	91
Figure 4.10: AMRRPS Question 7.....	91
Figure 4.11: AMRRPS Question 13.....	92
Figure 4.12: AMRPRS Question 6.....	97
Figure 4.13: AMRRPS pre-test Question 17.....	98
Figure 4.14: Online reading interest survey (ORIS).....	102
Figure 4.15: Participant responses to Question 2 (ORIS).....	103
Figure 4.16: ORIS Question 3 - Participant responses to Question 3.....	104
Figure 4.17: AMRPRS pre- and post-mean percentage scores.....	115
Figure 4.18: Comparison of AMRRPS pre- and post-mean raw scores.....	115
Figure 4.19: Nora's AMRPRS results.....	126
Figure 4.20: Analysis of Nora's use of Goodreads (GR) (1).....	128

Figure 4.21: Figure 4.22: Analysis of Nora’s use of Goodreads (GR) (2)	129
Figure 4.23: Figure 4.24: Analysis of Nora’s use of Goodreads (GR) (3)	130
Figure 4.25: Shreya’s AMRPRS results - pre and post and total raw scores.....	131
Figure 4.26: Analysis of Shreya’s use of Goodreads (GR) (1).....	133
Figure 4.27: Analysis of Shreya’s use of Goodreads (GR) (2).....	134
Figure 4.28: Shreya’s favourite genre list.....	134
Figure 4.29: Linda’s AMRRPS pre- and post- and total raw scores	136
Figure 4.30: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (1).....	138
Figure 4.31: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (2).....	139
Figure 4.32: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (3).....	140
Figure 4.33: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (4).....	141
Figure 4.34: Naledi’s AMRPRS Results of pre-intervention and post-intervention total raw scores.....	142
Figure 4.35: Naledi’s use of GR	144
Figure 4.36: Analysis of Naledi’s use of Goodreads (GR).....	145
Figure 5.1: Mrs Reid’s 2016 Reading Challenge photo courtesy of I. Reid GR Profile	163

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Statistical data of number of books issued monthly to Grade 8-12 in 2016.....	5
Table 3.1: “Filling the Case”	42
Table 4.1: Total number of books issued, average numbers of books borrowed per learner per annum and per month.....	61
Table 4.2: Participant borrowing figures and time spent reading.....	65
Table 4.3: Summary of motivation, reading feelings, and attitude/feelings towards reading and time spent reading	67
Table 4.4: Mean AMRPRS pre-raw scores.....	80
Table 4.5: Summary of self-concept pre-intervention and post-intervention total scores	114
Table 4.6: Summary of value of reading pre- and post-total scores	115
Table 4.7: Research themes from data analysis	124
Table 4.8: Comparison of AMRPRS self-concept pre- and post-intervention scores	124
Table 4.9: Comparison AMRPRS Value of Reading pre- and post-intervention scores.....	124
Table 4.10: Pre-intervention and post-intervention AMRPRS scores showing self-concept and value score changes after the intervention (GR).....	125
Table 4.11: AMRPRS pre- and post-responses changes	127
Table 4.12: AMRPRS pre- and post- responses for self-concept and value.....	132
Table 4.13: AMRPRS pre-intervention and post-intervention self-concept responses changes	137
Table 4.14: Naledi’s AMRPRS pre-intervention and post-intervention self-concept response changes.....	143
Table 5.1: Participant pre and post intervention self-concept raw score changes	167
Table 5.2: Changes of AMRPRS raw scores of the construct ‘perceived value of reading’ .	169

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical clearance UKZN	198
Appendix 2: Department of Education gatekeeper permission	199
Appendix 3: Parent consent form	200
Appendix 4: Papyrus library data system – Borrower’s Profile	201
Appendix 5: Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey	202
Appendix 6: Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey scoring sheet	204
Appendix 7: Book and reading chat tool	205
Appendix 8: Reading Conference #1 & #2 Questions	206
Appendix 9: Online Reading Interest Survey (ORIS) Questions	208
Appendix 10: ORIS Participant 18’s Responses	210
Appendix 11: Goodreads Poll Questions Poll Questions	211
Appendix 12: Reading Reflection Questions and Exemplars	213
Appendix 13: Library Pictures	217
Appendix 14: Editing Certificate	220

Abstract

This study investigates the effects of an online social book platform on secondary school learners' reading habits, in order to explore how teachers and librarians can support students in improving their motivation and 'will' to read. Research shows that the affective processes of reading powerfully predict a reader's engagement and success in reading and help to sustain the reader in their long-term reading journey. As students move into adolescence, and start secondary school, their motivation to read books for pleasure appears to decrease. Students appear to lose the 'will' to read books for pleasure. This results in less time spent reading books and engaging with written book texts, and thus students do not enjoy the potential benefits that this type of reading offers. The focus of this research has been on book reading. There is a vast amount of research showing the immense benefits that book reading confers on the readers' current and future lives. Researchers agree on the benefits of book reading but there is limited research investigating the role of the affective processes involved in reading, namely: reader attitude, reader self-concept, a reader's value of reading and a reader's motivation for sustained and regular reading. The social nature of technology and its popular status in the life of the adolescent may afford these students' opportunities that might impact their reading 'will', thus positively influencing their reading motivation, resulting in a more positive reader attitude, reader self-concept, as well as improved perceptions of the value of reading.

In this exploratory case study in an all-girls' secondary school in Durban, KZN, South Africa, Grade Eight students were introduced to Goodreads (GR), a social book networking platform specifically aimed at readers and book lovers. The aim of this study was to investigate and explore the use of the online platform GR, and how through its creative and engaging technological interface, it might impact and influence the young adolescent readers' reading for pleasure. It was thought that GR might afford each reader a differentiated reading experience, a personalised meeting of other book lovers, readers and authors and in doing this connect with these adolescent readers where they were in their reading journey.

In this case study I followed the reading journey and reading activity of 170 Grade Eight students. Using mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative data from the student survey responses and written reading reflections, as well as observations of their time spent on the GR intervention, this case study has indicated some change in relation to their reading engagement, reading volume, reading motivation, reader self-concept and perceived value of

reading. The findings show that a readers' motivation varies depending on the individual. Thus, to increase and arouse a student's reading motivation the interventions sought must be personal and differentiated rather than systemic. Themes identified in this research are: the importance of choice and goal setting in reading; the social capital of reading within the school, home and community as it relates to a student's value of reading; and the reader's reading self-concept which is related to their motivation for reading. Implications for parents, teachers of reading and librarians are discussed, and recommendations for further research generated.

Key words: adolescent reading, online social book platforms, reader self-concept, reader value of reading, motivation, secondary school librarians.

List of Acronyms

KZN – KwaZulu-Natal

GR – Goodreads

PIRLS - Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

CAPS – Curriculum and Policy Statement

AMRPRS – Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile – Reading Survey

AT – Affordances Theory

SET – Self-Efficacy Theory

SLT – Social Learning Theory

SDT – Self-Determination Theory

NLT – National Literacy Trust

NCTE – National Council of Teachers of English

RSA – Republic of South Africa

DBE – Department of Basic Education

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

BCS70 – British Cohort Study 1970

RA – The Reading Agency

WASCBR – Western Australian Study in Children’s Book Reading

ORIS – Online Reading Interest Survey

GRPOLL – Goodreads Online Poll

VAR – Very Active Readers

AVR – Average Readers

LAR – Less Active Readers

GRT – great deal of time spent reading

MT – moderate time spent reading

LTN – little to no time spent reading

BA – Book Abandonment – the habit of abandoning books unfinished

#Act Pedagogy – Activated Classroom Teaching Pedagogy

ESARD – Education Standards Research Team, UK.

SC – self-concept as a reader

PV – perceived value of reading

RC – reading conference

FOMO – the fear of missing out (a real phenomenon becoming increasingly common)

Chapter 1: Introduction

“The study of teenagers’ reading practices is a dynamic and rapidly changing field, and one in which digital innovation continues to reformulate old concepts and generate new practices”

(Rutherford, 2017)

1.1 Introduction

This research is a case study investigation into young adolescent reading, within an all-girls’ secondary school, in Westville, KwaZulu-Natal, where I am the teacher-librarian. The participants were young adolescent females, aged between 12 and 15 years of age. They have limited face to face time with me, the teacher-librarian/researcher – one 45-minute lesson, in a 10-day teaching and learning cycle. I investigated the use of Goodreads (GR), an online, social book networking platform, on the reading for pleasure of the Grade Eight students. I aimed to explore the dynamics of their reading for pleasure behaviour, their reader self-concept and their perceived value of reading, their current reading habits and how the use of GR influences the affective reading needs of these students.

1.2 Catching Reading

My thesis title, ‘Catching Reading’ arose from my own personal experiences of ‘catching’ reading from my father’s open demonstrations of his love of books, his reading example, and his passion for reading. I witnessed similar experiences as the students talked about their reading for pleasure journeys. The vast array of literature that I read, pointed to motivation and the will to read being a vital and critical factor in developing life-long readers. This led me to the idea that reading could be ‘caught’ if the motivation or will to read was activated, nurtured, and sustained. “The natural desire to read will be enhanced by the reinforcement of enjoyment” (Hicks, 2007, p. 143). These conditions could, I propose, create readers who love reading and who would choose to read for pleasure for life.

For clarity I would like to define the following terms, concepts, and themes relevant to my research:

- **Reading habits:** Those behaviours associated with reading for pleasure on a regular and consistent basis. For example: when one reads, how often one reads, what one reads, level of engagement (focus and concentration) when one reads, feelings and

attitudes towards reading, reader motivation, and value of reading. Reading needs to become a habit, something that is an integral part of adolescents' lives. This will allow the reader to feel confident, at ease, empowered and capable in their reading. Students will then be able to lead a reading life outside of school, becoming a "wild reader", a reader who has taken ownership of their reading life (Miller, 2014, p. xxiii-xxiv & p. 193).

- **Reading for Pleasure:** This case study looks specifically at reading for pleasure. It is reading that an individual chooses to do. It is independent, self-selected, intrinsically motivated reading that is completed in their own time (Merga, 2015a). It is completed for a wide range of personal and or social purposes and is seen as a fun activity by the reader (International Reading Asasociation, 2014). Krashen (2004) calls it free voluntary reading (FVR) while other terms include "voluntary reading, spare time reading, recreational reading and reading that occurs outside of school" (Hughes-Hassell, & Rodge, 2007). This reading is voluntary, and material is self-chosen. Reading is done where and whenever the reader feels the need or desire to read. Should you not enjoy the book you can put it back on the self and choose another title. According to Krashen, "it is the kind of reading that literate people do all of the time" (Krashen, 2004, p. xv).
- **Affective Processes of Reading:** Until recently there have been a limited number of studies looking at the topic of adolescent reading for pleasure with an emphasis on the affective processes involved in reading, as shown by the National Literacy Trust (NLT) diagram in Figure 2.3. Little research has focused on the development of readers who read regularly for enjoyment, are self-motivated to read, think of reading as a positive activity, have reading confidence (good reader self-concept) and identify themselves as readers who relate well to a variety of text. Research has concentrated on reading engagement, reading skills, scholastic achievement and performance (National Council of Teachers of English, 2019). My research focus is on the reader's intrinsic motivation for reading and the 'will' to read that creates lifelong readers – a desirable educational reading goal. Miller (2014) identifies five behaviours or habits that she believes life-long readers' exhibit. I have chosen these as reading behaviour themes to identify in my research sample when analysing the data of my case study. Life-long readers: prioritise time for reading; make their own reading choices, self-selecting the books they wish to read; enjoy opportunities to respond to the books they

read thus they foster reading relationships with other readers, thereby developing a strong reading community e.g. talking about books and sharing book recommendations; make reading plans or set reading goals beyond the current book they are reading; show a personal preference for specific genres, authors and themes or topics in the reading texts chosen.

- **Reader self-concept (SC):** All readers have an identity as a reader – some idea of themselves as a reader. This is a personalised estimation of themselves as a reader that is based upon their previous reading experiences, successes and failures, and feedback from significant others (peers, friends, family, teachers) about their reading ability and skill. This reader self-concept is an internalised view or picture of oneself as a reader. A reader with a strong reading self-concept will enjoy reading, be motivated to read and feel confident as a reader. They will experience feelings of control and positivity. They will believe they are capable and successful readers. Conversely, having a poor reading self-concept will leave the reader feeling demotivated to engage in reading, they will not find reading enjoyable, will not believe they can succeed at reading, and will develop long term negativity towards the activity of reading. They will feel powerless to effect changes to their reading and may even avoid the activity of reading completely. The relationship between a reader's self-concept and their reading motivation will either inhibit or promote their engagement and success in reading (Scott, 1996).
- **A reader's perceived value of reading (PV):** To develop adolescent readers who regularly read for pleasure and maintain this reading habit over a lifetime, one needs to understand the adolescents' perceptions of the importance and value of reading, and how these perceptions influence their motivation to read. Is reading valued enough by the adolescent to warrant engagement in reading for pleasure? If one views an activity as valuable, then one would choose to be engaged in this activity frequently. Merga and Roni (2018, p. 2) have found that frequent reading develops enhanced reading engagement, and those readers who value reading will read more often and develop and hone a variety of reading skills through the time they spend reading. The authors suggest that a low task value of reading negatively influences reading frequency. They state that the benefits of reading (both immediate and future) need to be communicated to adolescents and they must understand the benefits of reading. They conclude that 'reading will' and the value of reading needs to be fostered by both

parents at home as well as teachers at schools and in communities (Merga & Roni, 2018, p. 16). We can therefore assume that a relationship exists between one's perceived value of reading and one's willingness to engage in the activity of reading.

1.3 Research Background and Context

As the teacher-librarian in this large, well-resourced, all girls' public school, in Durban, Kwazulu-Natal (KZN), I am charged with the promotion of independent reading for pleasure, and the teaching of reading. I routinely, at the end of each academic year, collate data on user borrowing statistics from Papyrus[®], the library data system. An analysis of the statistics of the students' borrowing patterns revealed that their reading for pleasure is steadily decreasing throughout their time at secondary school (Figure 1). The students' declining borrowing as shown by the statistical data, is supported by comments made by the students themselves when chatting about books and reading for pleasure during their library lessons. Listed below are answers to questions asked of the students about why they do not appear to read as much as they did previously. The students' replies suggest personal and varied reasons for the apparent decline in their reading for pleasure, as follows:

- "I'm very busy with sport" ...
- "I have a lot going on at home"
- "My phone gets in the way of my reading because it can be quite distracting at times"
- "I do like reading but if I had to choose to either read or go to the beach, I would drop the book and go".

These students clearly articulate that they have a wide range of interests and activities that compete for their attention. Sport, family engagements, smart phone distractions and social media attractions, as well as socialising with their peer group and friends, are merely some that have been mentioned above. With reading being the "key enabler of learning for academic proficiency across all subject areas and over all grades", how can schools, teachers, parents, and librarians ensure that independent reading and regular reading engagement continues so that the reading skills continue to develop? (Daggett and Hasselbring, 2014, p. 2). This study explored long-form reading (Baron, 2015) – primarily books, because in all the available research, book reading is more consistently associated with academic benefit than other forms of reading, for example, eBook reading. The affective aspects of the Grade Eight readers, namely, self-concept as a reader and perceived value of reading as a reader, were

examined both pre- and post the use of GR and the influence of GR upon these affective processes in the context of the participants’ reading for pleasure journey, was investigated.

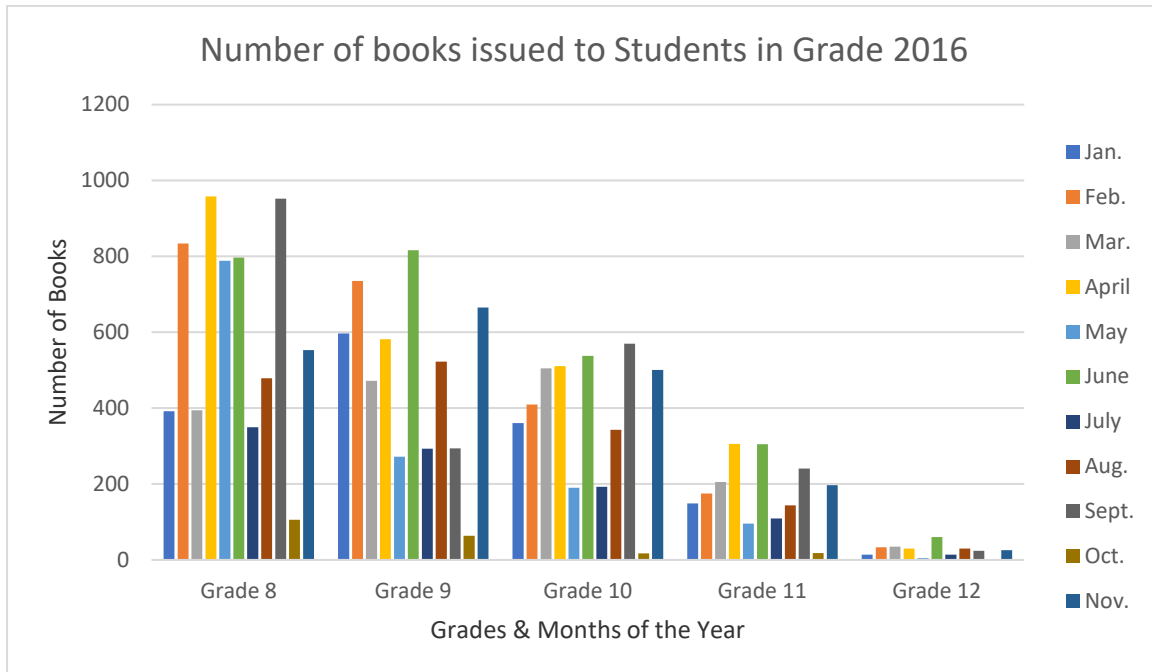


Figure 1.1: Annual average number of books issued to students, per grade, per month, in 2016

Table 1.1: Statistical data of number of books issued monthly to Grade 8-12 in 2016

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Gr. 8	392	834	394	958	788	797	350	479	952	106	553	30
Gr. 9	597	735	735	472	582	272	293	523	294	64	665	64
Gr. 10	361	410	410	505	511	190	193	343	570	17	501	56
Gr. 11	149	175	175	205	306	96	109	144	241	18	197	15
Gr. 12	14	33	35	30	5	60	14	30	24	0	26	3

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Upon reflecting on the students’ verbal comments and their statistics, I began to realise that the reading decline amongst the students as they moved through the school was a real problem. There appeared to be an increase in the demands competing for the students’ time and attention. For example, sporting, cultural and religious extra-curricular activities, increased homework, auxiliary subject classes, peer influences, academic pressures to achieve and excel, smartphone addiction and the fear of missing out (FOMO), socialising, and making new friends, compulsory after-hours school events, social media, television,

binge watching series, family activities and the internet. Teens are also prioritising self-identity and social group membership both virtual and located (Zasacka, 2014). These all play a role in the decline of reading in adolescents' time allocation. It seemed that the plethora of school and leisure activities available to the students were challenging them to 'make; or 'find' the time for reading. There were similarities to my statistics in the research data of American adolescents (Scholastic, 2017), Western Australian adolescents (Merga, 2014c), and in the United Kingdom. Clarke and Teravainen's (2017) research showed that attitudes towards reading for pleasure were becoming more negative. In our local South African research results, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) showed that eight out of ten Grade Four students in South Africa (78%) cannot read for meaning, suggesting that choosing to read for pleasure is diminishing amongst our young adolescents (Howie et al., 2016).

I realised that my secondary school reading programme with Grade Eight students was failing to create in the students a life-long habit of reading. I began to read around the topic, thinking about what I could possibly do to improve the reading motivation of my students. I believed, as did Hinchman and Appleman (2017), that positive action could be taken to improve and create a reading for pleasure culture within the school. I wanted to fulfil my ethical obligation as the Teacher-Librarian and "do well" with my students, developing in them a real love and pleasure for reading (Murphy, 2012). As a teacher-librarian within the school, I felt that not enough time was allocated to independent reading for pleasure in the secondary school (Merga, 2019a). The young adolescents were not "catching" the passion for reading. They were not finding the time to spend reading, becoming immersed in a book for the sheer pleasure of it. This was the motivation and impetus for this research.

1.5 Technology and Adolescent Reading

As an avid reader, I use the GR platform myself to record and plan my own reading. I use the 'reading challenge goal feature' in the application to challenge myself to read regularly as it keeps me motivated to mark off books I have read. I write book reviews and I recommend books to the students using links back to my own GR account. I find it useful and very motivating, and given the students' enjoyment of technology, I introduced the platform to the Grade Eight students as a part of their reading programme. Technology is changing literacy, introducing new literacies, multiliteracies and multimodal literacies. I had seen and experienced the excitement and motivation of the young adolescents when using technology,

especially the use of their smartphones. I reasoned that the GR platform, being available as a smartphone application would therefore be user-friendly and very accessible to them. As argued by Biancarosa and Griffiths (2012), I too felt that the use of the GR platform “[afforded] tools that teachers can deploy in their quest to create young readers who possess the higher levels of literacy skills and background knowledge demanded by today’s information-based society”, and I believed that they need to know how to consciously and strategically use technology to improve their literary skills.

My research is based on the view that the deliberate use of technology integration in reading teaching has the potential to engage readers, change reader attitudes and motivate readers (Derene, 2013; Mosito, Warnick, & Esambe, 2017; Maynard, 2010; Grant, & Basye, 2014; Moje, 2009). In this study, therefore, I investigated the use of the GR platform and whether it would develop in the adolescent reader participants an intrinsic positive motivation for reading that would: improve their attitude towards reading for pleasure; allow them to develop reading behaviours and habits that lend structure to their reading time; enable them to plan for reading time; make a positive impact on their reader self-concept; and give them a new realisation of the value of reading, creating in them the desire to be life-long independent readers.

My research was an attempt to understand the ways in which students are currently engaged in reading, how their reading fits into their everyday lives.

Goodreads provides a visually attractive technology platform for book lovers and encourages socialising online about reading. It is user friendly and operationally simple. Goodreads is a social repository of books and allows users free access to an extensive book database, book reviews, authors, book quizzes, book/reading questions, and answers. Users register, create personalised profiles, set themselves individual reading challenges or goals and can store books they read and books they want to read on personalised visual shelves. They can rate, review, and recommend books, follow friends, other readers, and authors. They can enjoy chatting and socialising online with peers, friends, and other book lovers on the site.

Goodreads is owned by the retailer Amazon. It was founded in 2006 and launched in 2007 with a mission to help readers find and share the books they love with other readers. I had been using Shelfari with the students which was acquired by Amazon and amalgamated with GR in 2016, hence my change of platform.

1.6 Research Focus

My research began with my thoughts on the ‘declining will to read’ of my students after looking at the Papyrus data. I asked the question: “can we shape or even change young people’s beliefs about themselves as readers and their attitudes towards books and reading?” (Merga (2019a, p.150). This exploratory case study of the Grade Eight students reading attempted to reveal whether the GR platform could effectively support and foster a love of reading within the Grade Eight student population, creating passionate readers who make time to read. Would the use of GR lessen their decline of reading for pleasure as they progress through secondary school?

My case study is an experiential enquiry, that “investigates in depth a contemporary phenomenon [Grade eight reading] in depth and within a real-world context, [the Grade Eight participant’s library reading programme] especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, R., 2014, pp. 16-17). Yin (2014), further states “that a case study has many variables of interest, relies on multiple sources of evidence, [and] benefits from ...theoretical propositions [that] guide data collection and analysis” (p.17).

1.7 Research Objectives

The following four objectives of this research were devised to guide the research process:

- To establish a baseline of the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students.
- To establish how the students use the Goodreads online platform.
- To investigate how the students’ views of themselves as readers is impacted by using the GR platform. (reader self-concept and perceived value of reading)
- To investigate the influences and impacts of the use of the GR platform upon the Grade Eight students’ reading.

1.8 Research Questions

The research questions provided a clear focus for the research process:

1. What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students?
2. How do the students utilise the online platform, Goodreads (GR)?
3. How are the students’ views of themselves as readers influenced when using the GR platform?
4. In what way does the use of GR influence the Grade Eight students’ reading?

My research design was based within the interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm tries to understand the world as it is, from the personal experiences of individuals (Thomas, 2003). In this case study as the researcher, I followed the reading journey and reading activity of 170 Grade Eight students. I engaged with them as their teacher-librarian when they came to their media lesson in the library. I talked about reading, sharing my own reading passion, and reading recommendations with them, thus facilitating their reading journey. Thus, I am “a participant observer” (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 88 cited in Thomas, 2005, p. 299). As researcher in this study, I interpreted the students’ reading reflections written at the start of their year (pre-reading reflections) and their responses to the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile-Reading Survey (AMRPRS) (pre-survey responses) completed at the beginning of the research process. These were then compared with their AMRPRS responses and reading reflections (post-reading reflections and post-survey responses) at the end of Term 3. I conducted nine individual participant reading conferences, wherein I meet with individual students to discuss their reading journey. In the reading conference, we look together at their reading goals set by themselves and their reading progress. We discuss their current book they are reading, their ‘to be read’ list and their Papyrus print out of books borrowed. We discuss book choices, and we chat about ways to challenge themselves in their reading. I employed a mixed method strategy of data collection with the survey and the reading reflections and reading conference instruments all drawing upon each other to cross-validate my findings.

1.9 Significance of the Study

This research is significant as it is based in South Africa. Much of the current research about adolescent reading has been conducted in the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States of America, Singapore, and other European countries as well as in some North African countries. My research will contribute significantly to reading research within a South African context. With the focus of my research being the affective aspects of reading in young adolescent readers, it also affords more significance, because these areas are neglected by reading research. Current research concentrates more on reading skills, reading engagement and the comprehension of younger children, with not enough research attention being given to fostering the desire or the will to read. Reading will or the intrinsic motivation to read is a vital starting point, and an essential factor of reading success (Merga, 2019a; De Naeghel, J., Van Keer, H., & Vanderlinde, R. (2014); Gambrell, 1996). A reader who is self-motivated to read will read more often. This increase in reading frequency and volume will

improve reading pace and reading skills, resulting in greater reading success. This in turn, will give the reader improved reading confidence. The reader self-concept will become more positive, and the reader will experience more enjoyment in reading, resulting in this reader choosing to read more frequently. This cyclical nature of reading will, reading volume, reading skills improvement and increased reading success is evidence of a mutually reinforcing relationship between reading will and reading skill. In providing research of the affective processes of reading in young adolescents' reading, in a South Africa context, this research will bolster local research in young adolescent reading.

With the use of technology (GR) as an intervention being used in my research, this case study could lend weight to a suggestion made by reading researcher Margaret Merga. She avers that social networking should be seen as a literary tool, suggesting, that future research can help to clarify the extent to which social networking around books encourages the development of a "recreational book habit" (Merga, 2015c, p. 14).

1.10 Theoretical Frameworks

This case study tells the story of the Grade Eight students' reading journey viewed through a socio-cultural lens. Reading is seen as a valuable part of the student's holistic literary development. This socio-cultural perspective sees reading as a social activity, in which readers grow and develop themselves, their knowledge and their reading skills. This occurs because of the relationships between the different social, physical, cultural and technological environments they practice reading in and engage with through their reading texts, as well as through the reading interactions they have with other readers around them (Reward cited in Gee, 2020, p. 47). The socio-cultural lens allows the researcher to use a symbolic interactionist model – a framework that allows for the analysis of the many varied influences that are involved in shaping the students' attitudes towards reading. For example, their engagement in reading, their choice to read or not to read, the volume and frequency of reading, their own choice of texts to read, time spent reading, and reading environments. The readers' attitudes towards book reading for pleasure are in some way a "product of their interactions with influential social agents ..." (Merga & Moon, 2016, p. 125) In this research these social agents may be teachers, librarians, parents, friends, peers and those they meet and interact with on the social networking site GR, as they socialise around books and reading.

Theories which proved useful and relevant to my research are:

- a) Affordances Theory (AT)

- b) Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory of Motivation (intrinsic motivation/will) (SET)
- c) Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT)
- d) Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

1.11 Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter details the motivation for the research, outlining the background and context of this case study. The research focus, the purpose of the study and details the research objectives and questions are highlighted. It briefly conveys the study's significance, outlining the research design and theoretical framework.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature relevant to my case study. I critically review literature around the significance and value of adolescent book reading for pleasure as it has evolved over time. I present arguments on the importance and benefits of reading books for pleasure. I examine the literature on the relationship between reading books for pleasure and the readers' affective processes. I critically examine literature and research about the use of technology in promoting and encouraging reading for pleasure. Literature on the relevant theories that support my research is critically investigated. The chapter ends with a discussion of the possible contributions of this research to the debate about adolescent book reading for pleasure and the use of technology in literacy programmes.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes the research paradigm and approach. It details how the data was collected and generated. It outlines the rationale for how and why specific procedures were used in identifying, selecting, processing, and analysing the information that was analysed to understand the research questions. I explain my conceptual and theoretical framework. I discuss ethical issues and research limitations that I encountered in the case study.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

I establish a baseline understanding of the current status of reading for pleasure amongst the participants. I examine the readers' current perceived value of reading, reader self-concept and motivation for reading and how this was influenced by their use of GR. Using vignettes this chapter tells the story of four individual reader's reading journeys, with specific emphasis

on their use of GR and its influence their affective processes (reader self-concept, value of reading, reading habits, attitudes, and feelings towards reading). Some conclusions about the Grade Eight adolescents' reading for pleasure are presented.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications and Recommendations

This chapter interprets the findings of my research and details the significance of those findings in the light of the adolescents' reading for pleasure experiences. It explains new understandings or insights that have emerged from this research, examines the implications of these new findings for understanding of young adolescent reading in the context of using technology in the reading programme at a secondary school. It makes recommendations as to how the school, its teachers and school librarian can support, motivate and encourage, the students in their reading for pleasure and in their use of technology with reading, to create a school that values reading and readers who read for pleasure with enjoyment and success thus creating life-long readers.

Chapter 2: The Literature Review and Theory

“it is essential that we take the time to consider the changes, our acceptance of all things digital evokes, in our lives, our learning and in our schools”

(Niemann, 2016, p. 31)

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I examine and discuss Grade Eight students’ reading for pleasure in the context of an all-girls’ secondary school. I present why I believe that reading books for pleasure has a definitive place in the secondary school curriculum. I briefly discuss the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), (Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa, 2011) regarding the focus currently in place for reading for pleasure, within the National Curriculum. I look at the significance and value of book reading. I critically investigate the literature and research regarding young adolescent reading and the perceived decline in reading for pleasure amongst young adolescents. I look at literature as it relates to the affective and aesthetic processes of reading. I explore research and literature about the integration of technology into reading programmes. I review literature around digital and e-reading. Lastly, I examine, critique, and apply the theories that pertain to my case study.

2.2 What is Reading?

On examining the literature around adolescent reading, I noticed many differing views on reading. Researchers agree that reading is changing and evolving to encompass a host of different texts and ways of reading. The concept of literacy, of which reading is one part, has become known as literacies, making the concepts of literacy, and reading, dynamic and complex.

Smith (1975, p. 179-187) believes that in becoming a fluent reader we need to rely less on the visual information and rely more on the non-visual information “behind [one’s] eyeballs” and the author further believes that “reading can only be learned through reading ... children can teach themselves to read ... children know how to read, if given half the chance”. This is a somewhat controversial view of reading and is at the origin of my thesis title, “Catching Reading”, which we will examine as we journey through the literature. Krashen (2013)

believes that “recent changes in the language arts education are working against access to books and reading time in school” (p. 21). This finding was supported by Merga and Moon (2016) in relation to how students perceived the low value of reading. Krashen (2013) also believes that the one thing that can improve reading, and therefore learning, is to read more frequently and he states that he believes that reading instruction does not necessarily result in improved reading competence.

Reading is a vital facet of the developing literacy of a person – a mix of cognitive processes, reading habits and behaviours and affective processes. Traditionally reading was the development of sets of skills to decode letters, words, and other symbols, to gain meaning from them. Recent research advocates for an engagement perspective and aesthetic approach to reading instruction, that shows a growth mindset approach to reading (Guthrie, 2008; Miller, 2014; Scholastic, 2016; Atwell, 2007; Dweck, 2000). These new approaches to reading view reading as a lifelong activity and habit. The focus has shifted to recognising that reading is a social activity, thriving in an atmosphere of meaning seeking and engagement both towards the text and from the text (Guthrie, 2008; Dweck, 2007; Gee, 2011); Jenkins, (2006). They value the affective process involved in reading and see reading as holistic. Reader choice is important. The reader directs their own reading (Atwell, 2007; Guthrie, 2012; Guthrie and Humenick, 2004; Sewell, 2003; Gallagher, 2009; Merga, 2014c; Kragler, 2009 & 2009; Krashen 2013; Ripp, 2018). “Self-selection allows the students more latitude to be deeply involved with the [reading] learning process, thus fostering an interest in, as well as developing an ownership of, the reading process” (Kragler, 2009, p. 1). The abovementioned authors also view the reader and the reading process differently. The reader is considered as holding great reader potential. Readers can be intrinsically motivated to read by attending to and meeting the affective attributes of the reader and their reading, and by allowing them access to books, choice in what they read, and time to read.

The NLT attempted to broaden the definition of reading to include cognitive processes, reading habits and behaviours and affective processes (Clark & Teravainen, 2017). Clark and Teravainen (2017) conceptualised reading broadly, defining what it means to be a reader and what is meant by the term reading (Figure 2.0).

The OECD (2016), in agreement with the NLT, suggests that changes to our concept of reading over the years has led to the inclusion of behavioural, motivational, and cognitive characteristics in the definition of reading.

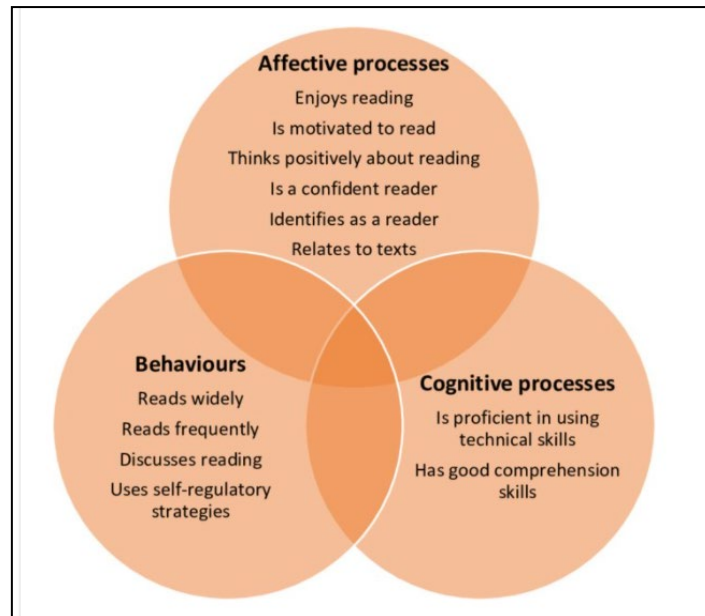


Figure 2.1: NLT top-level tripartite conceptualisation of what we mean by “reading”

Source: Clark and Teravainen, (2017, p. 2)

Current literature and research support a broader and all-encompassing definition of reading. As my research focus is the affective processes of reading, I too support this new broad conceptualisation of reading outlined by the NLT, adopting it for my study.

My definition of reading is that it is an active, engaged process, involving the use of a variety of cognitive skills, affective processes and reader habits that result in positive reading behaviours and emotions. For example, the development of one’s confidence in reading, and one’s enjoyment and motivation for reading, result in the development of a positive reader self-concept and an enhanced perception of the value of reading. This pleasure, enjoyment and confidence leads the reader to further pursue the activity of reading independently for their own pleasure and this pursuit results in further development of their reading skills and success in reading.

Reading has evolved over the centuries. Views of reading from the 1900s although contextually situated in a very different world, reveal much about reading that is like the practice of reading today (Saxby, 1987; Hazard, 1983). They saw reading as transformative, liberating and suggested it allowed the reader to transcend the limitations of the physical worlds in which they found themselves. Although emotive, these views of reading recognise the innate power of reading. Atwell (2007, p. 19) views reading as “a personal art”. In the 1980s reference was made to new literacies or multi-literacies. Research at that time encompassed the essential elements of traditional literacy: reading, listening, speaking, and

writing. With the advent of the internet, technology, and the world wide web, the forms of these traditional elements have become many and varied. The basic tenets of literacy as well as how literacy is practised is changing (Hull and Moje, 2012; Gee, 2011; Street, 2003). Literacy and reading have come to be viewed as a social practice, embedded in other social practices such as “political and economic conditions, social structure and local ideologies” (Street, 2003, p.78-79).

2.3 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS): Literacy and Reading in a South African Context

Although the terms literacy and reading are often used synonymously, they are inherently different. In the CAPS document (Department of Basic Education, RSA, 2011), literacy is referred to as language and reading. Reading is seen as a component of literacy. Literacy in the Senior Phase Curriculum (Grades Seven to Nine) involves the combined development of skills such as speaking and listening, reading and viewing, writing and presenting. Reading is viewed as skills based and the document differentiates between three different types of reading activities (pre-reading, during reading and post-reading). The document states “the time allocation for reading and viewing in Grade Eight is, reading and viewing three hours and thirty minutes, (one hour thirty minutes for comprehension and one hour thirty minutes for literary texts). Time allocation per two-week cycle in hours” (Department of Basic Education, RSA, 2011, p. 12). This view of reading is skills based. The only mention of independent reading is found on pages 25, 31 and 36, and refers to reading and viewing being arranged into three sections: reading for comprehension; reading for formal study (literary set-works); and extended independent reading, which is referred to as “extra-curricular reading for pleasure and research” (namely, reading that happens outside of the curriculum), and during which they must practice the strategies learned during intensive reading lessons and formal literary text study lessons. (CAPS, Department of Basic Education, RSA, 2011, p. 31); (Figure 2.1). No time is allocated within the daily curriculum for independent reading for pleasure, as defined by the National Literacy Trust as: “reading that we do of our own free will, anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading (National Literacy Trust (2012), p.8). This lack of curriculum time allocation for reading for pleasure arises even though a vast amount of current educational research finds that reading for pleasure supports personal development, impacts positively on general reading skills, and has educational benefits (Education Standards Research Team (ESARD), Research evidence on reading for pleasure, UK, 2012). However, the CAPS document does acknowledge the importance of

reading and states the following. “Well-developed reading and viewing skills are central to successful learning across the curriculum” (Department of Basic Education, RSA, 2011, p. 25). When is this reading developed and practised, if no curriculum time is allocated within the learners’ school day? Spencer (2021), believes that regular reading promotes the development of reading stamina and agrees with Krashen (2009), who says that a great deal of varied and interesting reading results in one becoming a lifelong reader, and that “simply providing the time to read results in more reading” (Krashen, 2004, p. 85).

<p>EXTENDED INDEPENDENT READING/VIEWING</p> <p>Learners practise the strategies modelled in intensive reading and formal text study for extra-curricular independent reading for pleasure and research. Teacher guidance on access and level is crucial to this part of the reading programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access libraries and know book storage conventions• Provide evidence of extended reading/viewing in the form of speeches, discussions and book/film/programme reviews• Read/view a wide range of whole texts, e.g. books, magazines, newspapers, websites, films, documentaries, TV series both during and after class.

Figure 2.2: CAPS document page thirty-one

2.4 Significance and Benefits of Book Reading for Pleasure

Reading books for pleasure, also known as independent reading, self-selected reading, free voluntary reading, recreational reading, spare-time reading, reading outside of school, whatever term you choose to give it, is the kind of reading which involves personal choice, creating and spending time reading, develops reading skills, increases enjoyment, grows a reader’s book selection skills and reading focus and stamina, and improves the concentration and focus to read for however long one chooses to read for (Merga, 2015a; OECD, 2011a; Vermuri & Mormino, 2013). There have been limited studies on this type of reading, but its growing recognition, significance and value have recently positioned it higher on the research agenda, and more recent research into reading for pleasure abounds. Reading for enjoyment is seen to enhance student academic achievement. Research shows that reading positively influences academic attainment and “can mitigate the effects of socio-economic status” (Cremin, 2007, p. 1 citing Topping et al, 2003). Research also talks of personal and academic benefits such as increased reading volume, improved general knowledge, more positive reader self-concept and confidence as a reader, an improved and richer vocabulary, increased

reading and writing ability, improved comprehension, more positive attitudes and enjoyment towards reading, and greater pleasure in later life (Cremin, 2007, ; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2011; Sullivan & Brown, 2015 Lumby, 2011, cited in Merga 2014b, p. 150; Shin & Krashen, 2008). Another benefit recognised through research is that reading contributes to cognitive stamina and improves one's resistance to cognitive decline (Vemuri & Mormino, 2013; Wilson et al., 2013). The reading of fiction appears to improve the development of empathy in readers and this emotional and psychological awareness is carried over into the readers real every-day lives. This suggests that reading fiction may contribute to and influence our ability to relate to others, changing how we socialise and develop relationships (Chiat & Roy, 2013; Kidd & Castano, 2013). Sullivan and Brown (2015) state that it is not how much you read but what you read, that makes the difference. Beres (2017, p. 1) comments that reading is "a great way to practice being human" and he goes on to say that studies show that "reading helps with developing both fluid intelligence and emotional intelligence ... but like any skill it has to be practised regularly and consistently". The practice of reading and writing among adolescents "fosters communication, relationships, self-expression among peers and family members; supports their economic and psychological health; and allows them to construct ... identities that offer them power in their own everyday lives" (Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008, p. 31). Sullivan and Brown (2015) state that we need to foster a love of reading, citing their reading study, the 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70), which showed links to improvements in vocabulary, spelling and maths attainment. Figure 2.2 graphically sums up the many benefits of reading and how these confer personal, social and external benefits for readers. For example, an eternal benefit of reading is an increased awareness and understanding of other cultures. An example of a social benefit is an improvement in communication skills and the enjoyment of sharing one's reading experiences with others. Personal benefits are many, for example, reading may relieve stress, develop self-awareness and the ability to show empathy to others. In the realm of book reading research, the educative benefits of reading books for pleasure are well established. Consistently reading for pleasure is associated with a range of literacy advantages, and the advantage extend beyond literacy as discussed above. Those readers who enjoy reading become better readers (Clark, 2013; Mol & Bus, 2011; Samuels & Wu, 2001; OECD, 2011a; Sullivan & Brown, 2013; Comer, Kidd & Castano, 2013; Oatley, 2016).

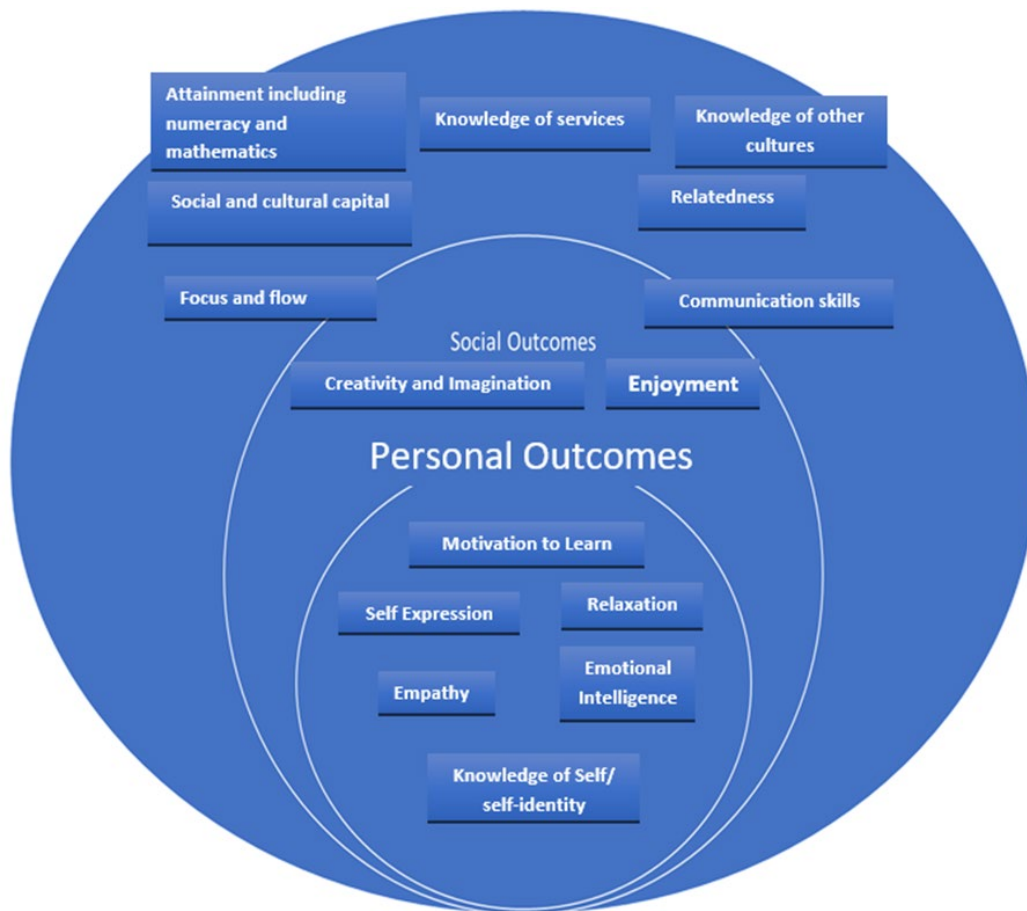


Figure 2.3: Adapted diagram showing impact and outcomes of reading for pleasure on young adolescents
 Source: The Reading Agency 2015

These benefits of reading (Clark & De Zoysa, 2011; OECD, 2010) which are well recognised in research, need to be explicitly made known to students so that they can make informed choices when it comes to choosing to read for pleasure or not. Principals, teachers, and parents need to be made aware of these reading benefits too, so that they are conscious of the impact of encouraging reading for pleasure and of creating a school, classroom or home that allows for reading for pleasure. Merga (2018b, p. 449) states that research by Walberg and Tsa in 1984 shows how time spent reading is more important than homework. Walberg and Tsa’s research suggested that recreational reading and reading frequency were positively associated with academic achievement. The return on reading time showed longer lasting benefits than time invested in homework did. Morgan (2017, p. 1), defines one of the benefits of reading as “Readaxation ... the act of reading for pleasure as a deliberate strategy for relaxing stress levels. It acknowledges that relaxation is not a luxury but an essential part of physical and mental wellbeing and health. Readaxation crucially includes the act of achieving ‘flow’ or ‘engagement’, which has positive consequences for reducing stress levels and

improving wellbeing”. Research shows that reading for pleasure has immense value and benefit in the life of the secondary school learner, and that this activity should have a space within the school curriculum beyond testing and immediate learning. Learners should be building upon the inner idea of a lifelong reader and learner, identifying, and practicing the skills and behaviour that would create such a reader and learner (Miller, 2004). Giving reading for pleasure a place within the curriculum would allow the activity of reading to compete with the other demands placed upon the learners as they enter secondary school. Surely, by creating a culture of reading that “fuels delight and fosters desire, teachers will be supporting the development of life-long readers, readers who find both purpose and pleasure in reading”, and is this not teachers’ key priority? (Cremin, 2007, p.10). Reading for pleasure deserves a definitive place within the secondary school curriculum “where students are reading, and enjoyment of reading is encouraged through provision of an appropriate context and support, it should be considered a valid component of Secondary English” (Merga, 2013, p. 23).

2.5 The Perceived Decline in Adolescent Reading for Pleasure

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the main catalyst for my research was the decline in students’ book reading for pleasure that appeared to begin in the second term of Grade Eight and continued as the students moved through school to Grade Twelve – their final year. By this time, reading for pleasure was a non-existent activity choice for most of the students.

With no time in the curriculum or the school day allocated towards the practice of reading for pleasure, this type of reading continues to lose ground to curriculum content and assessment pressures. I mentioned in Chapter 1 the decline in reading for pleasure that I had noticed within my school. My perception appeared to be reinforced in the literature I reviewed, but there are views on both sides of this debate. Much research addresses “this neglect of the power of fostering reading for pleasure” (Smith et al., 2017, p. 169; Murphy, 2012; Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Nell, 1998; Merga, 2017b; Cremin, 2007, Mullis et al., 2003; Twist et al., 2003; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004; Clark, Torsi & Strong, 2005; Howard and Jin 2004 & Scholastic 2015 cited in Rutherford et al, 2017). Some researchers, much earlier, predicted this decline in reading for pleasure when the Literacy Hour was introduced (Meek 1998; Furlong, 1998). Literacy hour was a daily reading and writing lesson, introduced into the British primary school curriculum in 1998, to improve the standard of literacy. The Office for Standards in Education of the United Kingdom conducted a survey to investigate reading for

purpose and pleasure which found that schools did not endorse independent reading and there was limited support and encouragement for reading for pleasure (Office for Standards in Education, 2004). This ‘neglect’ it is suggested, is the cause of the decline of adolescents choosing to read for pleasure. Merga and Moon (2016) suggest that the lack of attention to reading in secondary school, either for pleasure or learning, leads to communicating a devaluing of the place of books and reading within the curriculum. Students may be encouraged to see reading as unimportant or as worthless; “dwindling expectations are associated with a corresponding notion that reading is no longer a valuable practice” (Merga, 2018b, p. 811). Niewenhuizen (2001) raise the idea that this may be a reason for the reduction in the volume and frequency of book reading during secondary school. Howell (2014) refers to adolescent disinterest in school and agrees that studies show students are reading less. Secondary school students appear to lack motivation for reading. The National Endowment for Arts of the USA observes that “all [reading] progress appears to halt as children enter their teenage years” (National Endowment for the Arts, 2017, p. 3). Cremin (2007) wonders if the lack of desire within the adolescent to read independently will sustain them scholastically in the present day and allow them educational success into the future. Hurd, Dixon, and Oldham. (2006, p. 85), conclude that “there is evidence that reading is being neglected ... and schools no longer view reading across the school day as a priority”.

Related to the decline in reading is a new concern in the literature. It is the state of aliteracy. This is where individuals can read, but they choose not to read. Thirty-seven percent of students in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries do not read for enjoyment. Nearly half of all older adolescents in America are not reading books for pleasure (Merga, 2014c, p. 473). The Common Sense Media report, suggests that teens are moving away from reading (Rideout, 2014). Students appear poorly motivated about spending time reading for pleasure and their attitudes towards choosing to read appear apathetic or negative. “Adolescent aliteracy levels are rising as teenagers become increasingly disengaged from recreational book reading” (Merga, 2013, p. 5.; Maynard et al, 2008; Niewenhuizen, 2001). Merga (2015), suggests that the decline in reading amongst adolescents may arise because reading is seen by adolescent as having no value. This perception arises through the lack of encouragement of reading within the secondary school, and by parents within the home (Office for Standards in Education, 2012). This notion has been termed “orphan responsibility” (Merga & Roni, 2018, p. 4). It appears to be consistent

with my observations in my school library and in chatting with students about parental support for reading at home.

In South Africa, the PIRLS, results suggest that almost 8% of Grade Four learners fall below the lowest internationally recognised level of reading literacy in their language of learning. According to Howie et al. (2016), the PIRLS research reveals that most South African learners cannot read well enough to learn successfully. The reasons for this poor reading performance are related to home language, teaching, and learning issues, poor resources and infrastructure, the lack of a reading culture at schools and at home, ineffective teaching of reading and poorly trained teachers. The author states that reading literacy is at the centre of the crisis in South African learning and that reading ability is one of the most important factors in a student's academic and future success. Without reading one's school and future life opportunities will be limited. For this reason, the author believes that reading ability should be a primary focus from a very young age. Unfortunately, we have shown little to no improvement in our PIRLS performances over the years (Mullis et al 2012, cited in Rule and Land, 2017, p.1). Our 2015 Annual National Assessment (ANA) results, and the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) report, show our consistently poor reading results and the developing problem of non-readers of English (Rule and Land, 2017). Spaul (2017), however, sees this problem as solvable, stating that reading teaching should enable all learners to read with meaning and that this should be a twenty-first century goal. The findings of a study by Pretorius (cited in Rule & Land, 2017, p.7), concurs with this quest for the teaching of reading for meaning. The factors affecting South African literacy and reading results appear to be an inheritance from an unequal educational system in the apartheid political era (pre-1994). Despite efforts in the new political era, previously disadvantaged schools continue to perform badly, while traditionally privileged schools are high performers. Spaul refers to this as the "persisting bimodality of the South African educational system" (Spaul, cited in Rule & Land, 2017, p.2). In South Africa, our reading problems remain situated in the 'learning to read' phase of schooling and education, with few students making the necessary progress to the 'reading to learn' stage. There are also other influences that add to the reading decline amongst adolescents. Merga's Western Australian Study in Children's Book Reading (WASCBR) showed the influences of peers or friends on book reading. This study found that a friend's reading attitude was more influential than peer group attitude. Especially within the adolescent stage of development where they are looking for 'a sense of belonging' and trying to fit in, friendship is crucial and their friends' opinions,

choices and lifestyles are valued and thus influential. In a reading context if a young adolescent's friends do not value reading or deem it important, then perhaps neither will they.

On the other side of this reading decline debate, there are a growing number of researchers who are questioning the notion of a reading decline, saying that it has been exaggerated (Krashen and Von Sprecken, 1998). Krashen (2013) believes that if young people are given interesting texts that they understand and enjoy they will read. The author feels that young people like reading "as much as they ever have" (Krashen, 2013, p. 21). Others believe adolescents are not the non-readers we think they are. They are simply reading informal, non-traditional texts not typically associated with school reading (Howell, 2014; Hughes-Hassell and Rodge, 2007). Other studies support this finding (Gabriel, Allington, & Billen, 2012; Groenke, Bennett & Hill, 2012). This finding was also corroborated by Gabriel et al., (2012). Their study revealed that texts such as magazines were viewed as more motivating by adolescents. Ivey and Broaddus's (2001) research showed that adolescents did value independent reading but felt their classroom did not encourage it. Kress, 2003, suggests that students no longer see books as the only sources of information but are making and using multimodal texts that are easily accessible to them (Howie et al., 2017). Howie et al., (2017) argue that adolescents are reading within their normal everyday lives. They take part in social media, read school notes, do homework, set television schedules, send messages from their phones, read information online, play online games and are thus reading. Aronson also questions that if adolescents were not reading, then how would they function in their daily life. How would they know about their favourite, movies, football stars, actors, pass driving tests, respond to text messages and select food or clothing items and pay for them? (2001). Hughes-Hassell and Rodge, (2007, p. 2-4) conducted a study and concluded that urban teens are indeed reading, with 72% indicating that they read in their leisure time. These same students also appeared to value reading (Hassell, 2007, p. 9). Sullivan and Brown (2015, p. 1). acknowledged a decline in the choice of reading as a pleasurable activity, but felt that, "the reports of the death of reading seem to have been exaggerated". The National Literacy Trust (NLT) (2012) (United Kingdom) annual survey concluded that the adolescents' levels of reading had remained relatively consistent. The myriad of research about a decline in adolescent reading all add fuel to the fire of the ongoing, dynamic, and conflictual debate about adolescents and their reading.

2.6 Literacy, reading and the internet

The internet is a profound influencer of life in the 21st Century. It gives us access to a massive store of information and provides many modes of communication including new ways to read, write and communicate. The internet is viewed by some researchers as a “literary issue rather than a technological issue” (Leu et al, 2009, p. 265). Others see the internet as being defined by its functional affordances and as serving social practices and these ways of looking at the internet as a literary issue have begun a collaborative discussion – a New Literacies theory. New literacies are seen as incorporating many different aspects – social practices, new discourses, new strategies essential for online comprehension, and others suggest they differentiate into multiliteracies (Leu et al., 2013) or multimodal literacies (Jewitt & Kress, 2003). New literacies emphasise doing, making, and sharing (Alvermann, 2010 cited in Scholastic, 2016) and they are evolving into a ‘metaliteracy’ and ‘transliteracy’ – the ability to read, write and interact across a range of tools, media and platforms which makes literacy dynamic and innovative (Thomas et al, 2007; Mackey and Jacobson, 2011 in Scholastic, 2016).

The transformative reading world of the 21st Century young adolescent is contextualised in a vastly different world, a world filled with social and cultural change, a dynamic and extensive information age, and increasing technological advancements. This world presents the modern-day young adolescent reader with both new and exciting reading possibilities and experiences, but also new threats, distractions, and constant change. Their ability to engage with text in a meaningful and active way is even more important as they access the vast storehouse of online information, digitally faster, than ever before.

Wolf and Barzillai suggest that “a culture can be judged, in Aristotle's view, according to how it pursues three lives: the life of activity and productivity, the life of enjoyment, and the life of contemplation” (2009, p. 32). As we move from a print-based to a more digital culture, they argue for “a thoughtful transition” in order to make sure the “unique contributions of both online and print literacies” are available to meet the needs of all the different individuals within a culture, and that all three of Aristotle’s lives are fostered (p. 32). “Rich, intensive, parallel development of multiple literacies can help shape the development of an analytical, probative approach to knowledge in which students view the information they acquire not as an end point, but as the beginning of deeper questions and new, never-before-articulated thoughts”. (Wolf & Barzillai, 2009, p. 32; Patricia Greenfield (2009). They agree that little

evidence exists about the “formation of the reading circuit in the young, online, literacy-immersed brain” compared with the research evidence available about the “young reading brain exposed to print literacy” (Wolf & Barzillai, 2009, p. 32). Baron, 2015 suggests we should examine how the “digital mindset is reshaping our students’ (and our own) understanding of what it means to read” and wonders if we may lose our ability to contemplate and understand, and instead become searchers and finders of information. (p. 9). Lou and Kanai (2015) recognise there are different processes involved in reading online and paper-based reading, but they too suggest that further research is needed in this area (cited Rutherford et al, 2017). Other researchers agree that there is not enough data about online reading habits, and that what data is available, has conflicting results (Twist, L. et al., 2007; OECD, 2010; PIRLS; PISA, 2010).

Krashen provides insights from reading research that suggests that the power of reading to impact literacy lies within the very act of reading itself. “When children read for pleasure, when they get hooked on books, they acquire involuntarily, and without conscious effort, nearly all of the so-called language skills ... when we read, we really have no choice – we must develop literacy” (Krashen, 2004, p. 149-150).

My focus for this case study was on the long form reading of books. Another long form of reading is the reading of eBooks. eBook reading for pleasure on a platform of the school’s choice, at the secondary school of this research, was officially on trial with Teachers during my research year but was not a part of the library reading programme for students. It was only introduced to the Grade Eight students the following year after my research.

In discussions with my research participants who voiced that they enjoyed reading for pleasure online, it was revealed that they preferred using sites like Wattpad and Fanfiction or they just googled to find free pdf versions of books they wanted to read. Wattpad was the most popular site, with fanfiction being the second most popular site. Wattpad and fanfiction are participatory writing and reading sites which have become very popular amongst teens for the reading of fiction. A few students mentioned using GR to find book suggestions and get ideas of what to read next. Some students said that reading eBooks made their eyes sore, was a “hassle” and was “costly”, and some spoke of a difficulty with concentration when reading online and thus preferred paper books. Other students mentioned the pleasure of the smell of books as a motivation to read ‘real’ books and suggested that e-reading was good when travelling but it was less fun and not as enjoyable as reading an actual paper book. Baron

found similar pros and cons amongst students in her research on reading in the digital age. Her findings showed that students generally preferred print books, but students had likes and dislikes of both print books and eBooks. Quoting her own experience, she states that digital books get “used” to find information whereas print books get “read” with more sustained attention (2015, p. 8). Hayles, 2012 refers to digital reading as “hyper reading” – reading that preserves attention and identifies relevant information quickly without deep reading and reflection (p. 12).

Similarly, Merga’s, West Australian Adolescent Book Reading (WASABR) study, reported that avid readers favoured reading print. These same avid users were not massive users or borrowers of eBooks, but they said they found the portability and immediate access to be advantageous over print (Merga 2014a).

Research by Rutherford et al, (2017) looked at barriers to reading on digital devices amongst teens. The teens first reason for not reading more on a digital device was that they preferred paper books. Secondly, the teens said they did not like to read that much. The above research results-the teens first reason for not reading more on a digital device, appears similar to the answers the participants gave me during our in-depth discussions and is supported by research. It is often assumed that all adolescents prefer to read digitally but research is beginning to challenge this notion (Bennett, Maton, and Kervin 2008; Bittman et al. 2011; Helsper and Eynon 2010; quoted by Rutherford et al, 2018).

Research by Long and Szabo with e-readers technology found that the students felt the e-readers “got in the way of their guided reading and they would have liked to have a traditional text as an alternative when the technology was not working properly” (2017, p. 9). Their research showed slightly higher gains in comprehension, and positive gains in student attitude towards reading in the group who read from their traditional text, when compared with their e-reader group. Other findings in Long and Szabo’s research with e-readers showed that small group instruction and meaningful texts were important to their readers and barriers from the e-reader technology were viewed as important results when it impacted negatively with their reading. Their research lent support to both sides of the paper versus digital reading issue, but they still advocated the using of technology in the classroom. Digital texts can be a motivating factor, but they can also be a “roadblock to instruction” when not functioning properly (2017, p. 9).

Rutherford et al, (2018) also discuss both sides of digital reading divide. Her research results appear inconclusive. “Teenagers appear to be reading but their reading practices are driven and mediated by cultural contexts, social influences, place and conditions of access, as well as factors labelled as individual personality” (2017, p. 39). They state that there is an increase in the use of digital technologies, with literary, screen and graphic fandom readily integrating. They agree that there are changing patterns in teenagers reading and quote a recent Pew Internet Study (Zickuhr et al., 2012) that shows that “library card holders and avid readers (16-65 years) are likely to be avid consumers of eBooks” (p. 41). Those who are already readers, are those readers who would also be reading online.

In further research on this topic, specifically the impact of devices on reading behaviour, Merga and Roni (2017a) similarly found that “Those who read more in general tended to read more on digital devices than those who did not read frequently...When access to devices was factored in ... there was evidence that access to a mobile phone is associated with less general reading frequency” (p. 19). In this research it was also found that the preference for an e-reader was an iPad/Kindle, “suggesting that this may be the most appropriate device choice of those studied to mitigate access issues and promote reading frequency” (p.22).

Jabr, (2013) recognises that as technologies improve so e-readers and tablets are becoming more popular. Research he reviewed suggest that reading on paper has specific advantages, like, offering a sense of control in our reading, allowing for imagination and serendipity in reading and an engaging level of comprehension. Jabr mentions many negatives of e-readers such as “screen inferiority, visual fatigue despite manufacturer’s corrections to devices, shallow levels of cognitive processing, and navigational inconvenience”, but suggests that screen preference over a long term develops screen superiority, seeming to negate some of the screen-based reading negatives mentioned above. Jabr posits screens do have something to offer that paper cannot offer, but he questions the way digital reading technologies copy the paper-based experiences of reading. He suggests that paper text reading has its place but makes the point that “screen-based reading should evolve into something else entirely” p. 14). He quotes Wolf, who states that “there is a physicality in reading ... maybe even more than we want to think about as we lurch into digital reading – as we move forward perhaps with too little reflection” (2013, p. 5).

I feel that Wolf’s choice of adjective about our urgent need to embrace and use digital reading technology is most apt. There is insufficient research at this stage to support the

wholesale abandoning of paper books for the digital alternatives available. Research provides us with the knowledge that the cognitive process used in screen-based reading compared to paper text reading, are different, but much more specific comparative research is needed (Giedd, 2012; Liu, 2005; Nicholas et al., 2003 quoted in Merga, (2017a. p. 3). Merga, (2014a) echoes Wolf's (2018) feelings when she sums up this debate in her research by saying that the findings of her analysis of teenagers and digital reading "suggest that it is not yet time to abandon the traditional book entirely in favour of the digital book ... as ongoing research is urgently needed to:

- establish if teens prefer to exclusively use digital book formats for recreational reading?
- Is the interactive digital reading experience of equal cognitive benefit to paper book reading?" (p. 26.)

My informal discussion with my students and the research reviewed on digital devices and digital reading, led me to decide to focus my research on the long form reading of books. It was the form of reading they were currently immersed in at school and reading books, appeared to be the preferred choice of most of my participants. This does not mean that these participants were prohibited from reading online for pleasure, nor were they discouraged from reading online for pleasure.

2.7 Using ICT in the Reading Classroom

The practice of reflection and the asking of questions are important for educators. These practices enable us to evaluate our performance and thereby enhance our own learning and teaching. During this research I have asked myself the following questions: What does it mean to be literate today? How do we use the opportunities afforded by technology and the varied reading literacies to reimagine what learning and reading is all about, to reinvent how we teach? For me, these are fundamental questions for finding out how we teach effectively with technology, as we move from our own expertise to becoming a part of a collective expertise (Blewett, 2017b, Trilling and Fadel, 2009). As educators we need to embrace the changes in technology and find ways to effectively integrate them into our teaching to enrich student learning (Adams & Hamm, 2000).

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, page 4, I have chosen to use the intervention GR, as by using GR, the participants are afforded the opportunity to manage and own their reading choices, plan their reading, and control the time they spend reading and socialising about

books and reading. Social networking around books and reading provided by online platforms has been found to encourage the development of reading habits and to improve motivation for reading (Myoshi & Oobayashi, 2011). Technology is believed to facilitate adolescent's active participation in online spaces and promote the development of new literacy skills (Curwood, 2013, cited in Bridges, 2015; Scholastic, 2016). Other research suggests that there is not a "one size fits all" relationship between readers and their use of social networking sites (Merga, 2015c). It is suggested that further research could clarify the extent to which social networking around books encourages the development of a "recreational book reading habit" (Merga, 2015c) p. 14). I believe the perceived value of reading could be enhanced with the aid of GR, and may encourage reading ownership, creating responsible readers that value reading (Miller, 2014), and that GR may provide an alternative reading model alongside the conventional reading models like parents and teachers (Merga, 2015b). When the reading environment of children and the people around them value reading, that is when we will develop the necessary culture of reading and literacy in our homes and our schools (Haggan, 2019 cited in Scholastic, 2019). Merga's research suggests that teachers should connect readers with other readers outside their immediate peer group using social networks, as this will assist them "to become part of a reading community on their own terms, as tentatively or as enthusiastically as they like", but the author cautions about possible online distractibility and that some readers prefer reading in private and will not want to connect online. (Merga, (2015c) p. 15-16). Jenkins (2009, p. 39) suggests the technology develops "core media literacy skills". However, new research is presenting alternative viewpoints that suggest that technology can be unhealthy, have negative side effects, can be dangerous and is changing the way we think, feel and act (Greenfield, 2014; Williams, 2018; Sadlier, 2017; Dretzin & Maggio, 2008; Dworak, Schierl, Bruns, T., & Strüder, 2007; Bilton, 2014; Niemann, 2016; Twenge et al., cited in Merga, 2018b; Rideout, 2015; Uhls et al., 2014).

2.8 Theoretical Orientations

2.8.1 Introduction

I now present a conceptual and theoretical framework that shows the inter-relationships between the theories used in this case study. I have considered various theories which seem relevant and are explained here. I will discuss how they related to each other in the process of addressing the findings.

2.8.2 Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT)

This theory provides the context within which my view of reading is situated. My focus is on the aesthetic and affective processes of reading, which are supported by theories which view reading not as a solitary pursuit but as a self-regulated and innate social activity (Guthrie, 2008; Bandura, 1977; Ivey & Johnston, 2013; Moje, 2007; Scholastic, 2014). This theory is an underlying theory that guided the analysis of research question three, where I establish the participants view of themselves as readers and how their view of themselves as readers is influenced when using GR. This theory also underpinned the choice of GR as an intervention with the Grade Eight students as it afforded socialising around books and reading, observation of other lovers of reading, and may encourage imitation and modelling of the observed behaviours. Bandura (1977) asserts that human behaviour is learned through the processes of observation, imitation, and modelling. This is known as observational learning. His theory suggests that learning is also dependent on intrinsic motivation and that self-efficacy predicts behaviour. He suggests that together with observation there are four steps that are needed for real learning to happen: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. To learn, we must pay attention, remember, and retain what we have seen. We must then be able to perform or repeat or 'do' what we have absorbed (put into action), and, lastly, we need to be motivated to continue this new action. Bandura realised that although observation was powerful in how we learn, both intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy affected how we view our learning and how we persist towards mastery of this learning.

2.8.3 Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (SET)

This theory is applied to the current case study in that my study's focus was on reader self-efficacy and reader motivation. Self-efficacy is the awareness individuals have about their ability to perform an activity and the effect of this awareness on their ongoing engagement with the activity. Recognition of the power of intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy in effecting consistent change in learning by Bandura, led me to look at the self-efficacy theory of Bandura (1997), in relation to my instruments used, for example the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey (AMRPRS). Bandura showed that humans could influence or direct the events of their own lives through their self-efficacy beliefs, which in turn determine how they think, feel, motivate themselves and behave. He believes that the sources of self-efficacy beliefs are developed and/or, are enhanced positively or negatively, by four major influences: mastery experiences/performance, vicarious/observational

experiences, social persuasion/feedback, and physiological states like the regulation of moods and stress. He identified four major processes through which self-efficacy affects human functioning, which were applied to the participant reading survey questions as follows:

- What kind of reader are you?
- How does your reading compare to that of your friends?
- What feedback are you getting from teachers, peers, and friends about your reading?
- How are you feeling about your reading?

Results from these questions were analysed in terms of the SEF theory.

2.8.4 Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

This theory was combined with the above SET theory, as it is a valuable and reliable theory of motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the deep desire from within that sustains us to complete an activity. Ryan and Deci's theory looks at constructs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Competence relates to a skill level or mastery level of a particular activity, for example, reading. Autonomy relates to the way a person can work alone to control actions and outcomes, set goals to result in the completion of the activity. Relatedness refers to the ability to collaborate and get along with others during social engagement or relationships with others (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Applied to the reading experience, the SDT theory suggests that certain conditions within the reader and reading experience, support or frustrate a reader's experience of these constructs. If they support the reader, they will foster high quality intrinsic motivation for reading, improved engagement in reading, and the resultant improved reading performance and persistence in the reading activity (De Naeghel, Van Keer, Vansteenkiste, & Rosseel, 2012; Deci & Ryan, 2000). These are conditions such as choice and autonomy, and supportive strategies such as student voice and control, social reading with peer interactions, and time for reading (De Naeghel, J. V. Van Keer, H., and Vandelinde R. 2014; Miller, 2014, Conley & French, 2014; Gallagher, 2009; Merga, 2015a, Ripp, 2018). These two theories guided my choice of platform, and they assisted with the analysis of the data collected from the participants' reading reflections both pre-and post the intervention of GR.

2.8.5 Affordances Theory

The concept of affordances was first conceived of by Gibson in 1979. In his view the affordance exists outside of the individual, within the environment, as natural relationships.

The notion of intention is central to his affordance theory. Your intent determines your use. Different people use the same thing differently. For example, a baby would not see stairs offering the act of climbing, while an adult may take the opportunity to go upstairs to another floor, or if tired may see a place to rest. Norman (2013) worked with this affordance theory in a design context and saw affordances as inherent only within the tool. For example, the handle of a door suggests only opening or closing of the door. Later researchers began to apply the concept of affordances to examine student learning. They perceived a triadic relationship between the instrument, the object, and the subject (Verillion & Rabardel, 1995). Even later researchers suggested that students adjust during their learning, combining their own experiences and their perceptions of the opportunities that digital tools could offer (John & Sutherland, 2005). Affordances then became not only existent in the technology, but also evident within the user as past experiences and within the context of the use of the technology.

In this case study I explore the socio-technical/material aspects of the affordance theory through an actant affordances lens and I apply the Actant Activity Affordance Model of Blewett and Hugo (2016). This model “identifies five key affordances that interact in a competing set of tensions in online spaces: accessibility, communication, connection, control and construction” (Blewett, 2017b, p. 2719-2739). In my data analysis I have applied an adapted version of the model to the participants’ use of the GR platform to explore the affordances offerings and their impact upon their reading. Blewett (2017b) believes that tensions exist between these affordances, which he terms ‘actant tensions. These tensions relate to the type of activity that exist between what is said and what is done (Blewett, 2017b). See Figure 2.4.

The introduction of technology in education has been fraught with much difficulty, and technology that has transformed the workplace and other sectors of society has had very poor to no success in education. Blewett (2017a, 2017b), suggests that this is because of the lack of a solid and authentic digital pedagogy. He has devised a pedagogy for use with technology which he calls, the Activated Classroom Teaching (ACT) pedagogy. Although I have viewed this pedagogy and applied it to my readers use of GR in the vignettes, its application is not within the bounds of this case study.

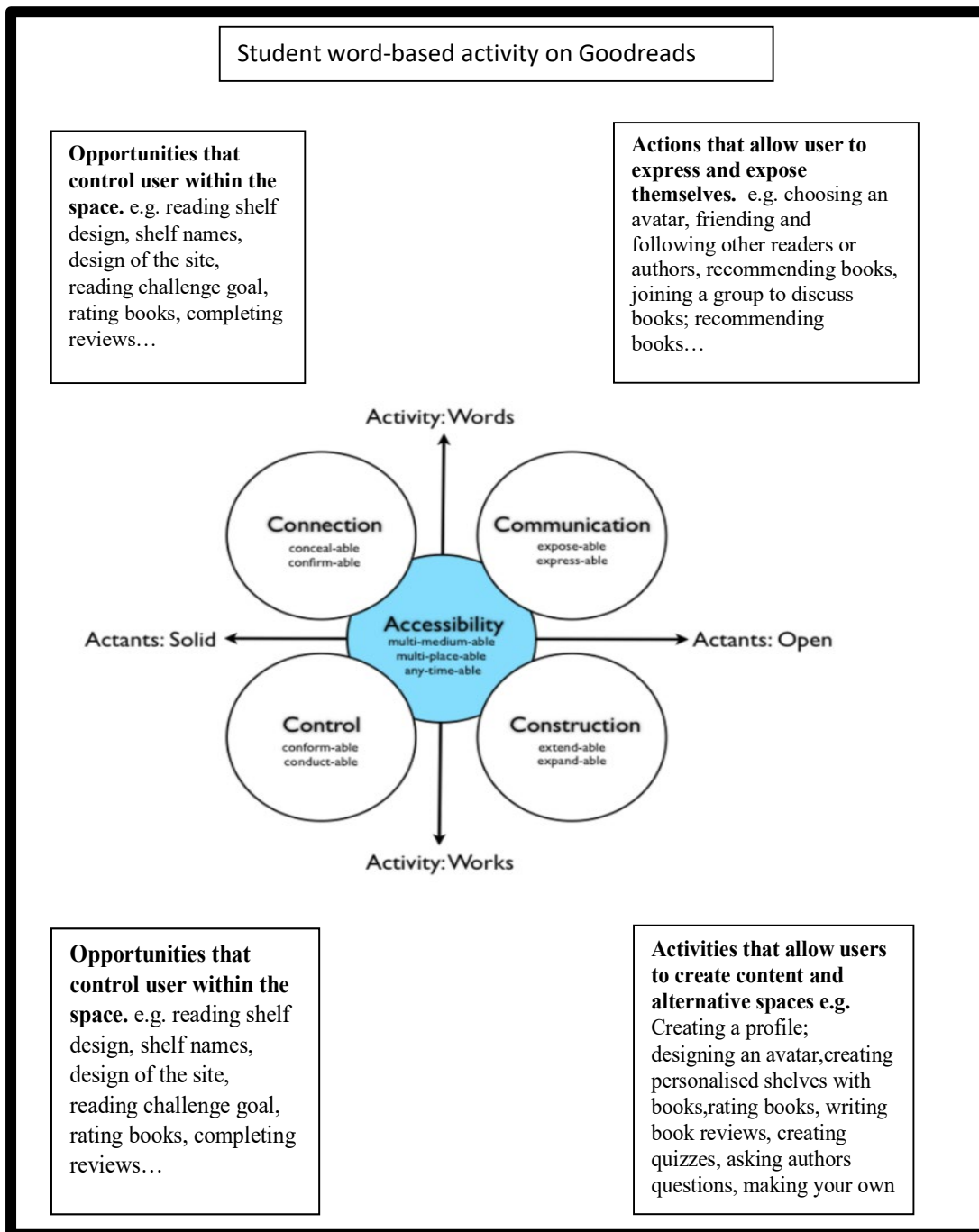


Figure 2.4: Diagram of Goodreads Platform Activity Affordances Model

Source: Blewett, C. (2017b). Wake up Class!: 5 Activating Digital-Age Pedagogies that will Revolutionise your Classroom

2.8.6 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

According to Miles and Huberman (cited in Maxwell, 2005, p. 39) “A conceptual framework ... the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs your research is a key part of your design...[and] may also be called the ‘theoretical framework’ or ‘idea context’ for the study”. My conceptual framework was developed,

constructed and built throughout the study, and was completed as the study progressed and came to an end. The idea of a conceptual framework was originally devised by Miles and Huberman in 1994, then developed further by Baxter and Jack (2008). I have attempted to explain graphically the main concepts, theories, variables and key factors to be studied, and highlighted the presumed relationships and other variables and relationships between them (Maxwell, 2008, p. 18), by means of a stacked venn diagram showing the overlapping relationships and themes that impact all the spheres of this research (Figure 2.5). For example, the changing literacy and reading landscape, both within the world at large, and in particular, within the educational landscape of my study, a secondary school.

The Grade Eight participants independent reading development and the influence of GR on their reading development was the focus of this case study. There were external and aesthetic factors involved in the participants' independent reading and my research focus was on the aesthetic factors and how they were impacted by the use of GR. For example: reader motivation, attitudes and feeling about independent reading, reader self-concept/self-efficacy, and reader valuing of reading. Theories that were used to support and guide the research were Bandura's social learning theory (SLT), Ryan & Deci's self-determination theory (SDT) and Bandura's self-efficacy theory (SET) and the Affordances theory

The affordance theory (AT) was examined as it related to the chosen intervention GR, and the participants' use of this technological platform. The affordances theory therefore helped to analyse research question four. The use of the GR platform was seen as an intervention that allowed the participants a space in which they could observe, model, practice and develop new reading skills and experiences, through the give-and-take interaction of the cognitive, behavioural, social and environmental influences the GR platform afforded them. The participants may be motivated to participate fully and integrate actively into the "participatory culture" of GR (Jenkins, 2009, pp. 5-14).

Both the SET and the SDT are based on social learning theory. Self-efficacy theory views self-efficacy as a construct that affects motivation and therefore encourages or inhibits the activity of independent reading. Self-determination theory identifies three psychological needs that affect motivation, and thus can therefore also either inhibit or promote independent learning. These two theories would be able to be used to assist the analysis of the data from the participants reading reflections, and in relating the data from the AMRPRS to the participants reading reflections to find anomalies or similarities in the data.

Ryan and Deci's SDT refers to three main types of motivation – amotivation, extrinsic and intrinsic. In SDT there are three constructs: autonomy, relatedness and competence. Autonomy refers “to being the perceived origin or source of one's own behaviour” (Deci & Ryan, 2002, p. 8), in this case, independent reading competence is defined as “feeling effective in one's ongoing interactions with the social environment [GR] and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one's capabilities” (Deci & Ryan 2002, p. 7), in this case within the bounds of the GR platform. Relatedness is seen as the longing to connect with others, in this case, around reading and books. If these three psychological needs are satisfied the participant is likely to experience increased levels of self-determined or intrinsic motivation. I believed that GR could afford this fostering of self-determined or intrinsic motivation and enhance autonomous reasons for reading. Intrinsic/autonomous reading motivation is desired when developing life-long independent readers, as it leads to an increase in qualitative reading behaviours and improved reading performance, because self-determined, confident readers are likely to read more often because they value reading as an activity or they obtain pleasure and satisfaction from the activity of reading. (De Naeghel, et al., 2012, p. 1019; Sweet, Fortier, Strachan, & Blanchard, 2012). Exploring and investigating the participants' intrinsic motivation for reading and their reader self-concept both before and after the GR intervention, drew me to attempt an integration of the SET (Bandura, 1977). Although self-efficacy does not reflect ability it does impact the readers' motivation to read and their performance when reading. Bandura believes that self-efficacy plays a role in the self-regulation of motivation and behaviour (Bandura, 1993). For example, self-efficacy “influence[s] [reading] goals students set, how much effort they will expend, and how strong their resilience to failure may be” (Scott, 1996, p. 198). In SDT however, the relationship between competence/self-efficacy is “more distal to behaviour ... autonomy plays a larger role ... if one feel autonomous in their actions [reading] the likelihood of behaviour change and sustainability is greater” (Sweet, Fortier, Strachan & Blanchard, 2012, p. 320). Integrating these two theories allowed me the researcher to better understand the constructs of reader autonomy, reader intrinsic/self-determined motivation, reader self-efficacy and reader value of reading as intertwined constructs of their reading development, within both the changing world of literacy and their secondary school environment. Understanding the relationships between the abovementioned constructs and the external contexts within which their reading happens, and how they influence the reading behaviour of the participants, enables me to assess if the the GR intervention effected changes to reader motivation, reader-self-efficacy and what influence and impact these changes had upon their reading behaviour

and development. Figure 2.5 is a graphic representation of my conceptual and theoretical framework for this case study.

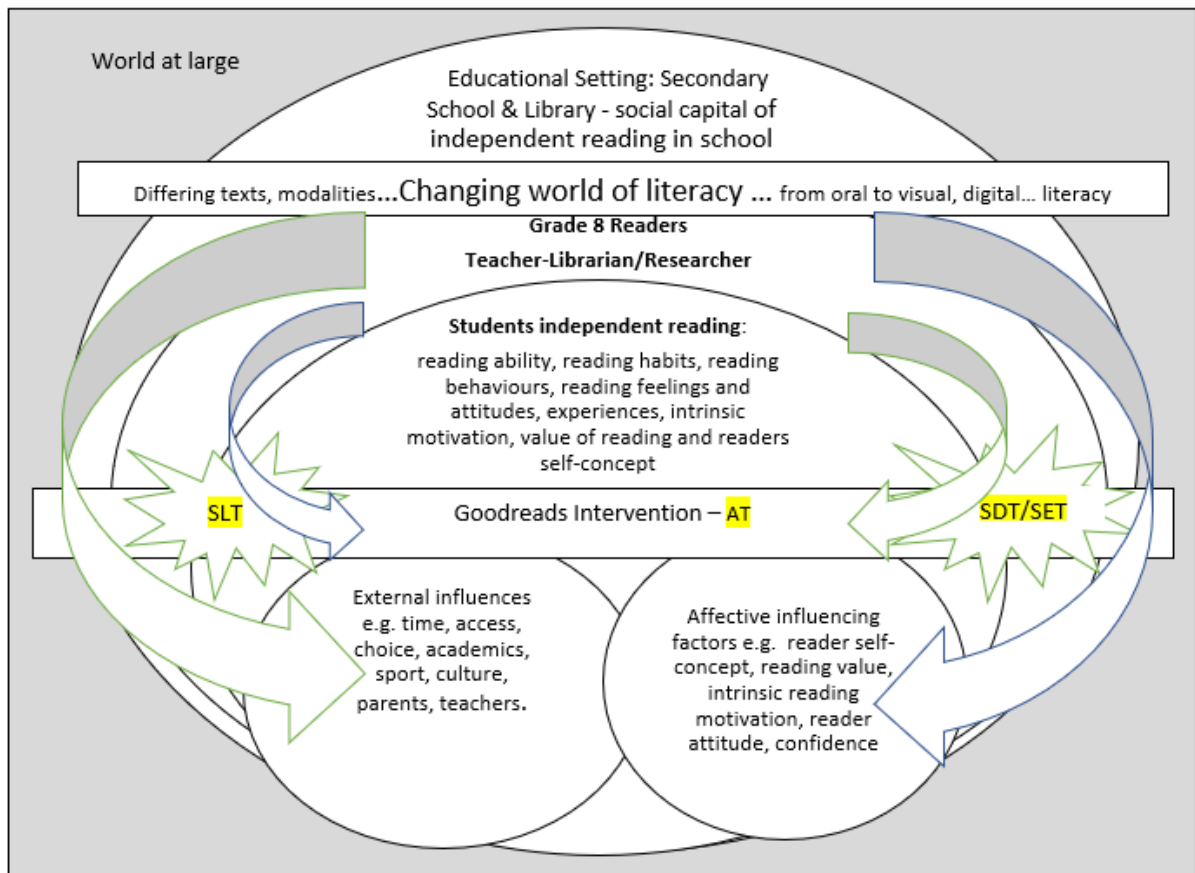


Figure 2.1: Combined conceptual and theoretical framework
 Source: Adapted from Baxter and Jack (2008, p. 553).

2.9 Literature Review Summary

There is a coherent voice of agreement in the literacy research around the fact that literacy in the 21st century, of which reading is a vital part, is dynamic and changing and that the internet and the world-wide web and the technologies it has brought with it are here to stay. Research warns of possible dangers with the use of technology, but also shows ever increasingly new and exciting ways to integrate learning and teaching with the use of technology tools but this requires the use of a sound digital pedagogy as a starting point, as well as linking relevant theories to one's use of technology. Research has also highlighted reading as a gateway skill to life-long learning and personal growth and success, showing that motivation drives reading achievement. Research highlights the cyclical nature of reader motivation, reading volume and practise, reading success, increased reader confidence and a positive reader self-concept and the creation of a desire to read more (Bridges, 2015; Atwell, 2007; Appleman, 2006;

Iyengar et al., 2007; Cockcroft, 2017; Miller, 2014). Research supports the notion that reading changes lives for the better through its many benefits (OECD, 2002; Krashen, 2012; Berns, Blaine, Prietula, & Pye, 2013; Kidd & Castano, 2013; Morgan, 2017; Miller, 2009; Pieper, 2016; Guthrie, 2008; Miller & Sharpe, 2018; Merga, 2019).

As a researcher and teacher, the vast array of literature I have now read has provided me with valuable and differing perspectives on the topic of reading and the value of the affective processes involved in the act of reading. The research has also guided and informed my use of technology in my educational reading programme. The literature highlights both the possible dangers and immense benefits that the use of technology can afford learning and teaching. Using GR with my participants allowed me to make sure that my intervention was presented and used in both an educationally and pedagogically sound way which was also ethically and morally safe. In this way my participants' personal safety and privacy, which is of paramount concern, was protected.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter looked at wide range of literature pertaining to young adolescent reading, critically examining the nature of reading, exploring the significance and benefits of book reading for pleasure, and investigating the perceived decline of young adolescent reading worldwide. Within the literature the affective processes engaged in reading are explored and an adapted definition of reading was defined is drawn upon in this study. I have critically engaged with the position of reading for pleasure in the Senior Phase CAPS document, as I explore the place of reading for pleasure within the South African secondary school curriculum. I introduced the theories that are central to this research. As an in-depth exploration of digital reading was not within the bounds of this research, I critically examined literature about the role of technology in supporting book reading and explored whether technology could afford readers with an opportunity to develop reading behaviours that grow their inner notion of becoming life-long readers.

“Never lose sight that our highest priority is to raise students who become lifelong readers. What they read in school is important; what they read the rest of their lives is more important” (Gallagher, 2009, p. 117)

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the paradigm and the approach to my case study is described in detail. My epistemological stance is outlined. I provide an overview of the research design used to link my research purpose and questions to processes for data collection and data analysis so that conclusions can be drawn from the data and explain how data was generated and collected during the case study investigation (Yin, 2014). I outline the rationale for how and why specific data collection tools and procedures were used, for example, why I used a pre- and post-survey and reading reflection. This chapter also looks at the ethical issues and outlines the limitations of the study. It is necessary to make it known that the data for this research was gathered before the COVID 19 lockdown began at the end of March 2020.

3.2 Research Paradigm

As a teacher-librarian I believe that the Grade Eight students may find reading more enjoyable and engaging if they are: intrinsically motivated to take ownership of their reading, are intentional about reading, set reading goals and make time to read and share their reading with their peers. In my research I explored emerging literature and the wider body of literature on young adolescent reading, the use of technology in education and in particular its use with reading programmes. From this, is generated the problem statement and purpose that would contribute to extant knowledge and frame my research. I defined the nature of reading using qualitative analysis of a selection of definitions and the adapted result was used as a descriptive framework to direct my empirical research. The unit of analysis, the reading of Grade 8 students, is the basis of my case, and the focus of my research.

I have positioned my research within the interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm has a life world ontology believing that what we know of our reality is constructed socially and subjectively and is negotiated within our cultures, social settings, and our relationships. The interpretivist paradigm uses an exploratory orientation. In this study I attempt to explore, understand, and describe the real reading world of the students that I teach. This understanding is from a subjective point of view and an explanation within the frame of reference of the participant. The strength of this approach is that it is naturalistic, participatory and inclusive, prioritising the participants' personal and subjective experiences regarding how they make and give meaning to their world. As a researcher I am empathically

and subjectively immersed in the research, becoming a part of the research (Phothongsunan, 2010).

3.3 Research Design –Justification for using a Mixed method Case Study

As stated by Yin (2014), “doing case study research...arises out of a desire to understand complex social phenomena ... [allowing the me, researcher] to focus on a case, yet retain a holistic and real world perspective” (p. 4). Research design is important because it links the research purpose and research questions to the processes used for data collection and data analysis and it implies or relies on the chosen research paradigm, guiding the choice of data collection techniques and the methods by which data will be analysed.

I chose a case study because it was appropriate for my research situation in that:

- my exploratory research of Grade Eight student readers and their reading could not be studied outside of its natural setting.
- I was focussed on current and contemporary Grade Eight readers and their reading.
- The theoretical knowledge on the phenomenon under investigation, Grade Eight Students reading, in particular, the affective processes of reading and the use of an online social networking platform in a reading programme, was limited in scope.

My case study employed an embedded design with multiple layers of analysis. I was investigating what the participants current reading habits were, how the participants viewed themselves as readers, and how they were using GR. Thus because my case study contained more than one sub-unit of analysis (Yin, 2014, p. 53), I used a mixed methodological process, where I integrated both quantitative and qualitative methods into a single research study. An embedded case study presnets ways to interreate and integrate the findings and evaluations from the different facets of the case. The philosophical foundation for the mixed method approach is pragmatism. It is a relatively new approach that originated in the late 1980s and early 1990s based on research in a variety of fields, including education. It has developed over time and become more prominently used by researchers who use the term ‘mixed methods’ (Teddlie, & Tashakkori 2009; Bryman, 2006). The strength of this approach is that it collects and synthesises both quantitative and qualitative data, lessening the limitations of both types of approaches (Creswell, & Plano Clark, 2017). The different data collection methods provide different kinds of information. For example: scores from quantitative instruments and detailed views, observations and reflections of individual participants from qualitative instruments. Both types of data are collected using the same variables or concepts. For example readers’ self-concept scores on the AMRPRS and analysis of readers’ responses

to questions in the pre-reading reflection for the theme, reader self-concept. Both types of data are collected in an iterative process. Data is analysed rigorously and must contain adequate samples, and a variety of sources of information and data analysis steps. Then the data is merged, connected or embedded as it is integrated. I am also aware of new meaning and new connections created by myself and the participants as part of the research process (Driscoll, Appiah-Yeboah, Slaib, & Rupert, 2007). Figure 3.1 illustrates interactivity in the research design process.

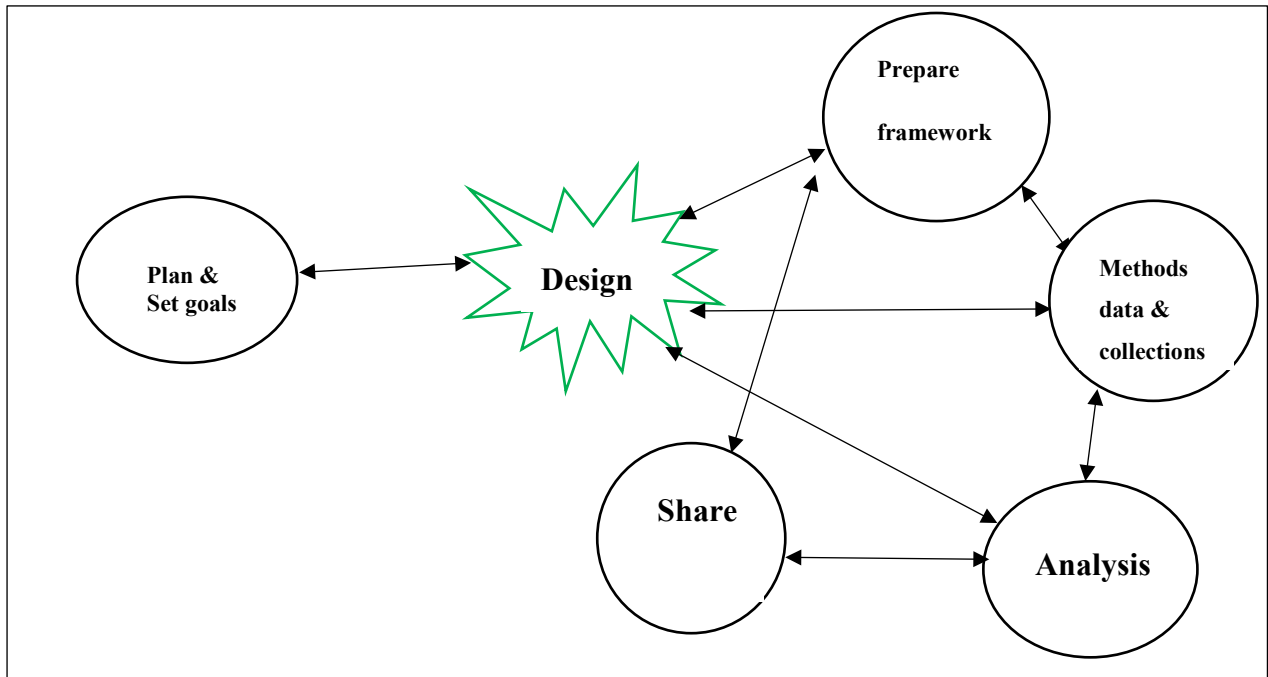


Figure 3.1: diagram representing interactivity in the research design process

Source: Adapted from Yin (2014, p. 26) and Maxwell (2005, p, 217)

As discussed in Chapter 1, the present study was guided by four research questions:

1. What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students?
2. How do the students utilise the online platform, Goodreads (GR)?
3. How is the students view of themselves influenced by using the GR platform?
4. In what way does the use of GR influence the Grade Eight students' reading?

Emphasis in this case study research was given to the qualitative data (Creswell, & Plano Clark, 2017) as I 'mix' both sets of data, giving me, the researcher, a holistic and more complete understanding of the research problems and questions. "The more complex and contextualised the objects of research, the more valuable the case study approach is" (Scholz, & Tietje, 2002, p. 4). The data sets are collected over time comparing different perspectives of the research problem. Maree (2010) states that "the term 'mixing' implies that the data and

or findings are integrated or connected at one or several points within the study” (p. 15). Qualitative data may explain and lend understanding to quantitative data results in the analysis. The unit of this case study is the Grade Eight student readers, as an online reading platform, and the influence of GR upon their reading.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The following quantitative tools were used to establish a baseline of current participants’ reading habits and behaviours, reader motivation and self-efficacy and value of reading. They also examine reader borrowing patterns using statistical data from the library database Papyrus. See Figure 3 and Table 3 below.

- Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey (AMRPRS) participant responses;
- Online poll on the use of Goodreads (GR);
- Online reading interest survey;
- Papyrus Library System – data on student book borrowing & returns.

The following qualitative tools were used to explore the individual participants’ reading journey in more depth and detail. They provided rich descriptions of each of the participants’ reading experiences, feeling, attitudes about reading, their reader self-concept and their value of reading, revealing their hopes and struggles as a reader.

- Semi-structured interviews;
- Reading conferences;
- Pre- and post-written participant reading reflections;
- Analysis of individual participant item responses on AMRPRS.

In seeking a holistic understanding of how the participants related to their independent reading, interacted with different texts, formed reading relationships with their peers and talked about books, as well as how they used the GR platform in their reading, I gathered large amounts of qualitative data and a smaller amount of quantitative data. The qualitative data was used to understand the participants’ personal reading experiences and their individual journeys, allowing me as the researcher to focus on the readers and “the moments of meaning” in their reading, opening up the possibility of generating a new understanding for me of my own students’ reading development and growth (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, p. 119, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Eisenhardt, 1989; Black, 2006). A large amount of data was collected from an usually high number of instruments because of

participant face-to-face time that was missed due to unforeseen circumstances. I used online instruments for those participants that missed the face-to-face sessions in the library. The number of instruments and the resultant data meant that I had to be systematic, extremely thoughtful and careful, in the collecting, organising, and collating of the data obtained, in order to ensure quality in my case study and allow me to generate relevant knowledge from my data (Rule & John, 2011). This knowledge has a comprehensive and real world point of view (Yin, 2014).

The following table, Table 3 and Figure 3 both demonstrate how the different data sources contributed to the case study data analysis, thereby guiding and shaping my research.

Table 3.1: “Filling the Case”

	Research Question	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Data Collection Instruments	List of Field Questions	List of Reading Self-Reflection Questions
1.	What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight adolescent readers?	<u>Participants</u> Responses to all data collection instruments Survey scores Reading Reflections Participants reading face to face reading conference answers and virtual reading conference responses.	<u>Quantitative</u> Raw scores and % scores for reading value and self-efficacy and numbers of books used and returned <u>Qualitative</u> Observations Participant reading reflection Themed transcripts from thematic analysis (both answers) Participant individual interviews/reading conferences	AMRPRA Pre-Test Papyrus participant statistics/reader profile Teacher/Researcher notes from: Researcher/participant discussions and reading conferences/interviews and online conference responses Participants’ written reading reflections (pre- and post) Analysis of individual participant AMRPRS individual answers (pre- and post-)	Who are adolescents? How often are adolescents engaged in the activity of reading? When do they read? Why do they read? What are they reading? Where do they get/find their reading texts/materials?	Are adolescents reading for pleasure? Is there an adolescent reading crisis? What are the causes of this possible crisis? What are the issues around time for reading? Why are they reading? What content is being read and what is the motivation for reading this content? Are they reading books, magazines, online or on phones?

2.	How do students utilise the GR platform? (frequency, type of use, content created).	Researcher	Qualitative Classroom Observations Analysis of online activity and participant discussions	Reflexive journal stories and notes Written observations (researcher's handwritten notes while observing participants' online and classroom reading activity) live in classroom and post online activity	Are the participants social about books and reading? Do they talk about reading and books? When do they discuss their reading? Are their discussions face to face or online or via text messages? Do they write book reviews of books read? Do they keep up to date book shelves on GR? Do they set reading goals?	What is the aim of GR vs Amazon its owner? Are their goals/aims aligned? Would Amazon keep the values and nature of GR once purchased? Will there be changes to GR? How was the buyout received by loyal GR users?
3.	How are the participants' views of themselves as readers changed by the use of the online platform GR?	Participants' post reading reflections Teacher observations of activity on GR Participants' answers to online poll Papyrus reader pProfile statistics Participant AMRPRS post responses and scores	Qualitative Qualitative & Quantitative Quantitative Quantitative & Qualitative	Analysis of participants' written post reading reflections Observations of online activity and reading activity Thematic analysis of participant poll responses of GR usage Analysis of quantitative data from poll responses Comparison of Papyrus data from beginning and end of research time period looking for changes and	How do they feel about reading for pleasure and why do they feel that way? How do they view themselves as readers? What value do they subscribe to the activity of reading for pleasure?	How do I feel about adolescent reading? Why? Are adolescents readers? How has GR impacted me as a reader? Why? Will the participants be impacted in a similar way as me? How are they impacted? What is the average age of GR users? What are the causative factors, if any,

			Quantitative & Qualitative	analysing changes Comparison of pre and post scores for changes and analysis of changes		that are involved in the AMRPRS response scores shifting from pre- to post-test? Can the use of GR be isolated as a factor? Or it is merely one of the factors amongst other possible factors?
4.	How does the use of the online platform GR influence and or impact participants' reading for pleasure?	Participants Researcher Participants	Quantitative Qualitative	Online Survey (using Survey Monkey) A reading interest survey on participants' use of GR Recorded observations of GR usage by participants AMRPRS individual question items from pre- and post-tests are qualitatively analysed for changes in reader attitude, self-efficacy, value of reading Analysis of the above changes for reflections and about participants' feelings and use of GR	What can the site afford the participants? Where is the participant activity on GR? Can GR have the ability to impact participants' reading positively or negatively? Does the setting of reading challenge goals on GR motivate participants?	Is there any current research about the impact of GR on its users reading patterns and behaviours? Was the platform taught and scaffolded correctly and for long enough? Was the platform's usage advocated enough? Do I have too little or too much data? How can I improve my research? How could I improve this case study? What are the limitations of my research, given that I am a novice researcher?

Source: Rule & John (2011, p. 63).

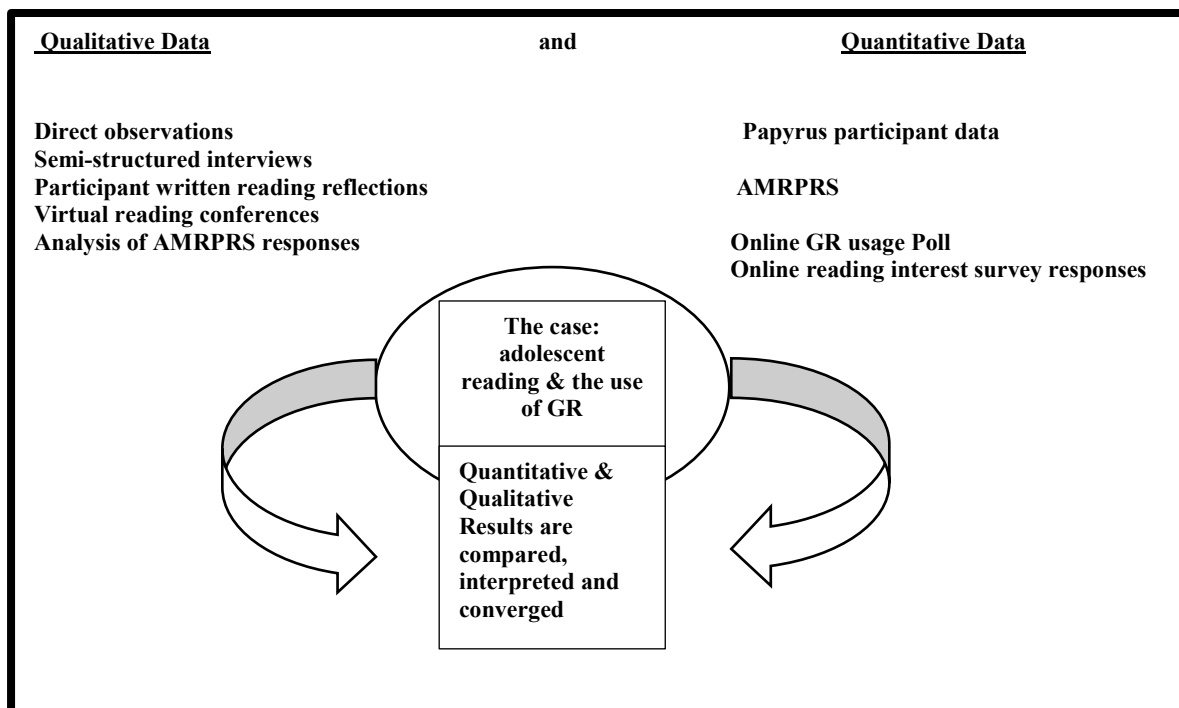


Figure 3.2: Using multiple sources of data
 Source: Adapted from Scholz & Tietje (2002, p. 14)

3.5 The Case

This case is an investigation of the influence of GR use in a reading programme, in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The participants are Grade Eight female students who have one library lesson in each 10-day teaching and learning cycle. There are nine streamed classes of students with plus minus 28 to 30 students in each class. The total number of students in these classes is 250. All were invited to participate. Parent consent via a letter with a consent/no consent return slip, was sought. One hundred and eighty-six positive consent return slips were received, Seventy-nine students were not included in the study, made up of two groups; 43 students who did not return their return slips at all and 36 students who returned negative return slips. The proportion of returned consent slips was high, 74%. However due to absenteeism, exiting the school, changing of mind regarding participation, and subject changes, the initial total of participants was 170 students, which was 68%. This then reduced to 165 due to missing data. (see discussion later in this chapter).

The sampling method used to choose the participants to be included in the detailed qualitative analysis was a random sample. This smaller sample was chosen from the large sample with all participants having a known and equal chance of being selected. Numbers were allocated to the participants and the random sample was drawn.

Due to time constraints during the face-to-face-reading conferences only nine reading conferences were completed (See Appendix 8). To elicit further responses from individual students, I posted a virtual reading conference online using the same questions (See Appendix 8). A further 23 students completed the virtual reading conference, thus a total of 32 students completed a reading conference. Time constraints resulted in an online reading interest survey being designed to further explore students reading interests. A further 16 survey responses were gathered. These different data subsets were analysed to find themes and compared with other data sets (survey statistics, book usage statistics, reading conference information and participants' written reading reflections). This enabled me, as the researcher, to investigate if the data reinforced similar results, relationships and conclusions, or revealed new results, conclusions and relationships. Table 3.3 outlines the data collection sequence and planned activity as well as what instrument was used in each step. This data collection process took place with each class in the library when they attended their library lessons.

Figure 3.3: Data collection sequence with activity and instrument used

Data Collection Sequence	Planned Activity & Instrument
1 st	Participants wrote personal reading reflections. This was done both before and after the GR intervention. The first reflection focuses on their reading journey, up to the present time in Grade Eight. Pre-reflection was completed.
2 nd	Administer the Adolescent Motivation to Read reading profile survey, as both a pre- and post-test, before and after the GR intervention. Possible changes in scores of variables, value of reading and self-concept as a reader, can be compared Pre-AMRPRS was administered and scored.
3 rd	Introduce students to GR Facilitate participant registration on the GR platform. Time was given for them to browse the platform and ask questions. They could create a profile. Students were encouraged to load GR on their phones. Students were given time in library lessons to go onto the site (voluntary). There was a total of +- 12 opportunities to be on the site in classtime during the course of the study.
4 th	Observations Observe participants live use of GR and make observational notes in a reflexive journal. Observations by researcher of student activity on GR by going online after school hours and noting what students had been doing online.
5 th	Post AMRPRS administered and scored
6 th	Quantitative statistics were printed from the Papyrus Library Programme showing participant book borrowing habits.
7 th	Post-reading reflections were written by the participants reflecting mainly on GR and any changes they noticed in their reading habits and attitudes.
8 th	Conducted individual face-to-face reading conferences with students about their reading and use of GR. Also chatted about their Papyrus statistics.

	Written record kept of their responses.
9 th	Virtual Reading Conference option was offered to participants in the Library Classroom on Edmodo. Students completed this in their own time or not.
10 th	Alternative Reading Interest Questionnaire was made available to participants in Edmodo, the online library Classroom. Students could choose to complete this in their own time or not.
11 th	A poll was also offered to participants through their Library Classroom, Edmodo. This poll asked questions about their use of GR.

3.6 Qualitative Data Tools

The following quantitative and qualitative data formed the bulk of this research. While I used both types of data the emphasis was on the convergence of the data when analysing the data and interpreting the findings.

3.6.1 Written Participant Reflections

Written participant reflections was a qualitative tool that was used both pre- and post-intervention. These reflections were written by the participants at the beginning and the end of the research process. This kind of writing and deep thinking promoted reflexive thinking and engaged them in metacognition about their reading development. They provided valuable insights into each students' authentic reading journey, providing deep and rich data.

3.6.2 Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile – Reading Survey (AMRPRS)

The AMRPRS was a qualitative tool used both pre- and post-intervention. See Appendix 5 and Appendix 6. This tool was essentially a quantitative tool. From a qualitative perspective I decided to select specific item responses which related to the themes of value of reading and reader self-concept, and the reading environment of the participants. This analysis is an attempt to obtain deeper insights into individual participants' responses about their reading. This analysis is once again compared with the reading reflection data, and the statistical reading profiles from Papyrus looking at similarities, differences and relationships in the data sub-sets. The following themes were identified when analysing the data:

- Reader's perceived value of reading;
- Reader's self-concept as a reader;
- Time spent reading for pleasure;
- Reading attitude and feelings;
- Reader engagement in reading;

- Reader strengths and struggles; and
- Reading as a social activity.

The even numbered items in the survey reported on a reader's perceived value of reading, while the odd numbered items reported on the reader's self-concept as a reader. Individual participant responses to specific question items from the survey were grouped according to the identified themes above and were analysed as qualitative data, to reveal particular participant information about their reading and gain deeper insights into each individual participant's reading experience. Questions 2 and 4 dealt with time spent reading and reading attitude and feelings; Questions 9 and 15 dealt with reader self-concept/self-efficacy/identity; Questions 12 and 16 explored the individual reader's perceived value of reading. Questions 5, 7 and 13 explored reader engagement, reader strength and struggles and comprehension; Questions 6 and 17 spoke to reading as a social activity. These were compared with the data from their reading reflections and Teacher/researcher observations. Thus the AMRPRS data was viewed through both a qualitative and a quantitative lens providing rich and dense layers of analysis within the case study and enriching the findings.

3.6.3 Classroom Reader Observations

Classroom reader observation was used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. Rule and John (2011) believe that in order for the research to portray "rich textured and in-depth accounts of the case" (p. 61), participants must be observed in the classroom situation, as they engage in their reading activities. In my research reading activity I included book selection, independent reading, book discussions, book recommendations and book chats that took place in Edmodo (library online classroom). Analysis of this data included time spent reading and/or choosing books, chatting about books, recommending books as well as the content of these book chats or conversations. To gain a holistic and thorough understanding of the case, Rule and John (2011) suggest "collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data ... [which will provide] an additional perspective" (p. 61).

3.6.4 Online GR Platform Activity Records and Observations

Data was gathered when readers used GR in classroom time – both qualitative and quantitative data. Online activity in the classroom when possible was also observed and recorded. Activity online could also be viewed retrospectively by me having access to their profile, if they asked me to be a friend on GR. This data was then analysed in terms of the following platform usage criteria: how often they went onto the platform; whether they

created a profile; set a reading challenge goal and achieved it or not; recorded books read and/or books they wanted to read; wrote book reviews; shared or recommended books; developed a network of peers and or friends and authors; as well as whether they engaged in online discussion about books on the platform. Analysis was also used to reveal how they felt about the platform – little or no use was viewed as a negative response. Conversely frequent and varied use was viewed as a positive response. Observational records ceased when participant activity online ceased.

3.6.5 Online Application Tools – ORIS and GR Poll

In using online tools, like the ORIS and GR Poll, it is likely that I recruited a higher proportion of participants with an existing strong interest in reading, because readers who love reading may take the time to answer the online questions, whereas those readers who did not love reading as much or at all, may not make the time to answer questions online about their reading. The findings from these tools may therefore skew towards higher reader engagement in the activity of reading, more positive attitudes towards reading and stronger value of reading as an activity of choice than would be found in the general population of the Grade Eight students in my study.

These tools collected both qualitative and quantitative data via a reading interest survey [ORIS] and a GR usage poll. The survey was created using SurveyMonkey (Appendix 11). This survey was made up of three questions. The first question contained 21 statements that participants had to respond to using a Likert rating scale of : strongly disagree; disagree; agree and strongly agree. The statements were about reading attitudes, habits, reading likes and dislikes; readers' perceived value of reading as an activity both personally and in their family; support of the school for reading; book choice; reading feelings and socialising about reading. I tried in my questions to cover themes from the AMRPRS data questions and analysis. For example:

Question 1: I enjoy reading

Question 3: I am confident in my ability to choose a book I will enjoy.

Question 9: I talk to my friends about what I am reading.

Question 15: My attitude towards reading has changed as I have gotten older.

Question 19: I believe that most teenagers are good readers.

Question 21: As teenagers we never have enough time to enjoy reading for pleasure.

Questions 2 and 3 three dealt with the theme of time spent reading for learning and reading for pleasure. Responses were made from five options: none, less than one hour, one to two hours, three to four hours or five or more hours. See Appendix 9.

Although the participants were anonymous, valuable additional quantitative data was collected that was used for comparative analysis with similar data, thereby adding a depth of understanding of the participants reading experiences. Questions 2 and 3 could be viewed individually although still anonymously and provided very interesting data about time spent reading. For example see Participant 18's response (Appendix 10).

3.6.6 Individual Reading Conferences

Face-to-face-reading conferences were undertaken with individual students, class by class. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, curriculum and time constraints resulted in less students being interviewed and consulted than was originally planned. Examples of the constraints experienced were: lesson loss; timetable changes; exams and tests; counselling sessions; sports matches and galas; prize-giving practices; lack of flexibility within the library timetable to recoup lessons lost. Having fewer interviews naturally affected the size of the sample for this instrument and thus the data collected may be less representative of the case study. The questions of the interview were then placed online as a virtual reading conference and 23 virtual reading conference responses were submitted by students. Being virtual, some good qualitative aspects may have been lost due to no face-to-face interaction, and the inability to respond flexibly to answers given and redirect questions where necessary. No records of non-verbal cues or answers given could be observed or recorded with the online conference, thus the qualitative information about each participants' reading journey and reading experiences was less rich than it might have been. Thus a total of 32 students completed a reading conference.

3.7 Quantitative Data Tools

3.7.1 AMRPRS pre- and post-test

This tool was mentioned in the qualitative instruments section but its main use was quantitative. The original version of the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) was designed for elementary students and is supported in terms of validity and reliability (Gambrell, 1996). The MRP consists of two basic instruments: The Reading Survey and the Conversational Interview. The Reading Survey is a self-report, group-administered instrument, and the

Conversational Interview is designed for individual administration. This test was revised in 2013 (Malloy, Marinak, Gambrell, & Mazzoni, 2013). Another version was designed by 11 researchers making it more suited to the reading experiences and language of adolescents, as stated by Pitcher et al. (2007): “we decided to revise the MRP to create a flexible instrument for secondary teachers to better understand their students’ motivation to read” (p.379). It consists of a 20-item self-report survey and an open ended 14-item conversational interview. This cross-sectional survey collected raw scores in two categories or subsets, namely reader self-concept and the reader’s perceived value of reading. These individual raw scores were combined to give a total raw score and/or percentage score, for reader self-concept and a reader’s perceived value of reading.

In lieu of the suggestions made by the designers, I adapted this conversational interview for specific use with the participants of this research, thus “allow[ing] for different interpretations of the survey” (Pitcher et al, 2007, p. 394). It was presented as a face-to-face reading conference and as an online reading conference as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Appendix 8.

An analysis of pre- and post-scores revealed the changes over time in the participants’ scores and changes in their reading behaviour, attitudes and feelings toward reading (self-concept as a reader and their perceived value of reading). These scores were compared with their Papyrus borrower profiles and their reading reflections to establish if any relationships existed between these variables and to discover the nature of these relationships. The results were examined from a socio-cultural perspective in an attempt to discover how, why and what was effecting any reading changes and to explore what social or cultural factors were at play in the development of the students’ perceptions of the value of reading as a pleasurable activity and their self-concept as a reader. This provided a benchmark and comparative data point for the participants’ reading behaviours, reader self-concept and value of reading as an independent activity.

3.7.2 Papyrus Library System – User Statistical Data (See Appendix 4 – Borrowers Profile)

Quantitative data was collected from the library programme showing statistical borrowing profiles for each individual student. This data itemises by date the number of books issued and returned during the research period. This can be compared against the number of books shelved as read on GR and with the individual’s reading reflections. See Appendix 4.

3.7.3 Online GR Poll

A poll entitled “How are you using the Social Book Platform, Goodreads?” was made using poll daddy, now called crowdsignal (Appendix 11). This poll was created online to collect data and participant feedback about their use of the GR platform. This instrument provided support for my observations of the participants’ use of GR and provided additional feedback on how they felt about the platform. The poll was made up of 11 statements which the participants had to respond to. This provided valuable data about how often they said they used the GR platform, what affordances of the platform they engaged with, their social activity on GR and how they felt about the GR platform. This data was compared with participant talk, their post intervention reading reflections and teacher/researcher observations. In this way the qualitative data allowed me to interpret and explore the meaning which the students’ placed on their reading experiences and their use of GR and further guided my enquiry and exploration. The quantitative data allowed me to look for relationships between reader attitudes and feelings about reading, reader self-concept and the value the readers placed upon the activity of reading. It was important that the reality of the readers’ reading experiences and their feelings and attitudes about themselves as readers be captured fairly and be understood through this analysis (Bertram, 2014).

3.8 Challenges and Limitations

By virtue of the need to obtain both parent and student consent to taking part in my research case study, it is likely that I have recruited from the general Grade Eight population, a higher proportion of participants who have an existing love of reading and or a strong interest in reading. The findings may therefore skew towards higher reader self-concept as a reader and a higher perceived value of reading, than would be found in the general Grade Eight population at the school.

As a mature and passionate practicing Teacher-Librarian with a lifelong love of reading, I understand that my background, age, race, ethnicity, gender, social class, political, religious, personal, and theoretical beliefs, and perspectives decide the lens through which I view the world around me. My personal positions may potentially influence the research and my participants. I am aware of the roles and responsibilities of insider/outsider researcher and Teacher-Librarian. In locating myself about the participants I must consider how they view themselves, how others view them, but I must also acknowledge that they themselves may not be fully aware of how they have constructed their identities. I recognize that it may not be

possible to do this without in depth thought and critical analysis. I realise that my research cannot be value free and thus have adopted a reflexive approach.

A further perceived limitation is that my data analysis did not include participant culture or reading proficiency. My research followed the understanding that regular engagement in book reading for pleasure, offers benefits for literacy skills development and maintenance. I positioned book reading for pleasure, as of both immediate and continuing importance beyond independent skill acquisition. I believed that the individual reader's choice, persistence, and performance can be explained by their beliefs about how well they will read, and the extent to which they value the activity of reading, and that these beliefs and values shape their reading choices, persistence, and performance. I acknowledge that within my study the participants may have exhibited a wide range of reading proficiency and that the participants were varied in culture. Analysis of my data in terms of reading proficiency and home culture was avoided because my focus was to understand the current reading habits of the participants and how they viewed themselves as readers and their perceived value in the activity of reading, and lastly how GR influenced those affective aspects of their reading development.

Analysis of my data in terms of reading proficiency and home culture would be a worthwhile further study opportunity, but it was beyond the scope of this study. As such I have listed it as a potential limitation.

3.8.1 Volume and variety of data

This case study was very time intensive. To produce the required level of detailed analysis large amounts of both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analysed. Although some of it was completed as part of my ordinary work as the Librarian, a deeper and more intense level of analysis was required as a researcher. I did feel like Groenke (2017) and her students, that there was at times a mismatch between self-report data and teacher-researcher observations. This was the catalyst for my decision to include an analysis of specific item responses of the AMRPRS, as this could unlock valuable qualitative information about each individual participants' reading experiences. "It just goes to show the AMRPRS unlocks learning potential not only for adolescents [participants] but also for ... teachers" (Groenke, 2017, p. 704).

There is the possibility that online data gathered by the ORIS and GR Poll may skew the findings towards higher reader engagement, higher reader self-concept and perceived value of

reading than would be found in the overall population of Grade Eight students as only those students who had an existing strong interest in and love of reading may have taken the time to complete the online survey and poll.

3.8.2 Missing Data

As teacher-researcher I was limited in my research time. I depended upon the lesson time of each class. This meant that if a class missed their library lesson due to unforeseen circumstances those participants had incomplete data sets with some missing data. Examples of these unforeseen circumstance which were totally out of my control were situations such as late arrival to class, shortened or missed lessons due to timetable changes, and lessons usurped for other emergencies. I determined that the data was completely missing for some participants. As my sample was large in qualitative case study terms, I do not believe there was a loss of trustworthiness. By completing a listwise deletion of all missing data participants (Sauro, 2015), the final data set was then comprised of 165 participants.

3.8.3 Self-Report Data

Limitations are inherent in self-report data, such as the AMRPRS and the student pre- and post-reading reflections. Limitations include lack of understanding of the question, lack of honesty in answering the question for many reasons such as embarrassment, wanting to please the teacher by giving the 'right' answer, peer pressure, and wanting to maintain a certain reader image within a peer group. All self-report data was reflected upon and compared with teacher/researcher observations and information gathered at their face-to-face reading conferences.

3.8.3.1 Researcher Bias and Expectations

The case study required that as researcher I immerse myself in the case. This may result in researcher bias and prejudice. As a passionate reader and role model myself, who shares her reading journey with the Grade Eight students in my role as Teacher Librarian, I may exert untoward expectations upon the students, who may in turn, feel led to submit answers that would be seen to favourable to me, as both a passionate reader and their Teacher-Librarian.

There was also a further complication in my dual role as both teacher-librarian and researcher. My positionality as the Researcher, could be a source of bias in the way in which findings are interpreted and as Teacher-Librarian in the way in which participants responded to questions asked in surveys, reflections etc., because of my position of power over them.

This is known as the Hawthorne effect (Kenton, 2019). These dynamics were considered, and I acknowledge the potential impact of my positionality and power on my findings.

As the researcher I tried to keep my perspective as an outsider, but at the same time I needed to remember the importance of the delicate reading relationship I was cultivating with the readers/participants, as their reading teacher and librarian.

3.8.3.2 Ethical Issues and Considerations

The university policy on ethical clearance and permission was followed. See my ethical clearance in Appendix 1. Many researchers feel that “doing ethics has been reduced to a point where it [means] filling out a form and seeking ethical clearance from an ethics committee, rather than an engaged process of reflecting upon the ethical issues [within your] research design (Allen, 2005, p. 15 cited in Tisdall & Davis, 2009, p. 13). Essentially, ethics in research covers such topics as anonymity, informed consent, researcher power relations and positionality, confidentiality and gatekeeper permissions.

Anonymity means ensuring all participants’ privacy. In this study Participants’ real names have been removed from the data analysis records and they have been given pseudonyms or numbers when referred to individually. Where participants pictures were used their faces were blackened out to ensure anonymity.

Informed consent was obtained by sending out an informed consent letter to the parents or guardians of the participants as they were underage. See Appendix 3.

Non-maleficence refers to the ethical duty of the research to ensure that at every stage in the research process the participants are not harmed or maligned in any way. Participation in this research was entirely voluntary. All forms of participation, including non-participation were analysed to provide valuable data. Participants were free to withdraw from the research activity at any stage should they feel they wanted to.

Beneficence means that as the researcher the interest and welfare of the participants are prioritised. As the researcher I endeavoured to maintain my interests as a researcher and to ensure the welfare of the participants throughout this study. There were meetings held to agree upon research issues that cropped up and to give participants follow up on the research. Being a vulnerable group, the adolescent participants’ privacy, individuality, confidentiality, and emotional wellbeing was always, safeguarded.

Researcher positionality and power relations was touched upon under researcher bias and expectations. Throughout the research I was conscious of and sensitive towards my status, power, and authority as both Researcher, and the Head Teacher-Librarian. I tried to counteract its influence and impact upon the study by allowing for honesty and transparency amongst myself and the participants, and in the systematic planning in my collection and analysis of data. But I acknowledge that this dual position will result in some bias and participant expectations that may result in skewing the data.

For quality in a case study research, the participants' relationships with each other, with the researcher and the research problem need to be handled with ethics and professionalism, and the data demands researcher rigour and creativity. The researcher must be objective. This is in direct conflict with the need, as a Teacher- Librarian, to foster open, honest, and intimate relationships with the Grade Eight readers – really getting to know them as readers. Long and Szabo (2016), stated in their research of the need for the reading teacher to develop and foster a positive relationship with the students and they show that this relationship has a positive impact upon their reading and learning. The “human touch” is important in the learning process” (p. 9). Thus, my role as Teacher-Librarian is likely to have impacted upon the students answers in the research questions and in how I collate and analyse this data.

Gatekeeper permission was sought twice from the Department of Education and needed to be applied for before the research could begin. See Appendix 2.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the methodology that was used in this case study. The researcher used an embedded case study research design and a mixed methods approach to data collection that was underpinned by the interpretivist paradigm. An explanation of how the theories chosen were developed into the theoretical framework in this study is given and it is shown how theories guided the selection of specific data collection tools and how they guided the data analysis.

Qualitative data in the form of pre- and post- participant written reading reflections, semi structured interviews/reading conferences, and quantitative data in the form of the AMRPRS survey, were administered by the researcher herself to collect the mixed data. Other secondary sources of data included an online poll and ORIS (online reading interest survey), data from the Papyrus library programme and participant usage and activity records, as well researcher observation of GR activity and usage and readers reading activity. An explanation

of case study research as using mixed methods for data collection and analysis was given. Measures followed during the data collection were discussed in this chapter.

Permission was obtained from the Department of Basic Education, as well as from the secondary school in which the students were enrolled. Consent was obtained from the participants' parents. Participant anonymity, self-determination and confidentiality were ensured during the data collection, analysis and writing processes. Researcher positionality and bias were critically addressed in a positionality statement. Key challenges to be faced in the research and the possible limitations of the research were discussed.

“...case study research is not only about collecting, analysing and interpreting data. It is also about people and relationships” (Rule & John, 2011, p. 113)

Chapter 4 Findings – “Catching Reading”

4.1 Introduction

“I caught the reading bug from my mom. She’s an obsessive reader and I turned out pretty much the same” (Participant 3, 13 years old)

In this chapter I present my findings for the following research questions:

1. What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students?
2. How do the Grade Eight students utilise the online platform, Goodreads (GR)?
3. How is the students’ view of themselves influenced by using the GR platform?
4. In what way does their use of GR influence the Grade Eight students’ reading?

The research is a mixed method exploratory case study. The findings will be presented alongside themes discovered in the data and themes chosen by the researcher as relevant to the case. There are two large data sets. Quantitative results from the AMRPRS pre-intervention and post-intervention, and qualitative results from the participants pre-intervention and post-intervention reading reflections. Specific survey items are grouped in themes and analysed for qualitative data. There are also smaller data subsets that have additional quantitative data, for example, the GR online poll and online reading interest survey (ORIS), as well as supporting qualitative data from participant/teacher-librarian/researcher reading conference interviews which were both online and face-to-face, and the reflexive journal records of the researcher’s ongoing observations of the research process. This chapter will end with a summary of the findings of the research.

4.2 Statement of the Problem

As the teacher-librarian in a secondary school my mandate is the promotion of reading both for pleasure and for learning amongst all students in the school. My area of focus as a teacher-librarian is mainly reading advocacy and the teaching of reading to the Grade Eight students. They are the only students in the school who attend a 45-minute library lesson, once in a 10-day teaching and learning cycle. Through an analysis of the annual library users’ statistics, I had noticed a decline in the students’ reading for pleasure as they progressed through the school from Grade Eight through to Grade Twelve. As discussed in Chapter 1, I decided to investigate this reading for pleasure decline amongst the Grade Eight students.

4.3 Research Question 1: What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students?

I compiled a baseline reading profile of the Grade Eight readers, using the large data set mentioned above. This data provided a general view of the reading habits of the participants. I used both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was provided by the participants borrowing profiles on the library database, Papyrus, and the AMRPRS pre-intervention scores, and the ORIS results. The qualitative data I used consisted of the participants pre-intervention reflections and an analysis of the participants' responses to the pre-AMRPRS survey questions, looking for relevant themes. My analysis and observations were guided by the following reflective questions:

- How motivated were they about reading?
- How did they see themselves as readers?
- What value did they perceive reading to have as an activity?
- Was reading a worthwhile activity in the eyes of these readers?
- Did they choose to read books for pleasure?
- How did they feel about reading?
- What was their attitude towards reading?
- When did they read?
- Where did they read?
- How much time did they spend reading?
- What were they reading?

From this baseline assessment of current reading habits, I identified whether reading was a real part of the participants' lives. This informed how the social book networking platform GR was introduced to the readers and it provided a benchmark from which I could make comparisons of their reading development from the beginning of the research period to the end of the research period.

In the AMRPRS, the survey items are divided into items that relate to self-concept (all the odd numbered questions) and items that relate to perceived value of reading (all the even numbered items). See Appendix 5. The scores are then marked according to these categories. See Appendix 6. After spending time marking the AMRPRS tests and working with the test scores and percentages to find the group averages and means, and reading through the individual student responses, I identified sub-themes within the participant responses to the

AMRPRS questions and the survey items. I grouped the responses and questions according to these sub-themes. I used qualitative analysis on participants' responses to the selected items. Questions 2 and 14 related to the theme of 'time spent reading' and by assumption, the theme of 'participants' feelings, attitudes and motivation for reading'. They also related to the theme of the participants' perceptions of the 'benefits of reading'.

- Questions 9, 15 and 1 addressed the theme of 'self-concept as a reader'.
- Questions 2, 12 and 16 addressed the theme of 'readers' perceived value of reading'.
- Questions 5, 7, 15 and 13 relate to the themes of 'reading strengths/struggles', 'reading skill and reading comprehension', and whether the participants found reading easy or difficult.
- Questions 17, 6, 3, 4 and 1 addressed the theme of 'the social nature of reading'.

Themes identified within the mixed data sources are listed below:

- Reading intention and by assumption, possible time spent reading – borrowing pattern / actual books read – Quantitative data – Papyrus statistics and – AMRPRS Questions 2, 14.
- Feelings and attitudes/motivation towards reading AMRPRS Questions 2, 14 and pre-intervention reading reflections.
- Perceptions of the benefits of reading – AMRPRS Questions 2, 14, 8, 12, 16 and pre-intervention reading reflections.
- Self-concept as a reader – AMRPRS Questions 9, 15, 1.
- Perceived value of reading – AMRPRS Questions 2, 8, 12, 16.
- Reading strengths and struggles – AMRPRS Questions 5, 7, 9, 15, 13, 19.
- Social nature of reading – AMRPRS Questions 1, 3, 4, 6, 17.

4.3.1 Reading Intention (Time Spent Reading and Reading Feelings and Attitudes)

Quantitative data – Papyrus library system

A borrowers' profile was created for each participant in the sample by using the information from the school library database, Papyrus. This profile showed a history of books borrowed by the participant. The number of books borrowed by the participants in this sample group was used to reveal the possible frequency and quantity of reading. This assumed that participants did read the books they borrowed. It could be argued that all this profile revealed is their borrowing habits, as it is possible that not all books borrowed were read by the

borrower, but it gives some indication as to the participants’ activity around books and their intentions with regards to reading. The individual borrower profiles, mentioned above, revealed the number of books borrowed by each reader throughout the research period. Their frequency of borrowing suggests they were reading consistently. Over the period of the research, the Grade Eight readers as a cohort were issued a total of 6633 books. This is a monthly average of approximately 2,3 books borrowed per month, per student over the year. That is an average of 26 books borrowed per learner per year.

Table 4.1: Total number of books issued, average numbers of books borrowed per learner per annum and per month

Total number of books issued per annum	Average of books borrowed-per learner, per annum	Average of books borrowed per student per month
6632	26.5	2,21

The book borrowing statistic table below reveals a great deal about these adolescents’ reading patterns. They reveal when the students appear to read more, when they do not read, and when they read less. The participants’ borrowing patterns appear to reflect the school’s academic calendar. Figure 4.1 displays the borrowing patterns of the Grade Eights students throughout the school year. These patterns relate to the reading intentions of the participants. The patterns do show a healthy and active use of the library and speak to a positive attitude towards independent book reading. The students may borrow a maximum number of five books at any given time.

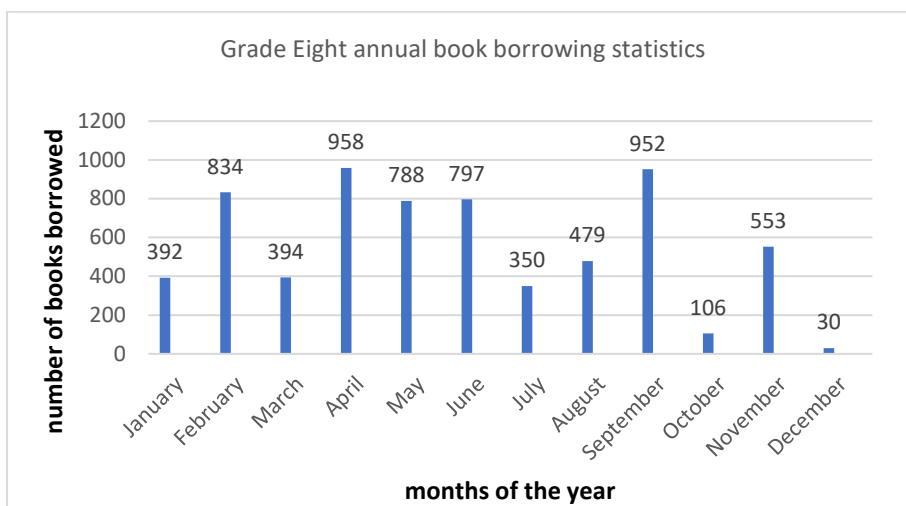


Figure 4.1: Grade Eight annual borrowing statistics

The borrowing pattern displayed in the figure above shows reduced borrowing around the examination periods, namely, July and October. Reduced borrowing also occurs around term test

times reflected in the table above in March, May, July. This was worrying as research has shown that students need to read a lot of books, but they also need that free access to books that attract them and hook them into the activity of reading to become independent proficient readers. Book floods and an abundance of books results in increased motivation and increased reading achievement. Having books facilitates students' reading (Allington, 2012; Kittle, 2013; Atwell, 2009; Guthrie, 2008; Lindsay, 2010; Routman, 2014; Gallagher, 2009, Worth & Roser, 2010).

Increased borrowing occurs in the months of February, April, and September. This pattern reveals the negative impact of a formal testing/exam period upon the participant's reading for pleasure. Parental pressures to do well in these assessments are also mentioned by the participants and this performance pressure results in learners not borrowing books during this time. During the reading conferences participants shared that their parents may even "take their reading books away from them" or "ban reading" during these assessment periods.

The February borrowing increase may be explained by the excitement of being new secondary school students. The participants excitement and motivation due to the size and appearance of the secondary school library, as well as its vast array of very accessible, popular, and up to date books could be the result of this borrowing increase. During the reading conferences participants shared how when choosing a secondary school, they were swayed in their choice because of the amazingly, wonderful library. The early receipt of their library card on arrival at this secondary school, (within the first week of school), library tours and orientation activities, and the promotion of reading that happens within the Grade Eight library lessons and further contribute to the high February statistic. This higher borrowing pattern extends through April and September as these are relaxed academic calendar months, with no exams prior to or after these months. It includes shorter holidays, resulting in more interest in reading over this period. This extra holiday borrowing and reading may be due to less 'planned holiday activity' because of the shortened holiday period. This afforded the students more reading time during their holidays. The books borrowed in December are usually considerably more, as students are encouraged to take out books to read over the extended December vacation. The book limit per student is often raised over this period.

Worthy and Roser report from their 'book flood' of a fifth-grade classroom, that before the 'book flood' only 27 percent of the students passed the state reading achievement test but after the 'book flood', all but one student passed the test (p. 250). The participants in engaging with more books over the December holiday period, are possibly spending more time reading and may be improving their motivation and attitudes towards reading for

pleasure as well as improving their reading proficiency. The low statistics in this research for the month of December are the result of drawing the data early in the month of December, for the purposes of this completing research.

The large number of books in the school library where this research took place facilitates a wide choice of books. The opening and closing hours of the library promote easy access to the books in the library (7:00am – 4:30 pm daily). The open and easy access to books and ability of the participants in this research to self-select their own books to read for pleasure can be seen in the photographs in Appendix 13. This translates to the participants' developing independence in their reading, and the experience of control over their reading for pleasure. They have a choice from a wide variety of books in a large collection of both non-fiction and fiction books. The total collection of their school library is +- 36 000 titles. The books are well displayed and allow for both choice and easy access. There is also a book suggestion facility where students can request titles that are not currently available. The pictures in Appendix 14 also illustrate the size and scope of the school library, its large collection, and the easy access to this collection for the participants. The participants practised their decision-making abilities when choosing books for themselves, giving them confidence and a feeling of ownership. This would result in improved reading achievement as shown in the data for research question 1.

A random selection of 30 participants' book borrowing records from the Papyrus data was selected. Then based on their level of activity as readers, the participants were put into three groups labelled very active readers, average readers and less active readers using their borrowing figures. Ten participants from each section mentioned above show the range of book borrowing that occurs amongst the participants. Very active readers borrow and may be reading between 62 and 200 books in a school year. Average readers are borrowing between 22 and 55 books in a year. Less active readers are borrowing and reading between zero and 13 books in a year. This represents the 'typical' wide range of borrowing activity present amongst the young adolescent participants. A range of the number of books borrowed within each group are shown in Figure 4.2.

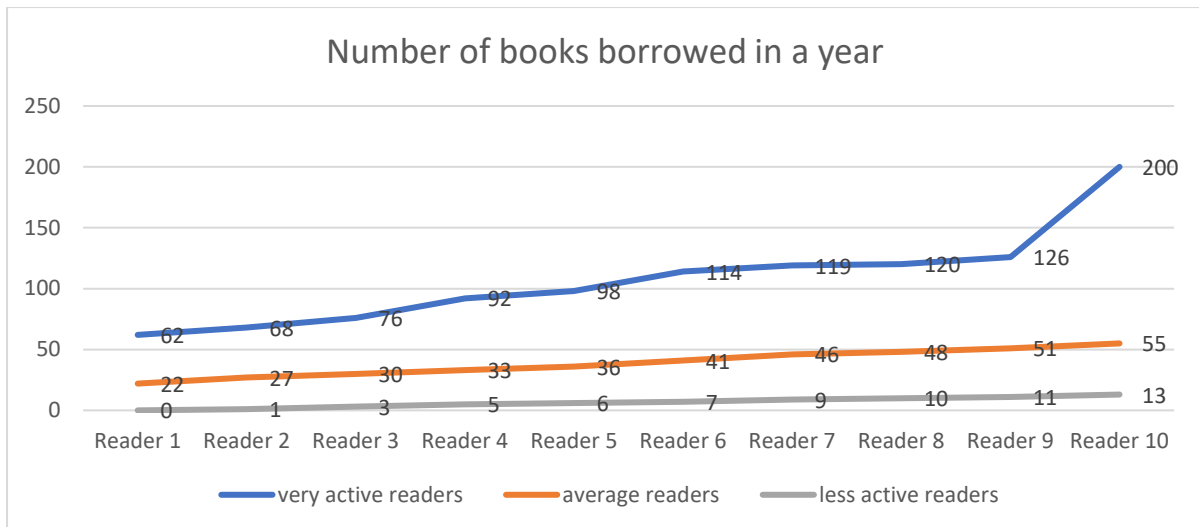


Figure 4.2: Comparative number of books borrowed by a sub-sample of 30 participants

The frequency and consistency of reading via the number of books borrowed, as shown in Figure 4.2 clearly shows the range of books borrowed by three different categories of readers, and the vast range in the total number of books borrowed by the whole sub-sample of 30 participants. There are 10 readers in each sub sample named Reader 1 – Reader 10. Reader 10 in the blue category “very active readers”, borrowed two hundred books in a year, whilst Reader 10 in the grey category “less-active readers”, borrowed only 13 books in the same year. Reader 10 in the orange category “average readers”, borrowed 55 books in the same year.

The figures give an indication of the book borrowing patterns of the participants, and their positive intention to read books, as well as their avoidance of reading completely or their limited reading activity. By assumption, we glean an indication of the possible number of books read or not read. The data may suggest the possible amount of time spent engaged in reading, by assuming that to read 200 books in a year a reader is spending a great deal of time on reading. Conversely, a reader who reads no books at all is spending no time at all reading books.

Generally, the participants appear to be active borrowers of books exhibiting a positive intent to read regularly. Their borrowing patterns suggest a general positive association with the activity of reading.

This data showed the wide range of borrowing/assumed reading activity amongst the participants and the wide range of calculated assumed time spent reading. (See Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Participant borrowing figures and time spent reading

Individual participants/readers from the 3 categories in figure 4.2	Number of books borrowed/ assumed read		Estimated/assumed possible time spent reading annually /monthly.
	Annually	Monthly	A great deal of time (GRT) moderate time (MT) Little to no time (LTN)
Participants/readers # 1 Less active readers/participants VA AV LA	62 22 0	5 (5,16) 2 (1,83) 0	GRT consistent daily reading MT sporadic daily reading LTNT - None
Participants/readers # 5 Average readers/participants VA AV LA	98 36 6	8 (8,16) 3 0,5 (0,5)	GRT consistent daily reading MT sporadic daily reading Infrequent to no daily reading
Participants/readers # 10 Very active readers/participants VA AV LA	200 55 13	17 (16,6) 5 (4,6) 1 (1,08)	GRT consistent daily reading MT sporadic daily reading Infrequent to no daily reading

Using the number of books borrowed/read in a month, I estimated the weekly time spent reading in each sub-group. In each group there were very active borrowers/assumed active readers, sporadic borrowers/assumed sporadic readers and infrequent borrowers/assumed infrequent readers. For example:

- Participants #1 showed a range of between 5 to 0 books borrowed/assumed read in a month. This translates to a range of reading of 1,25 books per week, 0,5 books per week and no books in a week. So even within the lowest volume of books borrowed/assumed read, group, there are readers engaged in reading consistently, whilst others are reading sporadically and still others are not reading at all.
- Participants #5 showed a range of between 8 to 0,5 books a borrowed in month. This translates to a range of 2 books per week, ,75 books per week and 0,125 books per week. Within this median range of books borrowed/assumed read there are readers who are reading consistently, sporadically, and infrequently.

- Participants #10 showed a range of between 17 to 1 book/s borrowed in a month. This translates to a range of 4,25 books per week, 1,25 books per week and 0.25 books per week. Within the very active range of readers there are readers who are reading a great deal, some who are reading consistently and some who are sporadically. In this group there are no readers reading infrequently.

This quantitative data reinforced that the range of borrowers and assumed time spent reading was indeed very varied amongst the participants.

Quantitative data: AMRPRS pre-intervention responses

The AMRPRS survey and the reading reflections were completed by the participants both prior to and after their use of the intervention, GR. For clarity and ease of understanding I have used the terms ‘pre’ for the survey and reflections done before the intervention and ‘post’ for the survey and reflections done after the GR intervention.

These themes of time spent reading and reader feelings and attitude towards reading have been linked together because research has shown that positive attitudes and feelings towards reading, positively and directly relate to the amount of time spent reading (Merga, 2018b). We choose to spend time on what we enjoy doing. Conversely negative attitudes towards reading may result in less time being spent reading.

AMRPRS questions 2 and 14.

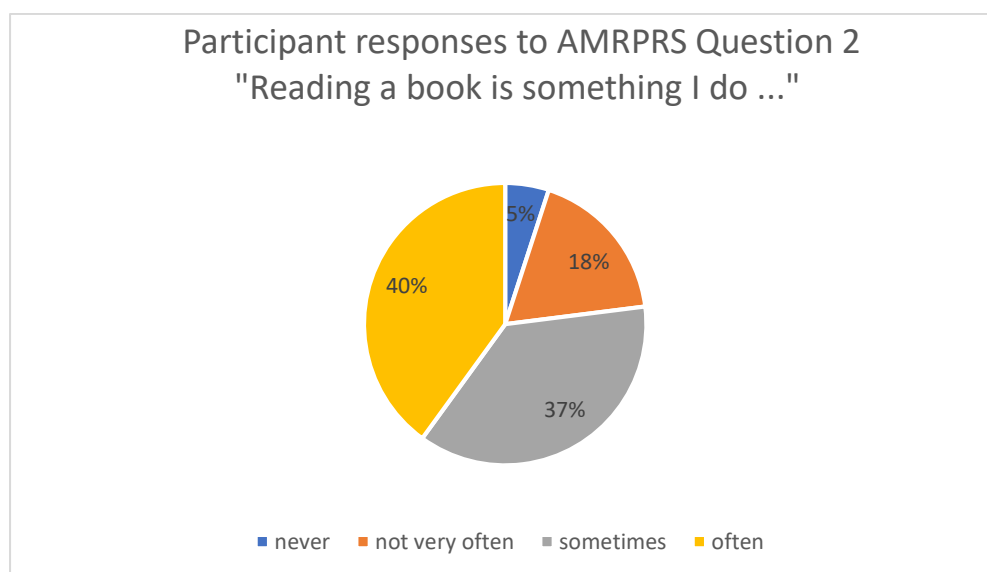


Figure 4.3: AMRPRS Question 2

Figure 4.3 shows that 40% (69) of participants said they would read a book often, 37% (63) said sometimes, 18% (30) said not often, and 5% (8) said they would never read a book. One participant did not respond to this item. In line with the above statistical analysis, the general attitude towards reading was positive. Generally, 95% of the participants said they would be reading to some degree or other, and only 5% of participants said they would never read (one participant had no response).

This result that shows that 95% of participants are engaged in some degree of reading. This is in line with the previous result from the book borrowing statistics that showed that the general population of participants had high book borrowing statistics which inferred that they were actively engaged in reading consistently every day.

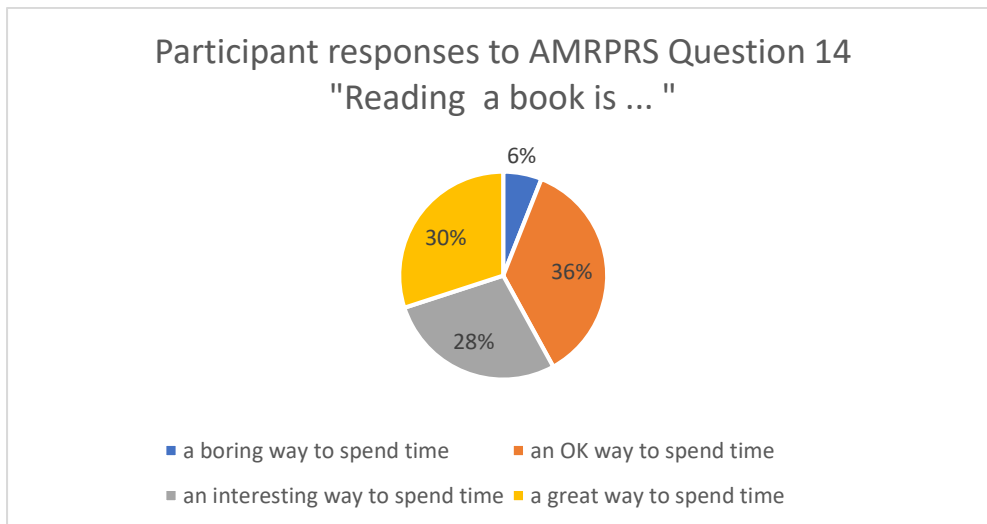


Figure 4.4: AMRPRS Question 14

Table 4.3: Summary of motivation, reading feelings, and attitude/feelings towards reading and time spent reading

Question 2 Reading a book is something I like to do	Often 40%	Sometimes 37%	not very often 18%	Never 5%
Question 14 I think reading is a ___ way to spend time	great 30%	interesting 28%	OK 36%	boring 6%

There is a high to moderate similarity between the participants' responses to these two questions (Figure 4.4 and Table 4.3). Table 4.4 shows that participants who read often feel that reading is a great way to spend their time. Participants who read sometimes feel that reading is an interesting way to spend their time, and participants who say they never read a book feel that reading is a boring way to spend their time.

The mismatch between those readers who do not read very often (17%) and those readers who feel reading is an OK way to spend their time (36%) is interesting, in that it reflects both the value of reading amongst the participants and their self-concept as readers. These ‘part-time’ readers state it is an OK way to spend time (36%) and thus show that they recognise the value of reading, but they are not very often engaged in the activity of reading by choice (17%). I wondered about why they are not choosing to engage in reading for pleasure. What this because of time availability, time allocation which alludes to preference and choice, skill deficit, access, choice

Merga’s WASABR study that further research was needed into why infrequent readers who can read do not engage in the practice of reading more often. She stated that teens had a lot of competing extracurricular demands on their time over which they can not exercise choice. It would appear that reading for pleasure is not thought of by the participants as important compared with significant other demands over which they have little choice (Merga, 2013 and Hughes-Hassell 2008; Gordon, 2010 cited in Merga, 2018). Nor does reading for pleasure compete when compared with pursuits that are more attractive to them. (Gordon, 2010; Manuale, 2012 and Hofferth & Jankuniene, 2010 cited by Merga, 2018). Thus we see that there is time availability and time allocation which involves preference.

Further analysis of their pre-reading reflections reveal that they choose not to read despite valuing the activity of reading because there are other demands on their available time. Extra-curricular activities one of which that featured high, was sport. Other time contenders were homework and studying, extra-lessons, cultural activities like choir, religious lessons, dancing and socialising with friends and smartphone time. These varied contenders for their pleasure time are either viewed as more attractive, for example horse riding, dancing, sports, smartphones & social media, or the participants are unable to exercise choice, for example homework, studying, auxiliary and religious lessons.

Participant 116 “ I don’t like reading a lot... I don’t really have a lot of time.” – preference and time allocation

Participant 50 “ I don’t read regularly, but when I do I enjoy it. I am more active with sports and dancing though” – time allocation - preference

In Merga’s research on the children’s perceptions of the importance and value of reading, (2018) she asked the question “is it important to be a good reader” (p. 9). This question was

also asked of my participants in the AMRPRS. Merga categorised the replies of her participants into “scope of importance” categories. I found these categories useful to apply when analysing the AMRPRS answers of my participants. In my analysis using Merga’s scope of importance categories, I found that my participants pre-reading reflections showed their value of reading, and I used Merga’s scope of value categories to analyse their responses. The participants often saw the benefit of reading as imparting one beneficial element, but many participants imagined the importance and value of reading as being multi-faceted. Merga suggested the following types of value of reading:

- Future vocational – reading is part of a necessary vocational skill set.
- Future academic – reading is helpful in later academic life
- Immediate academic – reading is beneficial as a foundational skill improving a range of skills whilst you are at school reading
- Immediate social – reading is valued as giving the readers exposure to social experiences that are beneficial to their everyday lives and personal, social and emotional well being and assist them to conquer challenges in their everyday lives.
- Future social – reading has value as it allows you to transfer your skills to a new upcoming generation. (parent to child)
- Immediate affective – reading is related to immediate feelings of enjoyment, it is de-stressing, relaxing, give the reader a feeling being soothed and helps the reader’s concentration and focus.
- Unimportant supported – reading is seen as unimportant as not everyone can be a good reader and there will always be someone who can assist you. Locus of control is outside of the reader. Reading skill is viewed as an inherited or biologically determined skill.

The abovementioned categories are further explained in more detail with examples from various participants’ pre-reading reflections:

Participant 111 below demonstrates in her reflection that her value of reading is multi-faceted, saying that her reading skills are improved (immediate academic) and that she experiences vicariously when reading, the feeling of living a different lifestyle (immediate social).

Participant 111 “ I read because it helps me improve my reading skills and it helps me

imagine a different life style”.

Participant 22 below also has a multi-modal value of reading. She describes her reading benefit as immediate social - she experiences what it would be like living in a different world. Her value of reading is also shown to be immediate affective - she describes how reading allows her to relax, unwind from her real everyday life.

Participant 22 “I like reading because you get to go in a different world and take a break from reality”.

Future functional value of reading - shows that the participants’ perceived the value of reading was that reading would be of value in their future career or general life as an adult, a kind of vocational or adult skills set.

Participant 1 “ Reading is a passion of mine, not only do I enjoy reading but is also teaches me life lessons...I have to be serious it changes my life forever..teaches us about the different people you may meet in life..”

Participant 147 below, perceives the value of reading as immediate academic – she sees reading as a foundational skill that provided her with immediate benefits such as improved vocabulary, and improved understanding and comprehension. Reading was valued because it improved her immediate scholastic achievement.

Participant 147 “Reading is very helpful, it increases your vocabulary and enables to comprehend things”.

Participant 42 below, sees her reading value as immediate affective, in that she enjoys her reading a great deal, as immediate academic, as she now uses more descriptive words, and immediate social as she can identify with the character. Her value of reading is multi-modal.

Participant 42 “I enjoy reading a lot. Reading lets you immerse yourself in the story and actually become the character. Reading has helped me with my vocabulary, as I can now use more descriptive words”.

Participant 76 has an immediate social value of reading – her reflection shows that reading has value in that it exposes the reader to social experiences such as family relationships, teen risks and relationships, inter-personal skills. This exposure through reading, appeared to be seen as helping the reader to deal with immediate and future social challenges and helped them to mitigate teenage risks. This reader saw reading as purposeful and as allowing her to develop

coping skills that helped them to navigate various social issues, through vicariously experiencing them in a book.

Participant 76 “ I like genre like reality fiction or drama because I like experiencing what other people are going through...” (immediate social value).

Immediate affective value of reading – shows reading being related to immediate affective enjoyment and relaxation. Like experiencing the joy of reading, feeling soothed after reading, feeling de-stressed after reading and they also felt it helped their focus and concentration..

Participant 79 “ I like reading because it takes me on an adventure and makes me open my mind for options and creativity (immediate social value). Reading makes me feel calm and happy” (immediate affective value).

Unimportant value of reading – shows reading being devalued and appears to be rooted in a belief or view that you were either a reader or you were not, not everyone becomes or is a good reader, and with this view was the feeling that there would always be someone around to help you if you needed literacy assistance.

Only 6% of the participants find reading boring, and by assumption a waste of valuable time and therefore preferred not to engage in reading for pleasure. While this is of concern, it is consistent with the previous quantitative results and is a relatively small number of participant population.

The readers in the 6% above, appear to lack an internal locus of control. Their low value of reading influences their frequency of reading. Because they see no value in reading as an activity this then influences their reading development and entrenches reading as something not to be enjoyed. These readers need to be made aware of and conversant about the benefits of reading, in order to see reading as important and to begin to value it as a worthwhile activity. They need to realise and see that their reading effort is directly related to their reading improvement.

These quantitative results suggest that most of the participants are positively engaged in reading and are seeing some value in reading and see reading as an activity worth spending time doing. Their reading experiences are unique and varied. A high value of reading results in more reading which in turn then produces more benefits to the reader thus highlighting “the persistent link between subjective task valuing of reading and reading engagement” (Merga, 2018, p. 15). Conversely, those readers that do not value reading spend little to no

time reading and see no benefit in the activity of reading. It suggests that it is important to communicate the value of reading to readers, parents, and teachers so that our readers, "... seek to achieve increasing skills for independent literacy in order to achieve sufficient literacy skills for both immediate and future needs, across functional, vocational, academic, social and affective dimensions" (Merga, 2018, p. 16).

Qualitative data: pre-reading reflections (these refer to written reading reflections made by the readers prior to the GR intervention).

Students reflected upon their reading journey at the beginning of the research period. They reflected on how they felt about reading, what kind of reader they were, how often they read, the value they attached to reading, who influenced them as a reader and other comments they felt were relevant to their reading journey up to that point.

Participant pre-intervention reflections were analysed and revealed information relative to the themes listed earlier in this chapter. Findings were related back to the research questions, theories, and current literature. The quantitative findings from the AMRPRS participant responses and the pre-intervention reflections were collated to give a view of participants' responses to each of the themes showing similarities and/or differences. The quantitative and qualitative data were consistent. We have seen in the quantitative data from Papyrus above that the participants responses to the AMRPRS questions 2 and 14 revealed a positive intention to read and be engaged in spending time reading. The reading reflections below correlate highly with the quantitative results above and reveal a positivity towards the activity of reading and by association towards spending time reading (readers who enjoy reading spend more time reading). The readers below are those participants who are avid readers that have assimilated reading into their lives, and it has become as natural to them as breathing. They are the readers who frequent the library and are expert at choosing "the right book" for themselves, they know their own reading tastes and have favourite authors, series and genres. They are comfortable talking about their reading and often are library monitors or reading assistants within the library.

I love reading with all my heart. (Participant 23, 13 years old)

I love, absolutely love reading ... reading is like my oxygen. (Participant 158, 14 years old)

I am a very passionate reader. (Participant 7, 13 years old)

However, this positivity about reading did not hold true for all participants. The following two reflections reveal the negativity that some participants displayed towards reading. This negativity arose due to reading difficulties, which were discovered through the reading conferences to be due to not being able to choose the ‘right’ book for them.

I hate reading because I find it really difficult for me ... I would like to start reading more. (Participant 151, 14 years old)

Participant 151 chose books that were either not engaging in content or were too difficult in style and literacy level. The participant did articulate a desire to read more. She seemed not see herself as in control or as having the power to change her book choices or the amount time she spent on reading.

Reading isn't what I would do in my spare time because I would bore myself to death. (Participant 162, 13 years old)

Participant 162 spoke about not choosing to read in their spare time as she found it boring. In the reading conferences Participant 162 expressed an inability to choose “the right book” to keep her interest and shared that she experienced a lack of focus when reading so that she lost engagement in the story and then felt bored, thus she stated that she wouldn't chose to read in her spare time. Author James Patterson has said that there is no such thing as a child who hates reading... just that these children are reading the wrong books, and they need expert assistance to help them find the right books (2014).

The above reading reflections show the participants' variety of feelings and attitudes about reading for pleasure.

Positive feelings and attitudes towards reading are intrinsically motivating for adolescent readers. These will motivate them to expend more effort and become more engaged in their reading. These feelings may positively influence the time participants spend reading, their text choices, and their willingness to engage in reading as an activity. Their reading feelings and attitudes towards reading influence their competency in reading, either positively or negatively. If participants engage successfully in reading and experience feelings of enjoyment with their reading, they will choose to read more and spend more time reading, thus improving their reading competency. If they lack reading experience and practice or have negative reading experiences, they will have consequent feelings of frustration and unhappiness with their reading. They will not choose to read as often, spend less time reading and their reading competency will not show improvement. Feelings and attitudes about

reading reflect, by association, the amount of time spent reading (Miller, 2013; Merga, 2018b)

It can be assumed that those participants who profess to “love, absolutely love reading” spend more time reading than the participants who profess they are “not a big fan of reading”. Similarly, it can be assumed that a participant who states that “I hate reading” will spend less time reading than a participant who states that “reading is like my oxygen”. There is consistency in the AMRPRS responses and the participant pre-reflections with most of the reflections about reading being positive.

The figure of 6% who chose the response, “I would never read a book” and “I think reading is a boring way to spend your time”, is however of grave concern. In analysing the reflections of this group of participants the root of the negative responses is not clear. The causes may be because they do not like reading per se, or because they prefer to read other texts, for example comics, magazines, online texts, websites, cell phone text messages, and posts on social media. The reasons for not choosing to read a book appear varied and are directly related to each individual participant’s life context and experiences with reading. Some participants appear to be ambivalent in their feelings and attitudes towards reading. They like to read but don’t often choose to read. They feel reading is important and yet they still choose not to read.

Further analysis of the responses below may reveal some of the specific reasons why some participants choose not to read. The following reflections are from participants who responded to Question 2, choosing the response, ‘Reading a book is something I would never do’. Their honest reflections are to be lauded and may reveal their feelings, beliefs and or attitudes towards reading and what they choose to do other than reading, giving insight into why they responded so negatively to Question 2.

I do not usually read. I am not really a reader because I am usually doing something else like horse-riding or going to a friend’s house ... I like reading when I have the time. (Participant 139, 14 years old)

This participant does not have negative attitudes or feelings about reading despite her AMRPRS response choice. She says she likes to read when she has the time. But she does not make any effort to prioritise any time for reading. Reading is just not a priority for her, she slots reading in, if and when she can.

I like to read but I am very judgemental by the first chapter. I don’t like to read over the weekend or in the holidays. (Participant 142, 13 years)

It appears that this participant does not choose to read regularly. She shared that during the weekends and holidays she is socialising with friends or spending time socialising on her smartphone. She agreed that she gives up easily and is often very judgemental in the early stages of reading her book, thus showing she has not developed reading resilience or reading stamina.

To be honest I don't read. I don't really enjoy reading, but my parents always nag and we have to. I spend my time doing other things and I'd rather watch the movie than read the book (Participant 89, 14 years old)

Being frank and honest, this participant does not enjoy reading and doesn't read by choice, only when forced by her parents' nagging, to read. Her preference is more visual – a movie over a book. Reading appears to have a low value to her, perhaps because of the negativity of “being nagged” to read. She also relates how other interests are more compelling for her attention and time, than reading, preferring to spend time doing other things.

I don't like reading at all. I am just a sporty person, I truly never have time to read, I never finish books and can't find time to read. (Participant 64, 13 years old)

Time constraints due to her sports interests appear to be the factors impacting this participant's time for reading and her inability to complete a book. Being active in sports this participant was busy most afternoons and did not find reading something she wanted to do when she did have time. In her it would appear that her value of reading is low which correlated with her AMRPRS perceived value scores (pre-score 32% and post- score 35%). She also had a low self-concept as a reader shown in her AMRPRS self-concept of a reader scores (pre-score 62% and post-score 22)

I don't like reading, but I am an average reader. I am more of a sporty person but once in a while I will find time for reading. (Participant 75, 13 years old)

The reader above is not against reading, saying she does read but only when she has time, which is ‘once in a while’. She has chosen not to make reading a part of her daily life. She has competing sporting interests for her time.

I'm not such a big reader, no books fascinate me, they don't make me want to read more. I have had one or two rare books that I just couldn't put down but that was a long time ago. Since it's been a long time since I read, I have been put off books. I do want to start reading again because it helps with studying. (Participant 163, 14 years old)

This participant appears to have lost her desire to read. She does not read regularly. She professes a desire to start to read more regularly. She does however recognise a benefit of

reading. but is she paying lip service to a benefit of reading that she has heard about “it helps with studying” because if she hasn’t read in a long time howe would she have realised that reading benefit? In her reading conference she was asked if she would work with me and accept the challenge to find a book that fascinated her again. She was keen and made an appointment to meet me in the library at a break, but she did not arrive for her book choosing appointment.

I am a terrible reader. I love reading romance books and mystery reads. I am not a book lover because I don’t have time to read. I love to take out books, but I don’t read them I just keep them at home. I don’t like to read because there is a limited return date at the school. (Participant 177, 13 years old)

This participant’s reflection is contradictory. She appears to have a poor self-concept of herself as a reader, which on discussion appears to be a result of her peer group as they are not really interested in reading. She enjoys taking books out and this is confirmed by her borrower’s profile on the Papyrus data base, yet when reflecting she says she is frustrated by the two-week borrowing period or “return date” of the library books which makes sense given she says it takes a long time to complete a book and that she forgets to renew her book. This participant has started to read on the online platform and although the reading time frame is the same, she prefers it because she can just borrow the book again once it has been automatically returned on the due date.

I don’t like reading because it is boring, and I don’t read because I do sport every day after school, and I don’t have time. If I start a book, I can never finish it because I get bored. I do think reading is important because it helps with your schoolwork”. (Participant 18, 14 years old)

This participant has made the realisation that reading is important for academic progress, but this realisation has not transposed into her changing her reading behaviour. She is a very active and sporty participant. She appears to not have reading stamina and resilience that would allow her to concentrate and focus, sit quietly, and read for an extended period. She therefore finds reading boring and this results in her abandoning books unfinished. She borrowed only ten books throughout the year. Her self-concept of reading was high both in the pre and post-test (75%). Her perceived value of reading improved over the research period from 50% to 69%. This may be because during the reading conference she accepted the challenge of trying to read for 15 mins per day, with good attention and focus and then trying to lengthen the time spent reading. She has time issues balancing her love of sport and her reading for pleasure and if pushed to choose she said she would rather be active.

Issues with time appear to be a common refrain heard from the participants in the above group, in that they basically all express time as a common theme. They state they have no time for reading because their lives are overscheduled with other activities that they prefer. On analysing these perceived negative responses to Question 2 against the rest of their answers on the survey, I discovered that none of the participants are totally averse towards the activity of reading at all, even when they voiced negative feelings.

Some of the participants are engaged in a reading behaviour called book abandonment (Miller, 2014; Ripp, 2018; Gonzalez, 2017). The participant below is an example of this kind of reader.

I don't read because I usually never finish a book because I get distracted (Participant 169, 13 years old)

This reader had a good self-concept as a reader in both pre and post scores (75%). Her perceived value of reading score improved over the research period from 77% to 82%. This could be because as the Teacher-Librarian, I made time during book discussion periods in the library, to discuss the benefits of reading. She had good intentions to read eight books but did not complete any books and said, "I regret not making the time to read". On GR she found peer recommendations "nice" and enjoyed the GR feature of ratings and reviews, saying they did influence the choice of books she wanted to read. She did make a commitment to complete the books that she had begun reading but left unfinished. She also mentioned school stress as a factor that prohibited her time for reading.

Book abandonment may be demotivating and lead to little or no satisfaction or enjoyment in reading, which in turn then results in less time spent reading. It is a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, students say that they don't enjoy the book, so they don't finish the book and they admit they don't feel good about not finishing the book and therefore they don't choose to read another book.

Other participant responses revealed that they have other more interesting activities competing for their time, like these three participants.

I sort of enjoy reading but I would rather be playing outside. (Participant 91, 14 years old)

This reader above began the reading year choosing other activities above reading. Her self-concept as a reader showed an improvement, whilst her perceived value of reading was static over the research period, despite this hesitancy to read. Her self-concept score moved from

65% to 78% and her perceived value of reading score remained at 75%. Her reading conference discussion revealed that she has started reading at bedtime and was enjoying it.

Reading is not one of my favourite things to do. I would rather go draw or play a game. (Participant 20, 13 years old)

In her reading reflections Participant 20 describes herself as an average reader and expressed issues with finding the “right book”. She admitted in her reading conference, “I haven’t focused much on reading, and I know that I should, but it’s not one of my hobbies or interests. I would rather be catching up with my friends on my phone than reading”. She did mention a focus problem when reading. She had reread some favourite reads like “Fault in our Stars but preferred to draw, listen to music go on her phone and the internet than spend time reading. It was interesting that she mentioned she should be reading and that not reading was not good for her schoolwork. However, this recognition of the value of reading for her academic progress was still not a motivator enough to persuade her to choose to read regularly.

I also can’t find the time to read because I play a lot of sport and finish late. (Participant 114, 14 years old)

Participant 114’s pre intervention scores show her self-concept as a reader as 65%. Her perceived value of reading was low at 47%. She believed that she was an average reader and said she never really found a book that she liked or that she wanted to read.

Her first reading conference discussion revealed that she did not see herself as a reader as she got bored reading. She felt her reading wasn’t progressing well. In the post GR intervention reading conference, she shared that GR was motivating for her and it was “a good site” because it helped her to see which books might interest her and which ones she may want to read. She did not find the reading challenge goal feature of GR very motivating at all.

Her post intervention scores were - self-concept 67% and perceived value of reading 37%. These scores were not consistent with her self-talk about her reading journey.

Some readers have issues with book choice or a lack of time for reading like this participant.

I am not much of a reader. Sometimes it is because of time or because I just choose the wrong books. (Participant 110, 12 years old)

4.3.2 Recognising the Benefits of Reading

Other participants like the ones below, are aware of the benefits of reading, and express the desire to read more, so that they realise these benefits for themselves.

My goal for term two was to read ten books. I managed to read eight books as it helped me de-stress during the exam term. (Participant 93, 13 years old)

I do think reading is important because it helps with your schoolwork. (Participant 18, 14 years old)

I mostly read during the exams because it calms my nerves. (Participant 142, 13 years old)

This participant has explicit positive feelings about reading. She says that she likes reading, for the specific purpose of calming herself during her examination periods. The variety of pre-intervention reflection responses as to why the participants do or do not engage in reading reflect the complex nature of reading, and the intensely complex nature of the young adolescents who are on a reading journey needing to establish themselves as readers.

The pre-intervention reflection responses are consistent with the results from the AMRPRS responses and there is a high similarity between the results. This suggests a possible reciprocal relationship between intrinsic motivation for reading, positive feelings and attitudes about reading and a subsequent increase in time spent reading. Conversely, a reciprocal relationship is also suggested between poor or no motivation for reading, negative feelings, and attitudes towards reading, and a decrease in the amount of time spent reading.

Quantitative data – AMRPRS mean pre-test raw scores

The participants' mean pre-test AMRPRS raw scores are shown in Table 4.4. The test gives two raw scores, as the test has two sub-sets. Sub-set 1 is the raw score for reader self-concept and sub-set 2 is the raw score for a reader's perceived value of reading. Reader self-concept is the view that a reader develops of themselves as a reader. It can be referred to as reader identity or reader self-efficacy (Ripp, 2018; Miller, 2014). Involved in reader self-concept are the reader's self-perceptions of their own reading ability (reading proficiency and performance), their attitudes and feelings about reading, and the amount of ownership or control they experience in their own reading, as well as the sense of accomplishment and confidence they experience when reading. A reader's perceived value of reading is the reader's perceptions of the importance and value of the activity of reading and may influence their motivation to read. "Perceptions of the importance of reading may be related to [their]

subjective task values in relation to reading” (Merga, 2018 p. 3) This means how much do they like or are interested in reading, how important is reading is to them, and how useful is reading to them.

In Table 4.4 these raw scores are reflected. They reveal the development of a very positive reader self-concept. The participants generally see themselves as good readers and their perceived value of reading is multi-modal and high. They appear to view reading positively, and experience it as a worthwhile and interesting activity to be engaged in. These scores are consistent with the above book borrowing statistics.

Table 4.4: Mean AMRPRS pre-raw scores

Pre-test self-concept raw score	Pre-test value of reading raw score	Pre-test total raw score
30,056 = 30/40	29,688 = 30/40	59,912 = 60/80

Qualitative Data: AMRPRS responses to pre-test questions 9 and 15

The theme ‘reader self-concept’ was further explored with more quantitative data – the participants’ responses to AMRPRS Questions 9 and 15. These results were then compared with their pre-intervention reflections.

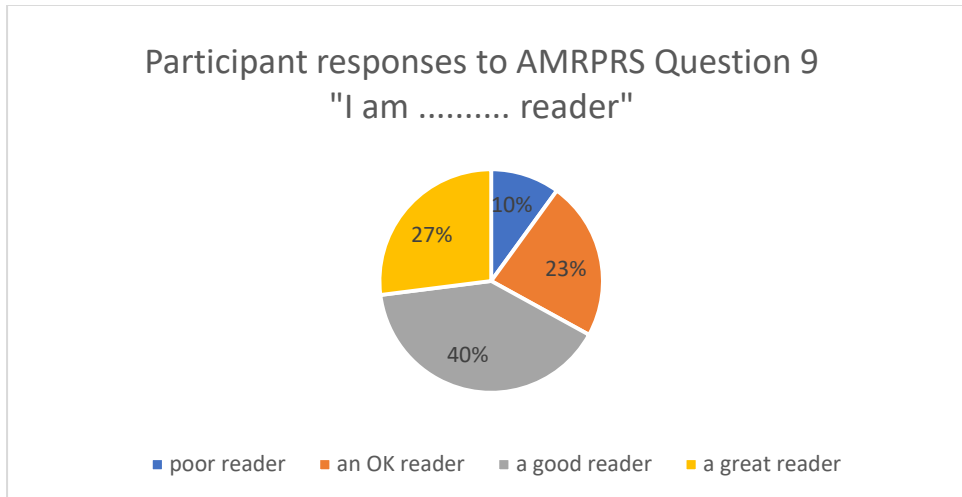


Figure 4.5: AMRPRS Question 9

As can be seen in Figure 4.5, 10% of participants saw themselves as poor readers, 23% as OK readers, 40% as good readers, and 27% as great readers. A total of 113 participants revealed a reader self-concept that is very positive. A further 39 participants see themselves as Ok readers which is positive, but perhaps suggests that they see room for improvement. Only 17 readers had negative self-concepts of themselves as readers as reflected in the AMRPRS

scores. The initial reading reflection responses when analysed had many positive responses. This appeared to reflect the same pattern as the AMRPRS responses for Question 9 above.

Usually a ‘because’ factor accompanied a negative reading comment. In exploring the responses of those participants who appeared to have negative feelings or attitudes towards reading, I noticed a pattern. These participants nearly all fell into an older age group. Previous research has shown that independent reading is drastically reduced as students get older (Merga, 2018b; Flood, 2015), and I wondered if my research data was revealing this pattern. This is also displayed in the 8% of participants who stated that reading was hard or kind of hard for them, when answering AMRPRS Question 15 (Figure 4.6).

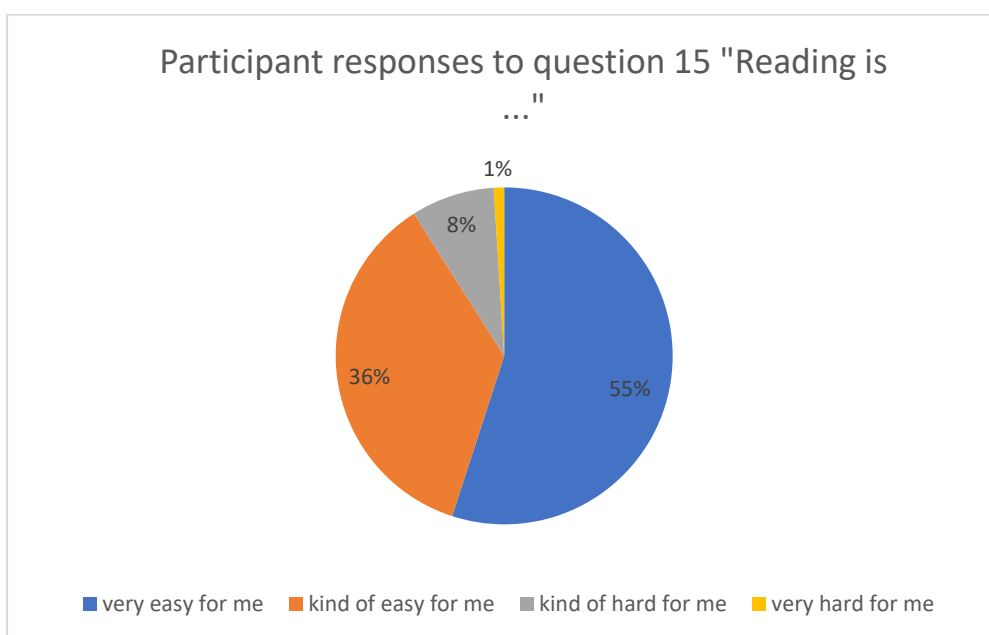


Figure 4.6: AMRPRS Question 15

The majority of the participants (55%) find reading easy. This suggests that they are very competent readers with a well-developed self-concept as a reader. They are confident and self-assured readers. 36% state that ‘reading is kind of easy for me’. If we look at the total of these participants, the total % of participants who feel positive about their reading is 91%. There is a high similarity between the participants results in this group (question 4.6), and the participants’ results in question 4.5, who stated that they were ‘ok readers (23%), good readers (40%), and great readers (27%)’. The total of participants who felt positive about their reading in question 4.5 was 90%. This high similarity of results between two questions suggests that most of the participants had a positive attitude towards reading and a well-developed self-concept of themselves as readers.

Qualitative data: pre-intervention reading reflections

The number of participants who said highly positive to positive things about themselves as readers in the pre-reflections below is highly consistent with their AMRPRS pre-intervention test responses, for Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6. The comments that follow are examples of the positive view the readers had of themselves as readers.

I am a really avid reader. (Participant 155, 14 years old)

I am very confident in my reading skills. (Participant 89, 13 years old)

I would say that I am a good reader because I can understand a hard word, if I read it in context. (Participant 29, 13 years old)

I love reading. I spend most of my time reading...I am a fast reader and I enjoy reading. (Participant 148, 13 years old)

I am a passionate reader. I enjoy reading. (Participant 113, 13 years old)

Fewer participants referred to themselves as average readers. This is also reflected in the percentage of responses by participants who chose the response, "I am an OK reader" for the AMRPRS pre-test Question 9, which was 23% of the participants.

Here are some examples of the comments of the students that support my conclusions above.

I am an average reader. (Participant 20, 13yrs 11 months).

I am OK when it comes to reading. (Participant 97, 14 years old)

I can read well but not very well. (Participant 30, 14 years old)

I am an average reader because I usually don't find the book that I like, and I don't finish it. (Participant 72, 14 years old)

I'm not passionate about reading but I like reading when I am bored. (Participant 112, 14 years old)

Even fewer participants saw themselves as readers who are not good at reading. This is also reflected in the 10% of participants who chose the response, "I am a poor reader", for AMRPRS Question 9 and the 1% of participants who stated that they found reading very hard in the AMRPRS Question 15, and 17% of participants who stated that they did not read very often. Research has shown that a reader who has a negative self-concept as a reader will engage less in the activity of reading. This results in less reading volume, and limited reading practice over time. Their lack of reading practice means that they are not developing their

literacy skills. “When we read, we really have no choice -we must develop literacy” (Krashen, 2004, p. 150). “Reading itself promotes reading (Krashen, 2004, p. 81).

I am not very good at reading, but I love reading a lot because I feel free from everything in life ... (Participant 85, 15 years old)

I am not the best reader. (Participant 30, 14 years old)

I'm a terrible reader. (Participant 177, 13 years old)

I am not a very passionate about reading as I do not read often I am not bad at reading but I a read more I would be better at reading. (Participant 176, 14 years old)

Participant number 85 has an underlying negative self-concept as a reader, but this does not appear to prevent her from enjoying the activity of reading and she relates how she views it as an escape from reality and life which is a real physically felt benefit of the activity of reading, as we lose ourselves in the story. In discussion with her she stated that she read much more slowly than her friends. I feel that this could have resulted in her giving herself the label of “not so good” at reading. Participant 17 shared that she could never find a book that she really enjoyed. She felt that should she find a book that she liked it would encourage her to read more. Difficulty in choosing the right book is a theme that arose from my data analysis. The majority of the participants who disliked reading, had negative self-concepts as readers and who had a love value of reading as a worthwhile activity tended to have difficulty in choosing books that they could easily get engaged in and often did not finish the book they chose for this reason. It is interesting to note that three out of four of the quoted participants who are negative about reading, are older than the mean of the participant group which is 13 years of age. Maynard, Mackey & Smith (2008) in their research about choosing books with readers aged between 4-16, found that as readers aged, they were more inclined to become lacking in enthusiasm for reading. This presents as an interesting opportunity for further research.

The following group of pre-reflection responses reveal very positive attitudes, beliefs and feelings about reading. They also reflect positive patterns regarding the participants' amount of time spent reading. This data reveals highly motivated readers, who feel very positive about their reading and who they are as a reader. They read whenever they can. They ‘make’ time to read in their busy day. These attributes reveal readers who have strongly developed concepts of themselves as competent, confident readers. They exhibit readers who think of reading as a valuable activity that is worthy of their engagement and time. Reading is

important to them. These readers also often recognise the benefits of reading in their own lives.

I have to take a book everywhere with me, just in case I get bored. (Participant 95, 13 years old)

I'm crazy about reading there is not one day I will not read... (Participant 132, 13 years old)

When I have a good book, nothing can stop me reading. (Participant 38, 14 years old)

Using effusive reading descriptors, most participants demonstrated their positive feelings and attitudes towards reading books for pleasure. These included words and phrases like: *I don't mind* reading, *I like* reading, *I enjoy* reading, *I love* reading, I am *passionate* about reading, *I read for fun*, I need to *challenge myself to read*, I go to the library *every day*, I wish I could *read more often*, *I read whenever I can*, my mother and a good friend *opened my life to reading*, reading is more of a *passion* than a hobby.

In answering question 15 in the AMRPRS, 55% of participants said reading was very easy. A further 36% of participants find reading kind of easy. Thus, a total of 91% percent of the participants that feel that reading is easy for them. The majority of the participants, therefore, can be said to have strong reader self-concepts. Some participants in this group show in their AMRPRS pre-test scores and pre-reflections ambivalence and negativity towards reading and so spend less time reading. They are motivated and/or distracted by other interests and are less motivated by reading. They find it difficult to fit reading into an already busy daily schedule. They choose not to read due to a lack of time, sports commitments, study or homework priorities. They prefer other activities, or they just do not enjoy reading for a variety of reasons that they mentioned in their pre-reading reflections. However, despite their apparent lack of reading engagement, the following reflections reveal readers who have well-developed self-concepts of themselves, as readers.

My reading journey has ups and downs because I love to read but I'm always busy and I can't choose the right book. (Participant 141, 13 years old)

Reading is not my thing – I'm more into sports. (Participant 134, 12 years old)

I'm an average reader because I don't really get the time to read books... I normally study most of the time to get good results. (Participant 107, 13 years old)

The reflections all confirm that most participants have positive attitudes to reading books despite not choosing reading as a regular leisure activity. The total number of participants who described reading as hard or kind of hard is 13%, which is a small portion. Looking at

the pre-intervention reflections of the participants who found reading ‘hard’, they appear to have a well-developed reader self-concept as mentioned previously in this chapter, but they tend to have a “because factor” that has resulted in their negative view of reading, for example, limited time for reading, poor book choices, distractibility, lack of concentration and focus. Other readers have developed low reader self-concepts and do not find reading enjoyable and may even experience minor reading difficulties as a result of the limited time spent reading – they lack reading practice. These participants are a minority, as shown in the following participants’ reflections.

I don’t like reading at all ... I never finish books and I can’t find the time to read ...
(Participant 64, 13 years old)

I am not a reader. I don’t enjoy reading. Some books are very interesting to me and others become hard to understand ... (Participant 157, 14 years old)

I am not a book person. I am more into movies and series. (Participant 43, 13 years old)

Fewer participants than I expected chose not to read, despite their answers about reading being positive. They merely preferred other leisure time pursuits like playing sport, being outdoors with family and friends. Their preference generally, was not to read for pleasure if they could be engaged in other outdoor recreational activities or socialising with others. This reinforces findings of Gilmore that found that there were many competing interests for students’ time (2011).

Sport appears to be a majority extra-mural choice, as is studying, homework or schoolwork. This reader attitude is very prevalent amongst the participants and seems to re-occur often in the analysed results. Further analysis of the individual participants’ pre-intervention reflections revealed a variety of participant preferences and choices for activities including sports that excluded choosing to read for pleasure and finding the time to read for pleasure.

I don’t like reading mostly because I don’t get time to read. I can never find the right book for me. (Participant 9, 13 years old)

I am an average reader ... I just don’t have enough time with swimming and homework. (Participant 138, 14 years old)

The results of the data analysis thus far highlight an important construct that is very meaningful to the participants namely, “time for reading”. This will be discussed further under the theme ‘reader strengths and struggles’.

4.3.3 Value of Reading as a Leisure Time Activity

Qualitative data -AMRPRS pre-test questions 12 and 16).

The pie chart in Figure 4.7 shows that only 2% of the participants answered that knowing how to read well was not very important, while 5% of participants felt that knowing how to read well was sort of important, 20% felt that knowing how to read well was important and 73% felt that knowing how to read well was very important. In my reflection as researcher, I must acknowledge that some of the participants may have felt the need to give answers that were viewed as ‘right’ and/or expected’, or ‘pleasing’ to me as the teacher-librarian. This does not invalidate the data, but it is a limitation that I, as researcher, must be aware of.

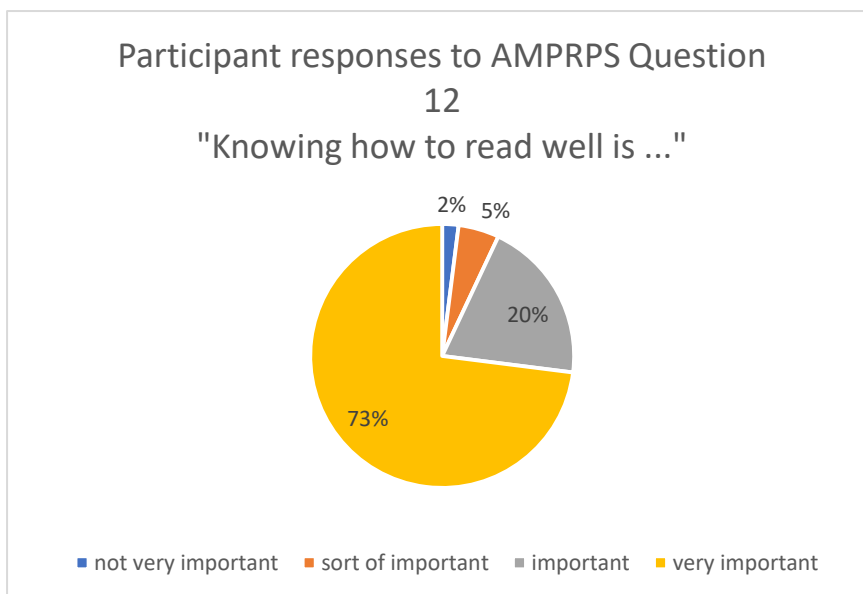


Figure 4.7: AMRPRS Question 12

The participants who value reading appear to realise the benefits of reading and therefore place a higher value on regular reading. The majority of the participants agree that knowing how to read well is important when answering the AMRPRS question 12. The quotes from the participants pre-test reflections shown below demonstrate the value these readers’ attach to the activity of reading, and the worth they see in the time they spend reading. I feel that this is a result of the work done by myself throughout the school, as the Teacher-Librarian in making the teachers and parents aware of the benefits of reading. This ‘benefits of reading’ campaign was begun because in my wide reading, Merga and Roni had suggested from her research findings with secondary school children that children who valued the practice of read with greater fluency. “fostering greater valuing of regular reading may enhance

children's reading engagement, as valuing of reading is found to be an important component of children's reading motivation" (2018, p. 1).

Reading calms, me down, and releases stress. (Participant 89, 13 years old)

I enjoy reading because I can put myself in the characters' shoes ... (Participant 99, 13 years old)

I love reading because it makes me feel good about myself. (Participant 171, 14 years old)

Reading for me is kinda like forgetting all my problems and just relaxing, escaping into another world. (Participant 121, 13 years old)

The Grade Eight participants in this research appear generally to have a high regard for reading and recognise its contribution to their lives.

... without reading I wouldn't be where I am today. (Participant 101, 13 years old)

Not only do I enjoy reading but it also teaches me life lessons. Participant 1, 13 years old)

I don't mind reading. Reading can be very interesting ... I sometimes get lost in a book. My soul is within the book. I sometimes connect with the book. (Participant 88, 14 years old)

I read at night before I sleep because it calms my brain from all the events from during the day

As discussed in the literature review, author and researcher Morgan (2017, p. 1) has coined the term "readaxation". The flow and engagement that she mentions describes the sense of being so engrossed in the activity of reading that you are transported into the world or situation you are reading about. This is exactly what some participants have mentioned in the above reading reflections.

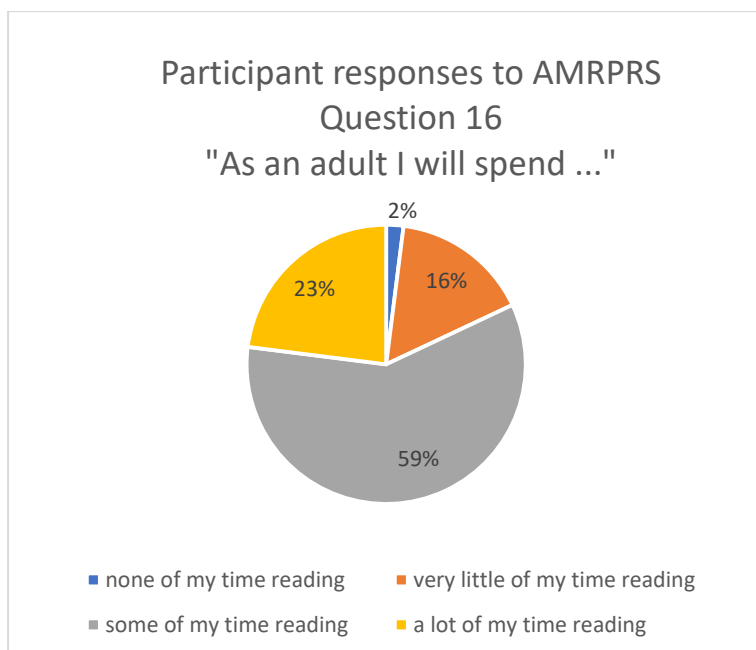


Figure 4.8: AMRPRS Question 16

Question 16 (Figure 4.8) regarding the participants' prediction of reading time as an adult appears to be less important and relevant for the current study and research, however it does allude to the association between reading value and time spent reading. A way that readers show that they value reading as an activity is by the amount of time they spend reading. If we value something, we are happy to prioritise it and spend time engaged in it. Therefore, the participant responses to AMRPRS pre-test Question 16 express how much time the participants spend engaged in reading and thus reflect the value they give to reading as an activity. This item is also asking the participants to project into the future, to predict the role of reading in their lives as adults. These results should be consistent with the participants' responses to pre-test Question 12. It is likely that if a student says that knowing how to read is very important, then they should say that they would spend some, or a lot, of their time reading as an adult. The actual statistical responses were surprising and not as consistent as expected.

The response choice one in both Question 12 and Question 16 has the same percentage response: "Knowing how to read well is not important" (2%) and "as an adult and I will spend none of my time reading" (2%). These two pre-test question responses showed agreement and consistency in their results. It would be interest talking with these participants about what they consider 'reading' to be in an adult life. In order to function as a citizen, employee, varsity student or whatever adult role they take on, they would need to be functionally reading and as a researcher I wondered if they were aware of this. Their

definition of reading was extremely restricted to what they experienced at school. But then in a discussion with the classes about the fact that they ‘read’ their notes and summaries when they were learning for assessments and class tests, they appeared to not see this as ‘real reading’ but rather learning. They did not see reading for learning as another form of “reading”. I will discuss this when I look at ORIS survey.

Response choice two – “knowing how to read well is sort of important” (5%) and “as an adult I will spend very little time reading” (16%) are not consistent but both scores are low. In analysing these two responses those participants who said knowing how to read well is sort of important were a very small group. The participant group who chose to spend very little time reading as an adult was three times larger. The analysis of the individual participants’ pre-reading reflection data revealed that the participant responses of AMRPRS question 16 were those participants who recognised reading was important but there was no transfer of this knowledge of the importance of reading into them prioritising reading as an activity they would engage in.

Response choice three – “knowing how to read well is important” (20%) and “as an adult I will spend some of my time reading” (23%) is fairly similar. This shows some consistency in the participant’s answers to the AMRPRS question in the survey. 73% of the participants thought that knowing how to read well was very important, yet only 59% of the participants thought they would spend a lot of my time reading as an adult.

The participants’ responses suggest a discord between time spent reading as an adult and the importance of knowing how to read well. The data analysis of the individual participants’ reflections revealed that this mismatch arises because of the preconceived notion the participants have of what reading is. They appear to see reading as a school based or school orientated activity and they do not see the reading they do on the television, their smartphones, and reading online on a laptop or computer or iPad as “reading”. They do not feel that they will need to read as an adult, because obviously they will not be going to school. In discussion with the various Grade Eight classes, they appeared to think that reading only happened at school or because of school. It also appeared that many participants did not have reading role models at home who would be modelling the activity of reading as an adult.

One participant said her dad did not read the newspaper, but after an investigation she said he was on his phone on twitter, LinkedIn, his whats-app groups etc. We discussed how these

apps were in fact still allowing for the activity of reading, just a very different form of reading from books reading for pleasure, but nonetheless still reading.

Similarly, there is a large discrepancy in choice four responses” “knowing how to read well is very important” (73%) and “as an adult, I will spend a lot of my time reading” (59%). The participants appeared reluctant to commit to saying they would be spending a lot of time reading as an adult, even though they state that knowing how to read well is very important. If one looks at the combined score for responses three and four in Questions 2 and 16, the combined scores appear more consistent, showing that 93% of participants said they feel knowing how to read well is important to very important, and 82% of participants said that they would spend some time to a lot of time reading as an adult.

I feel that this is a very worthwhile and interesting research opportunity for further research. Investigating the notion of what reading is and means to young adults at school, compared with what they understand reading to be for adults.

4.3.4 Reading Strengths and Struggles, Skills and Understanding

Qualitative data AMRPRS Questions 5, 7 and 13

The following question responses provide insights into reader reading engagement and creation of meaning (comprehension) during reading and perhaps reveal a generalised idea of adolescent readers’ level of skill during reading, which may reveal if participants’ find reading easy or difficult. The pre-reflections analysis reveals what difficulties the negative readers are experiencing; some reflections articulated difficulty with reading comprehension, which will be addressed below.

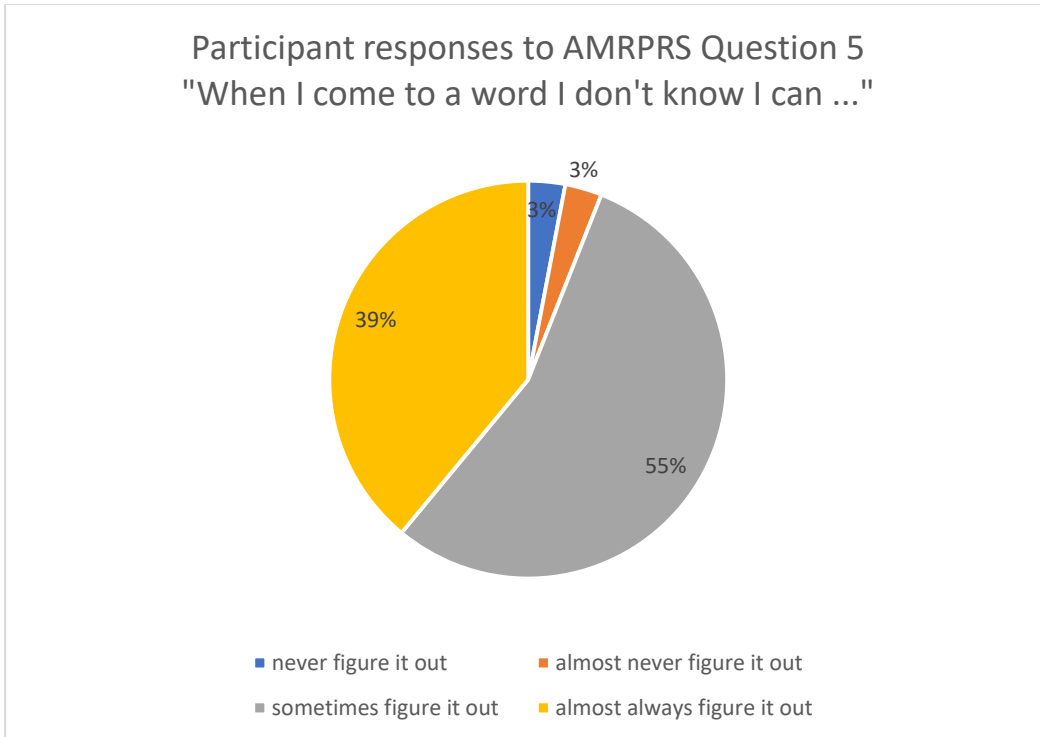


Figure 4.9: AMRRPS Question 5

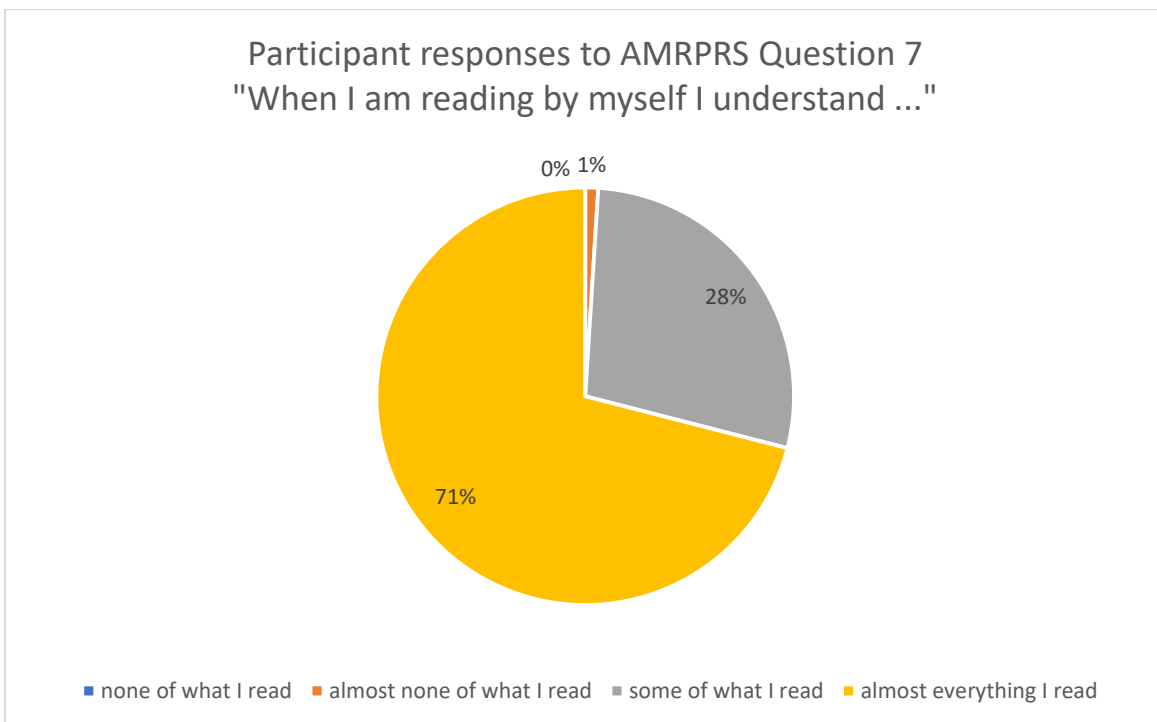


Figure 4.10: AMRRPS Question 7

Figures 4.9 and 4.10 show that generally the participants think of themselves as competent readers who are reading with engagement and understanding, with 94% of the participants feeling that they almost always figure out words they don't know, and 99% of participants

indicating that they understand the text when reading independently. Not one participant said that they did not understand what they read independently.

Yet, 1% indicated they had some difficulty understanding when reading independently. This is an anomaly. It suggests the participants misunderstood the questions or were confused by them, suggesting slightly poorer comprehension than stated, or they were choosing what they felt was the “right” answer. There may too have been some peer pressure at play with this question where they compared themselves to their peer group or friends circle and chose a like answer. Or they were choosing the ‘right answer’ due to my positionality as both Teacher-Librarian and Researcher and didn’t want to disappoint me as their Teacher-Librarian. They may also have not wanted to acknowledge in writing that they had reading difficulties. These participants were ear-marked for reading conferences with the Teacher-Librarian to follow-up on and provide assistance for them within the reading programme.

In AMRPRS pre-test Question 13 (Figure 4.11), when asked questions on a recently read text, most participants were confident and happy to answer the questions (36%). Only 2% of participants suggested they could not answer contextual questions asked by the teacher, and 14% suggested that they had some difficulties answering such questions. These results reveal that the Grade Eight participants generally found reading easy and were reading with good understanding. Only a small percentage (16%) of the participants answer that they were experiencing some reading difficulties and may have been struggling with comprehension in a minor way.

I am not a reader. I don't enjoy reading. I don't think I am very good either ... others become hard to understand. (Participant 157, 14 years-old)

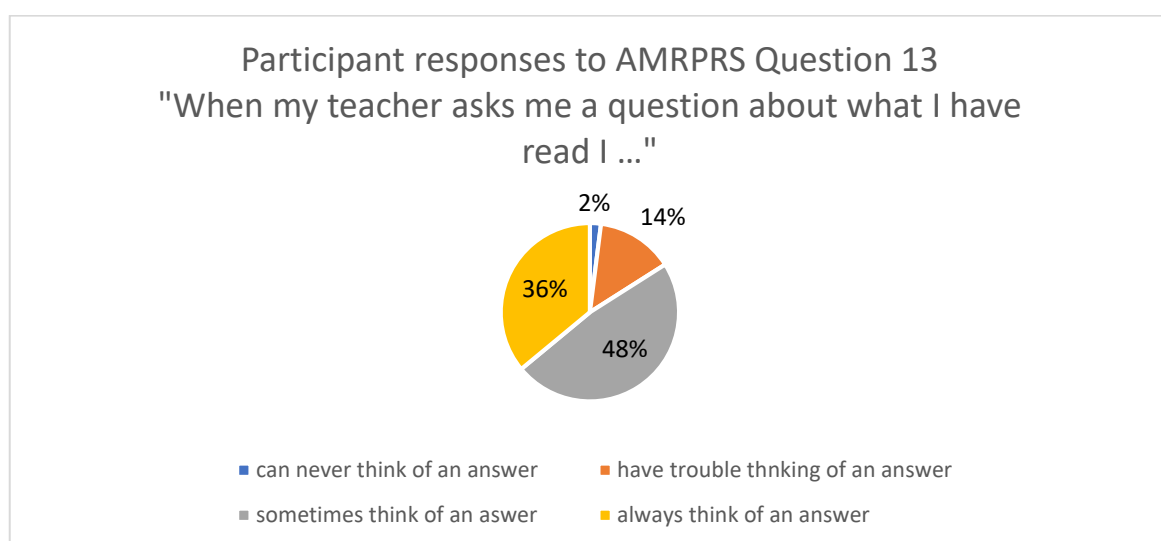


Figure 4.11: AMRRPS Question 13

In the reading reflections analysed for information around this theme, the data revealed very little on reading struggles and reading difficulties, and even less on reading word recognition and comprehension. This would suggest most participants felt they had ‘learned to read’ and they were not experiencing any ‘reading skill’ problems or difficulties. The responses reveal that a small minority of participants experienced difficulty with their reading. It is possible that the participants difficulties or struggles appear to not have been articulated in the reading reflections of the participants. This is not surprising in that when one looks at the measures of literacy, especially reading, self-reporting is not considered to be a reliable source of feedback from students, as most students may not want to own up to having comprehension difficulties and therefore would just say they had no problems. Difficulties with reading may also be due to them losing the reading skills they have acquired through a lack of reading practice.

The reading struggles faced by the Grade Eight participants appear to be:

- Book choice - an inability to choose the “right” book or a “good book”

For example, a participant wrote:

I have never been a good reader, I think it’s because it is really hard to find a book that would really have me on the edge of my seat. (Participant 57, 13 years old)

Some of these participants may presently be non-readers due to a lack of time for reading. If they were allocated time for reading in school, or if they managed their time, fitting in time for daily reading, they may begin to enjoy reading. Other self-declared non-readers said they were not really book people but preferred to watch movies or series. Some said they got easily distracted while reading, or they felt they didn’t have the patience for reading, and that they found reading boring. Interestingly, analysis of these pre-intervention reflections compared to their pre-test reader self-concept and value of reading responses, reveal a direct relationship between their choice to read or not to read, and their reader self-concept and value of reading. Positive responses result in pre-test scores showing a good reader self-concept scores and readers who value reading (high perceived value of reading score). This reveals readers who choose to read despite difficulties. Participant 37 testifies to the truth in the power of “the right book” that hooks a reader into the activity of reading (Sullivan & Brown, 2013).

I sometimes think that I don’t have the patience to read a book. (Participant 37, 13 years old)

I cannot concentrate but if it is my cup of tea then I'm in. (Participant 37, 13 years old)

However, many participants communicated that they had trouble choosing books. They professed to have difficulty with choosing the 'right-books'. They became disinterested while reading the books they chose. They experienced boredom with their own choice.

I don't read very often but I wish I could. I understand all the benefits and good things that come from reading. I don't read because I usually never finish a book because I get distracted ... (Participant 169, 13 years old)

I can't find a book that I'm into. (Participant 71, 13 years old)

I am a bad reader, but I like to read books that are really entertaining. I often read a book obsessively then I find I can't finish it ... I'm a reader that loves a book one day and the next I can't finish it. (Participant 73, 14 years old)

The power of choice in reading and of matching the right book to the right reader is often overlooked in the teaching of reading. This power of the reader being able to choose the 'right book' for themselves at the 'right time', is aptly stated in the following participants' reflections.

I used to hate reading and only read when I had to. Then after I read *Low Red Moon* by Ivy Devlin, I started to love to read. (Participant 63, 13 years old)

Another participant mentioned a book by title saying,

My favourite book is *Call me Hope* by Gretchen Olsen. The book has really impacted on my life ... (Participant 158, 14 years old)

Other participants related how they were totally absorbed or transported by their reading.

I read but I don't read much, but if I find a book I really like, my face is stuck into the book till I'm finished ... I go deep into the book. (Participant 86, 13 years).

I love reading because when I read it's like I go into a different world from earth (Participant 38, years old)

I have to be serious it [reading] changed my life forever – without books where else could one express their feelings ... (Participant 1, 13 years old)

The participants appear to have a confident self-awareness about themselves as readers. Even though they considered themselves poorly as readers, or struggled with book choices, they did not appear to lack confidence in themselves regarding their general reading ability. It was more that they had become disinterested in reading or had developed competing interests. In Chapter 5, I will pick up this observation to discuss it further.

- Time for reading

Not really having the time to read appears as a consistent complaint or reason given for not reading independently. Many students either have time constraints due to extra murals which they elect to take part in, or are prioritising schoolwork, friends, or playing outside before reading. Many of the research participants with both negative and positive self-concepts as readers had issues with ‘time’ for reading. As mentioned in Chapter 2, “wild readers” (a definition of lifelong readers coined by Miller [2014, p. xxiii]) are readers who make time to read. Although they lead hectic lives, they prioritise time to read. The Grade Eight readers who are negative about reading appear to see time as something that is outside of their locus of control. They do not appear to be able to manage their time, to make time for reading, nor can they prioritise reading enough to create a space within their daily schedule to fit it in. Reading then becomes less of a priority and less of a part of their everyday life.

I don’t have a lot of time for reading that’s why I haven’t read a lot of books.
(Participant 140, 14 years old)

... I don’t have the time to read with swimming and homework ... (Participant 138, 14 years-old)

I also can’t find the time to read because I play a lot of sport and finish late in the afternoon. (Participant 114, 14 years-old)

- Book abandonment (BA)

Book abandonment speaks to the habit that develops where readers get bored with their book and so never finish a book. This phenomenon often results from poor book choice, poor motivation and persistence to read through a part of the book that is not particularly gripping, and results in negative feelings towards reading. See the discussion of this reading behaviour in Chapter 5.

If the book is too thick, I seem to give up on it very quickly ... (Participant 33, 13 years old)

I start reading the book, but I get bored and don’t finish it. (Participant 82, 13 years old)

- Physiological, cognitive, ecological and emotional reasons

For example, sexual and skeletal maturation, changes to hormonal levels, changes in density of grey/white matter in frontal/parietal regions of brain changes, moodiness, (not being in the mood to read), poor concentration and focus, and because of the move to high school, a

subsequent decrease in ‘school’ reading motivation (Kamil, Pearson, Moje & Afflerbach, 2011, p159-165). Some participants tend to see reading as something they do if they are in the mood for it which implies that it has not become an inherently enjoyable daily habit.

I would only read for about five minutes if I’m in the mood. (Participant 33, 14 years old)

A lack of concentration or focus and getting distracted from reading. It must be quiet or I can’t concentrate. (Participant 57, 14 years old)

I never finish a book because I get distracted. (Participant 169, 13 years old)

- Excessive negative attitudes towards reading for pleasure

Only two participants were exceptionally vehement about their reading attitude and stated an apparent open dislike of reading because of inherent difficulties with their reading.

I hate reading because I find it really difficult for me. (Participant 151, 14 years old)

Reading is difficult for me. I don’t enjoy reading. I am not a good reader. Some books are hard to understand. I find it hard to read. (Participant 157, 13 years old)

4.3.5 Reading as a Social Activity

Fielding (2014) suggests that reading has been social since the days when reading was conducted beside the fireside and included an adult reading aloud to the family members. The author states: “the concept of reading as a social activity is stronger still. A key part of educational syllabi is to encourage children to read together and to discuss stories and non-fiction texts. Book [clubs and] groups have soared in popularity – people are coming together to share books and their opinions in all sorts of places, from homes to coffee shops, and across all manner of genres as well” (Fielding, 2014, p. 1). Novelist and book reviewer Fielding, like myself, is of the opinion that the multi-connectivity and exciting functionality of the possibilities afforded by technology “is creating the [stimulating] social reading developments” (Fielding, 2014, p. 1).

The data from the following two questions, AMRPRS Question 6 and 17, give insights into the participants’ socialising around books and reading, and provide insight into participants’ views regarding the social nature of reading.

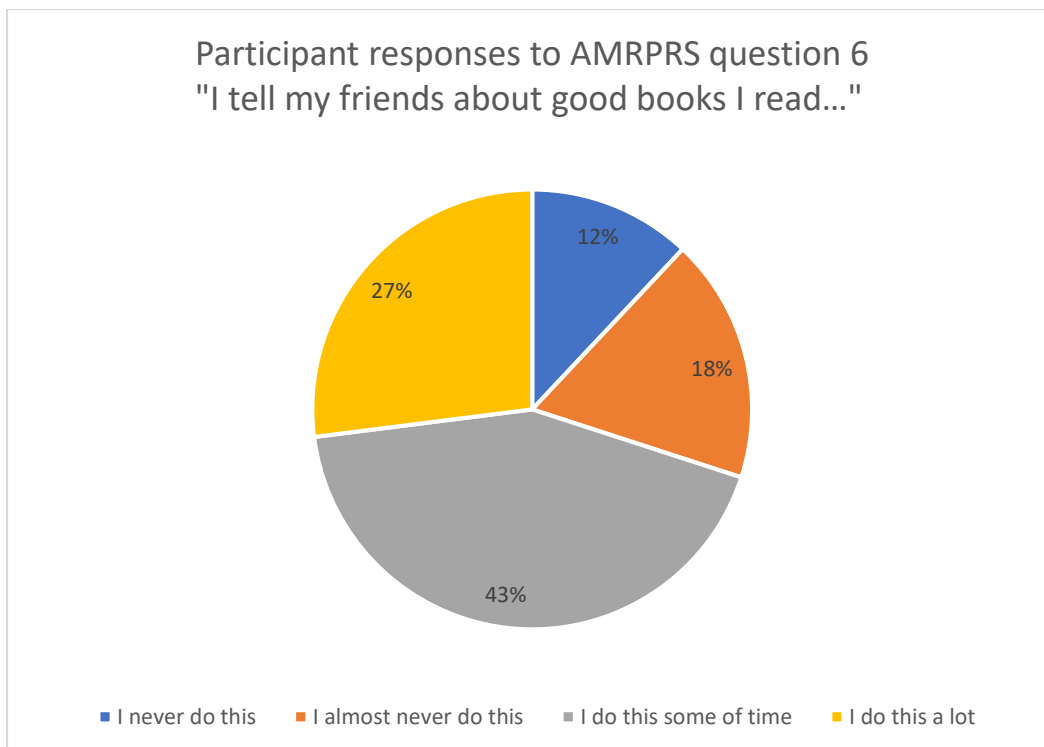


Figure 4.12: AMRPRS Question 6

Figure 4.12 shows that 27% percent of the participants talked to their friends about the books they were reading, and 43% shared what they were reading with their friends some of the time. This means that 70% of the participants were sharing in some way about the books they read i.e., more than half of the participants were socialising around what they were reading. However, 12% of participants stated emphatically that they never discussed what they were reading with their friends and 18% said they almost never talked about the books they read with their friends. This is a significantly higher negative response than in Question 17 and will be discussed in the next chapter.

I feel that these results address the issue of peer influence around reading. Merga's (2014c) research on the impact of friends and the peer group on the perceived social acceptability of reading as an activity suggests that "the act of identifying [one's-self] as a 'reader' may be a product of exposure to influential social agents such as ... friends and the peer group" (p 474).

The AMRPRS pre-test Question 17 also relates to the theme 'reading as a social activity' and refers to "talking about books in a class group". As can be seen from Figure 4.17, 47% of the responses are positive, that participants always or almost always talk about their ideas. The percentage of readers that sometimes share in this larger social group forum is similar, at 44% to the sharing happening in the responses of Question 6. The 'never sharing' of reading ideas

and opinions in the second question is only 9% compared with the 12% and almost never 18% in Question 2.

The difference in these two types of opportunities about ‘sharing about books’ may be the result of the type of forum and what they are asked to share or talk about. Question 6 is only sharing a recommendation, perhaps just a few words about a good book you have read, giving the title and author. The sharing requested in Question 17 asks for a reader’s own ideas, opinions, feelings, and points of view. Looking at the responses the type of sharing of experience in Question 6 appears less threatening and demanding on the adolescent readers, than the sharing experience expected in Question 17. Further discussion will follow on this aspect in the next chapter.

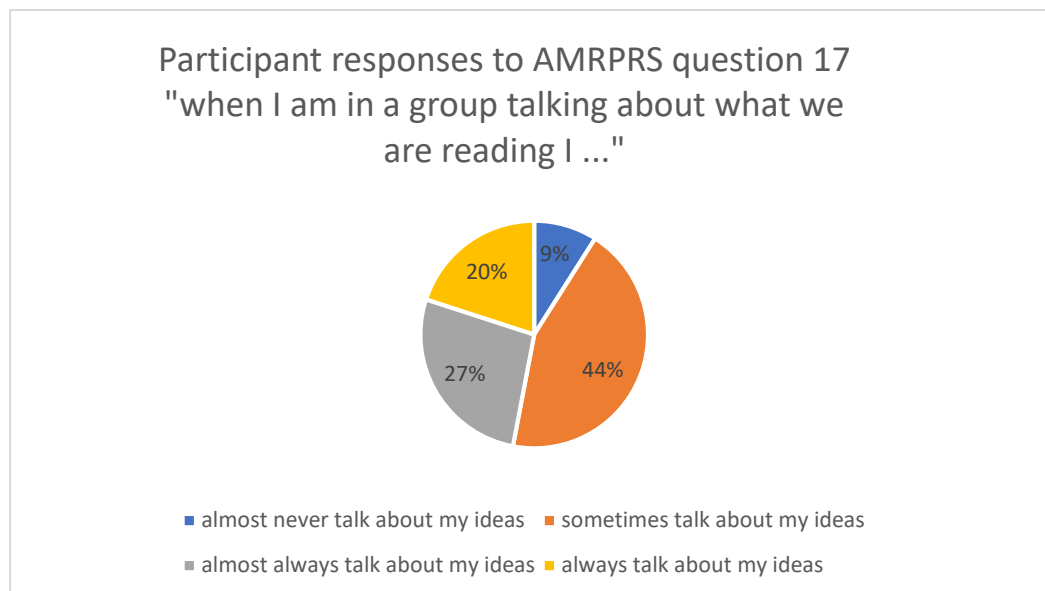


Figure 4.13: AMRRPS pre-test Question 17

However, data on the ‘sometimes’ response in both questions raises issues about peer group influences and peer pressure around reading amongst young adolescents. I think the low levels of peer and friend encouragement and an apparent reticence by adolescents to share and encourage one another with their reading resonates with Merga’s (2014a & c) suggestions mentioned in the literature review that a social media setting may be less risky and afford a sense of anonymity for young adolescent readers when socialising around reading and books. It also gives significance to my research.

4.3.6 Where do they Read?

Reading as a social act also speaks to the theme of ‘where’ and ‘when’ do I read’. The few reading reflections that pertained to these questions mentioned needing peace and quiet to

read. Most participants spend time reading at home often just before going to sleep. Most participants stated that they read on their beds. Again, these reflections do not show any participation in the socialising aspects that reading can offer.

I find myself reading just before I go to bed. (Participant 10, 13 years old)

I read at home and at second break in the library. (Participant 17, 14 years old)

I read whenever I can. (Participant 40, 13 years old)

Other pre reflections stated that they read in class, when classwork was completed before time, or they went to the library to read. Some said they tried to find a quiet spot in which to read. This continues the idea that for most of these participants, reading is viewed as a private or solitary and individual activity.

I can read in most places, but I like to read outside on the balcony, where no one disturbs me. (Participant 121, 13 years old)

Other participants professed to be able to read “wherever and whenever, either at home, in the taxi, in my room”, “whenever I have spare time”, “on my phone ... a lot”, “on the couch under a blanket”. These reflections on the pre-test question reiterate a view that suggests these adolescents see reading as a solitary act. One respondent perceived reading as an anti-social behaviour, suggesting that we should not be reading in public.

I read at home mostly because if you read in a public place, people think that I’m anti-social. (Participant 37, 13 years old)

Summary of pre-test reading reflections and pre-test survey data analysis

The data (both quantitative and qualitative) generally reflects young adolescent readers who have a good self-concept of themselves as readers, value reading as an activity of choice, enjoy reading for pleasure, and are engaged in their reading. They read with understanding. Their reading attitudes are positive. However, they do not appear to engage a great deal in socialising and talking about their books, with only some readers recommending books to friends, sharing in class groups and sharing with peers and friends. Most readers are finding some time to read but this is happening mostly at home before going to sleep.

A small minority have negative attitudes towards reading because of reading-time difficulties and struggles, for example, poor book choosing skills, lack of concentration and focus, book

abandonment, as well as competing interests and activities. An even smaller minority do not read because they choose not to for a variety of reasons.

4.3.7 Online Reading Interest Survey (ORIS)

To collect yet more data about the participants' reading habits, reading self-concept, and reading attitudes and perceived value of reading, I placed an online link to a reading interest survey (ORIS) in the virtual library classroom on Edmodo. It was compiled by me, on Survey Monkey (Appendix 12). The reason behind placing this reading interest survey online for students to complete was due to the lack of individual face-to-face time that I was experiencing with the students in the classes I was teaching. This was because of last minute changes in school timetabling, missing of library lessons due to various restructuring of the day for assembly, visiting speakers, counselling sessions, sports events and tests.

I received 18 anonymous responses to the survey. I decided to include these responses as a data subset. This data subset may skew the results favourably as it is quite likely that the participants who took the time and made the effort to answer the online reading interest survey were more than likely readers who enjoyed reading, spent time engaged in reading regularly and had great reader self-concepts and perceived reading as having great value as an activity they would readily be engaged in. This has been mentioned as a possible limitation within this research.

This online data elucidates the previous data findings on the reading habits of the participants. This data was online and given anonymously, and as such, was perhaps a less constrained response than the previous data responses collected in the library classroom, but as mentioned above the participants may have been good readers, who enjoyed reading and thus the subset data may skew the research results. In the survey there were three questions.

- Question 1 asked for the participants to rate 21 statements about reading according to the following scale: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree.
- Question 2 asked the question: "In a typical week, how much time do you spend on reading for school?" The participants chose their response from five given time frames, for example, 'none', 'less than one hour', or 'one to two hours', 'three to four hours', or 'five or more hours'.

- Question 3 asked the question: “In a typical week, how much time do you spend reading for pleasure?” The participants chose their response from five given time frames as in Question 2, for example, ‘none’, ‘less than one hour’, or ‘one to two hours’, ‘three to four hours’, or ‘five or more hours’.

ORIS Question 1: Rate the 21 statements about reading according to the following scale provided: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree.

A generalised summary of the participants’ responses to Question 1 indicates that most of them enjoy reading and have a good self-concept of themselves as readers (89%). Most also felt that they liked reading more now than they did before (83%). Most participants appeared confident in their ability to choose books that they would enjoy (83%). There were three respondents (17%) who stated they could not confidently choose books that they knew they would enjoy. Responses showed readers to be socialising about reading with parents (27.78%) and friends (33.33%). Reading was viewed as valued and important by participants at home and at school (72,22%), and, I was pleased to see, in English classes (72,22%). These participants felt that they did not have enough time to enjoy reading (66,67%). Participants reported that having the freedom to choose their own reading material was important, although a small minority (three, 16.6%), felt that it was not important that they had the opportunity to choose their own reading books. These responses are consistent with the earlier results of quantitative (AMRPRS pre-test survey question responses) and qualitative findings (pre-intervention test reading reflections).

Figure 4.14 shows a summary of the 18 participants’ answers to the 18 items in Question 1.

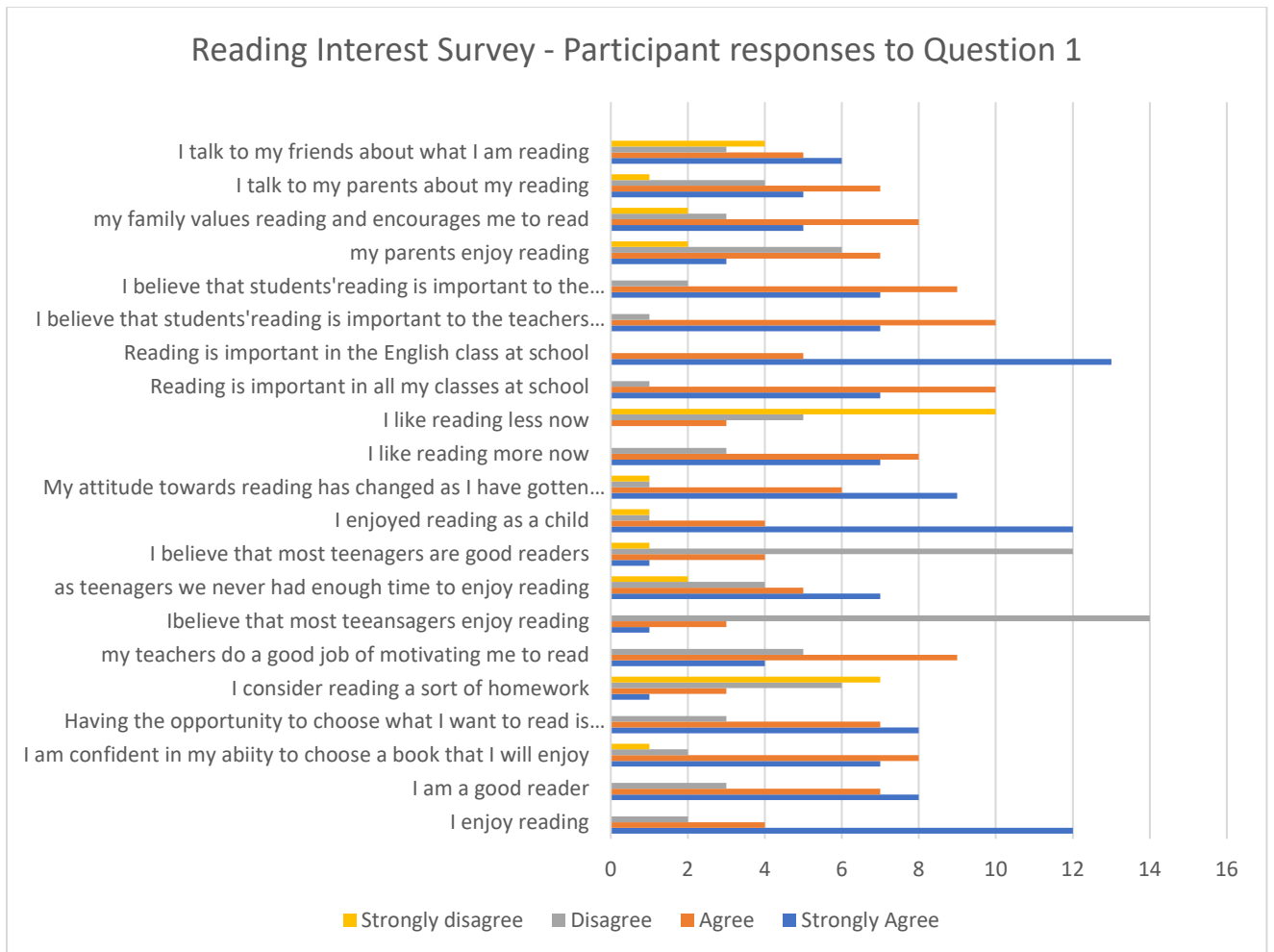


Figure 0.14: Online reading interest survey (ORIS)

ORIS Question 2: “In a typical week, how much time do you spend reading for school?”

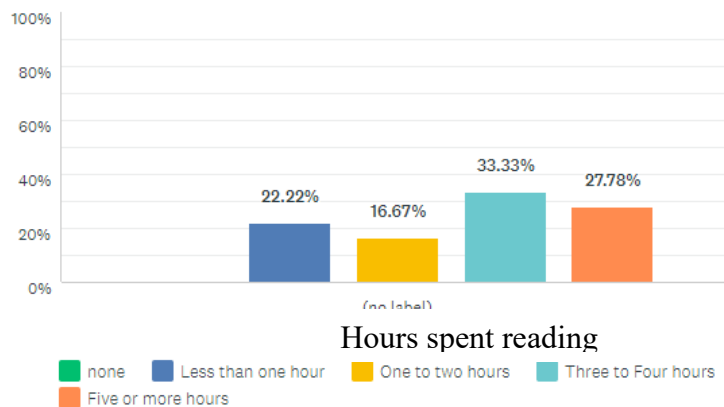
Participants chose their response from the following options – ‘none’, ‘less than one hour’, ‘one to two hours’, ‘three to four hours’, ‘five or more hours’. In this question “reading for school” pertained to reading for learning. It referred to the reading that related to school and the work being done at school. How the participants interpreted the question is not known. The reading referred to in this question was most likely viewed by the participants as reading subject specific notes for studying purposes, reading text-books, reading a class set work novel or play and perhaps rarely, a non-fiction book on a particular subject that interested them. This type of reading would also be viewed as reading for work and would be seen as a ‘homework’. This type of reading is probably the least popular type of reading, but, is often the most regular and practised type of reading. This is because the academic programme is important and is highly regarded by teachers, parents, and students. The school, parents and

students all hold good marks and academic performance in high esteem. This is also a part of the parents’ reasoning for their children attending this type of school. It would make sense then that school reading as opposed to reading for pleasure would be promoted both at home and at school within the various subject classrooms, more than reading for pleasure.

Figure 4.15 shows a summary of the 18 participants’ answers to Question 2

In a typical week, how many hours do you spend on reading for school?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



	NONE	LESS THAN ONE HOUR	ONE TO TWO HOURS	THREE TO FOUR HOURS	FIVE OR MORE HOURS	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00% 0	22.22% 4	16.67% 3	33.33% 6	27.78% 5	18	3.67

Figure 4.15: Participant responses to Question 2 (ORIS)

The ORIS Question 2 responses indicate that the participants spend from less than one hour up to five or more hours per week, reading for school. Four (22.22%) participants stated they read for less than one hour three (16.67%) for one to two hours, six (33,33%) for three to four hours, and five (27,78%) for five or more hours. This is a wide variation in the participants’ patterns of reading for school. What is interesting is that none of the participants chose not to read for school. The response choice ‘none’ was not chosen by any participant (0,0%). The majority (14, 77.78%) stated that they read for school from one to five or more hours.

ORIS Question 3: “In a typical week how many hours do you spend on reading for pleasure?”

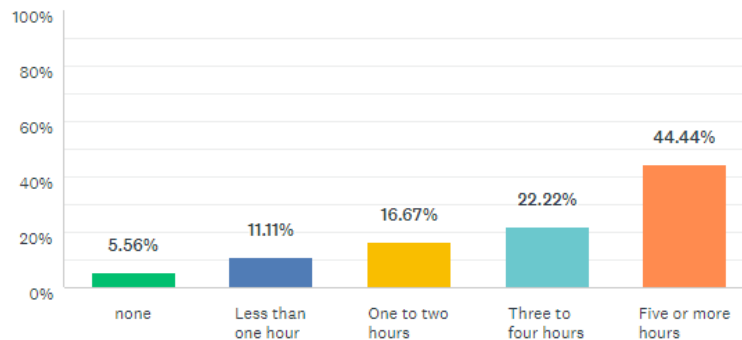
Participants chose their response from the following options – ‘none’, ‘less than one hour’, ‘one to two hours’, ‘three to four hours’, ‘five or more hours’.

This reading was understood to be time for reading for pleasure by the participant with a book or other text type that they had chosen and were enjoying. Reading to learn was not a

construct of this research under investigation but was a worthwhile comparison in terms of the depth of participant response it produced. Figure 4.16 outlines the percentage of the participants who read for pleasure or did not, and the graph highlighted details of how much time the participants felt they read for enjoyment in a “typical week”.

In a typical week, how many hours do you spend on reading for pleasure?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
none	5.56%	1
Less than one hour	11.11%	2
One to two hours	16.67%	3
Three to four hours	22.22%	4
Five or more hours	44.44%	8
TOTAL		18

Figure 4.16: ORIS Question 3 - Participant responses to Question 3

The responses to this question were extremely varied and the average time spent on reading for pleasure ranged between ‘no time spent at all’ and ‘five or more hours’ spent on independent reading for pleasure during a week. The majority of the participants responded positively (17, 94.44%), as follows:

- ‘less than one hour’ (two respondents – 11.11%);
- ‘one to two hours’ per week (three respondents – 16.67%);
- ‘three to four hours’ per week (four respondents – 22.22%);
- ‘five or more hours’ per week (eight respondents – 44.44%).

One participant responded negatively, by saying that she did not read for pleasure at all (5.56%).

As mentioned earlier in this section, the ORIS results appear to consolidate the earlier findings about the adolescents’ current reading habits (findings from AMRPRS pre-test

survey responses and the pre-test reflections). The young adolescents, who are the case study participants, have good, positive self-concepts about themselves as readers. They are reading for both learning and for pleasure consistently and regularly. The participants appear to value the activity of reading, but more enjoyment is apparent in reading for pleasure. Even though each of the 18 participants answered the online survey anonymously, I was able to complete a response analysis for each respondent. From that analysis, I created an anonymous reader profile, using their unique answers. This gave me anonymous, but individualised data on the reading habits and self-concept of the participants, as well as their perceived value of reading. In compiling these profiles, I used themes drawn from the research questions, and survey questions namely, reading attitude and self-concept as a reader, home modelling and support of reading, socialising around reading and value of reading, as well as time spent for reading for school and reading for pleasure. These themes were consistent with the previous themes identified in my research and linked to my research questions.

- **Attitude and feelings towards reading** - The data was again largely positive regarding the participants' attitude and confidence in their reading ability and enjoyment of reading. Fifteen (83%) of the participants stated they enjoyed reading. Three of the 18 (18%) participants stated they did not enjoy reading. These results correlate highly with the results from the AMRPRS responses and the pre-test reading reflections discussed earlier in this chapter.
- **Self-concept as a reader and perceived value of reading** - The data suggested that seven participants (39%) felt they were very good readers. Their self-concept as a reader was strongly positive and well developed. They were self-assured and confident of themselves as readers. Eight participants (44%) saw themselves as good readers. Combining these responses reveals that 15 participants (83%) see themselves as capable and positive readers with healthy positive view of themselves as readers. One of those participants had stated they did not enjoy reading, but still rated themselves as a good reader. Only three participants (17%) stated that they were not good readers. We can see that a strong relationship appears to exist between a positive attitude towards reading, a strong reader self-concept, reading enjoyment and perceived value of reading as an activity. Likewise, there appears to be strong relationship between a negative reading attitude, the development of a poor reader self-concept, a low value of reading and eventually the development of a dislike of

reading. These results correlate strongly with the previous results from the AMRPRS pre-test responses and pre-reading reflections on the same themes.

- **Value of reading and home support** - Thirteen (72%) participants stated that they received encouragement and support from home, and that they felt that their parents valued reading. One respondent (6%) felt that while they received support from home for their reading, they felt that their parents did not value reading. Four participants (22%) felt that their parents neither supported them in their reading nor valued reading as an activity. Most of the participants, therefore, were being supported and affirmed in their reading.
- **Socialising around reading** – These results were interesting. Seven participants (39%) shared what they were reading with both their parents and their peers. Five participants (28%) shared what they were reading with their parents. Only three participants (17%) shared what they were reading with their peers, and three participants (17%) did not share what they were reading with either their parents or their peers. Thus, most of participants were socialising to some degree with either parents or peers.
- **Time spent reading** - These results were very interesting as research has found that time spent reading improves reader engagement, reading proficiency and reading enjoyment. In this small data subset, 13 participants (72%) categorically felt they did not have enough time for reading. Only a small minority of 3 participants (28%) felt that they had enough time to read.

The two exemplar profiles below, display a qualitative analysis completed for two of the ORIS respondents. Completing these profiles afforded me rich descriptions of the participants' individual responses. The ORIS findings were consistent with the findings from the previous data gathered from a much larger sample the AMRPRS pre-test and the pre-test reading reflections. I have included only two contrasting reader profiles to show the variance and complexity of the young adolescent participants in this aspect of my research – to report on all 18 participants individually would have become somewhat repetitive.

- **Participant 1 – Reader profile from a qualitative analysis of the anonymous individual's ORIS responses**

This reader sees value in reading and feels supported in her reading by both her home and school. She has a very good self-concept as a reader. She sees reading as an enjoyable activity. She is motivated and confident enough to make good book choices. She manages her time to include time for reading. She is aware of her reading development recognising a growing sense of pleasure in her reading activity. She reads for about the same time for both school and pleasure (+- 84 minutes per day.)

- **Participant 2 - Reader profile from a qualitative analysis of the anonymous individual's ORIS responses**

This participant has not enjoyed reading since she was a child. Her reader self-concept appears to be good as she stated that she feels she is a good reader. She experiences difficulty when trying to choose books she will enjoy. She states her parents do not enjoy reading but they do value reading and encourage her to read. She shares what she is reading with her parents, and she talks to her friends about her reading. In a typical week, this participant does not spend any time reading for pleasure, but she does read for school. She does not feel that she has enough time for reading for pleasure within her week but sees reading as important for school classes.

4.3.8 Summary of Findings for Research Question 1

As mentioned before in Chapter 3, there are some limitations with regards to the self-report design of the AMRPRS. Peer group influence may play a part in how the participants respond. If they are in a peer group that sees reading as a “cool” activity their responses may be aligned to this despite their personal feelings about reading. If their peer group does not see reading as “cool”, their responses may reflect a peer group acceptable response, and not their own personal views of reading. Self-confidence may also play a part in participant responses. Some participants may not have wanted to seem arrogant in their responses while others may have felt embarrassed to confidently state how they truly felt. A poor reader may not willingly tick the box that says, “I am a poor reader”. Some participants may have deliberately wanted to seem like they were more competent readers than they were. The participants may be choosing responses to maintain a peer-group image. They may choose a response because they feel pressured by the need to save face academically, or to keep their self-image intact by saying what they perceive to be, “the right things” to say about reading. There is, with this age group, a “fine line between students wanting to seem intelligent and competent and students wanting to seem like they don't really care that much” (Groenke,

2017, p. 703). I need to consider all these factors when viewing and analysing the data and reporting the findings.

Generally, the quantitative and qualitative data findings reveal that:

- The young adolescent readers in this research, the participants, had a good self-concept of themselves as readers. They enjoyed reading for pleasure when they had the time and were engaged in their reading and reading with understanding. These participants generally viewed themselves as average to very capable readers.
- These participants did not appear to engage a great deal in socialising and talking about their books and reading.
- Most participants were positive about reading and were interested in reading. They had developed a firm sense of their favourite books and favourite authors. They also had established ideas of what genres they liked and did not like. Some participants were orientated to what they would like to read in the future. Most participants had some sort of reading goal and good reading intentions – wanting to be engaged in reading more often than they were.
- The participants were engaged in reading at various times throughout the day and in the evening. The participants appeared to read mostly at home before going to sleep but some did make time to read in class after completing their work, or in the school library throughout the school day. They appeared to enjoy a variety of reading habitats from outdoors, in trees, to their parents' big bed, in their own room, the library and in a classroom.
- It was apparent that the participants saw immense value and benefit in reading. The benefits of reading, its value and worth to them were often mentioned by them. They mentioned many differing deep reading experiences they had experienced when engaged in reading. Some participants shared the social, emotional and psychological benefits they experienced in reading. Others shared the academic and linguistic benefits that they experienced in reading.
- A very small minority of participants appeared to have problems with 'distractibility' and or focus, when reading.
- A small minority of participants had negative feelings and attitudes about reading. There were only two exceptionally negative responses that appeared to relate to perceived poor reading skills and/or a lack of reading ability. Some negative participants shared that reading had no benefits for them and that reading was not

enjoyable. On further analysis, some of these negative readers were participants who experience difficulty with book choice.

- All the participants stated that they had extreme difficulty in finding regular time to read. Even readers who stated they did not like to read could tell you what their favourite book was and who their favourite author was.
- Most young adolescents in this group see reading as a solitary pursuit. A few participants appeared to enjoy solitude and quiet when reading. It helped them to focus and concentrate. Most participants appear to shy away from contributing to large group book discussions about their opinions and ideas with regards to reading. They seem happier to talk to friends about their reading by making suggestions and sharing book recommendations. Sixty nine percent of participants said that they did some book sharing or discussion with their friends, but that leaves 31% of participants who are not engaged in socialising around books and reading in any form at all. This is of great concern because “The conversations we have shape the readers that students become” suggests Ripp (2018, p. 190). Similarly, “How we talk about books and share our reading lives communicates to students that we are reading” (Miller in an interview with Ferlazzo, 2018).

4.4 Research Question 2: How do the students utilize the Goodreads (GR) platform?

4.4.1 The GR Challenge Goal

Participants appeared to like the GR website and most users found the reading challenge goal very motivating. This positivity and motivation augurs well for a more positive view of themselves as readers if they set realistic and achievable goals. The challenge goal spurred some readers to read more books than they usually did, especially those readers who were recording the books they read, as they could see their challenge goal change visually on the site as it was being achieved. These participants also enjoyed the personalised comments sent to them by GR such as, “you have read three books towards your reading challenge goal”. This motivation enhanced both how they felt about the GR site and its use, as well as how they felt about themselves as readers (reader self-concept) and the value they attached to the activity of reading for pleasure.

4.4.2 Finding and Choosing Books on GR

Participants said that finding books that they liked and then read was easier on GR than other methods. This may be because GR recommends books based on those you have previously read and on the genres which you selected on initial registration, if you followed the prompts correctly. Some participants found this, “useful” and “helpful”. Some reported that it helped them find more books they liked and read. The motivation and satisfaction that comes from completing a book you enjoy is great and this would have contributed towards an increase in their reader self-concept. GR afforded the participants’ the opportunity to take part in a process that allowed them to choose which book to read next from a list of books which GR which GR displayed visually based on their recently completed book. This affordance combined with the ease of facilitation, in selecting and recording books they like to read next, would have resulted in making them feel better about themselves as readers and thus impacted their reader self-concept positively.

4.4.3 Reading Volume

GR appeared to increase the volume of books read by some of the participants initially, and this would have resulted in increased reading proficiency and attainment, which would have also impacted their self-concept as a reader very positively. For the majority of the participants’, the initial response to GR was excitement and enjoyment at trying something new. They read more books and they found books they liked to read more easily. Increased volume is positively correlated to reading attainment and increased reader self-confidence.

4.4.4 Planning Reading

A few participants planned what they were going to read next and recorded the books they had read. This enjoyment and excitement may result in a higher value being attached to reading for pleasure. It would seem though that their GR activity was not sustainable over the long term. Disappointingly, not many students found or made the time to continue their GR activity past the research period and any subsequent motivation and allied increase in both value of reading and reader self-concept may have waned as a result of the cessation of their activity on GR.

In summary it appears that GR is initially, an extrinsic motivational factor that improved the participants’ volume of reading. If sustained, it is likely that the activity itself and the improved reader self-concept and value attached to reading for pleasure, allied with increased

reading engagement and enjoyment, would result in this extrinsic motivation being replaced with an intrinsic motivation, which research has shown to be more effective in promoting sustained long-term reading engagement. The following post-intervention reflection comments show very positive and concrete reading habit changes felt and made by the participants because of their activity on GR.

Recently, in conversation with a participant, they shared that they still use GR to this very day to record books read, but mainly for book recommendations. This participant has read and recorded three hundred and forty-seven books on her GR profile since she registered on GR at the beginning of this research in April 2016.

Participant 101 (13 years old) said: “GR has positively changed my reading habits”.

Participant 114 (14 years old) said: “the site kept me up to date with new books and with authors and what friends were reading”.

Participant 140 (14 years old) said: “GR helped you manage your reading time”.

Further post-reflection comments which may have been the cause of an increased volume of reading, an improved reader self-concept and a higher value of reading as an activity are highlighted below.

“it’s motivational”, “helps you choose what to read next”, “it helped me reach beyond what I normally read”, “it was accessible, gave me choice, it was convenient, and I loved reading the ratings and reviews” (Participant 169, 13 years old).

GR knows what types of books I like. (Participant 178, 14 years old).

GR was helpful, it helped me find the latest books, increased the variety of genres I read. I did have password issues at times, but I think it is an excellent website. (Participant 114, 14 years old).

4.5 Research Question 3: How is the students’ view of themselves as readers influenced by using the GR platform?

To answer this research question, we need to look more closely at the participants’ view of themselves, their reader self-concept and/or reader identity and their perceived value of reading and what it was like before they used the intervention, GR. How did the participants view themselves as readers before the use of GR? What value did they currently ascribe to the activity of reading before using the GR platform? This was answered in the quantitative and qualitative data analysed by themes earlier in this chapter. Quantitative data analysed revealed information about the readers self-concept and value of reading, that formed a

baseline for comparing their self-concept and value of reading after using the Goodreads platform.

4.5.1 Reader Self-Concept

The pre-AMRPRS, raw scores for the self-concept construct, reflects readers who have a healthy and strong self-concept as readers. The average/mean raw score for reader self-concept was 30,298. This translates to 30/40 (74%) for the questions relating to this construct. The bulk of the participants had raw scores for the self-concept construct that fell within the range 66% to 100%. The highest raw score was recorded as 40/40 (100%). The lowest self-concept raw score was recorded as 18/40 (45%).

The following pre-reflections illustrate the high self-concept of most of the participants.

I am a passionate and confident reader. (Participant 52, 13,11 years old)

I am a reader and every chance I get I try to sink into the story. I love reading ... I am just fascinated of the way the author wrote the book ... Reading is my favourite thing to do. (Participant 17, 14,2 years old)

I like reading. I'm a good reader. My favourite author is Rick Riordan ... every book of his I read inspires me to read another. (Participant 45, 12,11years old)

Below is a narrative of the combined AMRPRS responses chosen by Participant 126, who scored the lowest self-concept score of 18/40.

My friends think I am an OK reader, and so do I. I do not read as well as my friends, but I only worry about what they think of my reading, occasionally. Reading is kind of hard for me, and when I read aloud, I am a poor reader. When the teacher asks me a question about what I have read I have trouble thinking of an answer. When I am reading by myself, I understand some of what I read, but I can never figure out words I don't know. When I am in a group talking about what we are reading, I almost never talk about my ideas. I like reading but reading is a little difficult for me. I find it hard to read any books. – it must be a book that I really enjoy. I also find it hard to read books because I find something better to do.

The pre-intervention reading reflection for this participant was much more positive than her survey score in terms of her attitudes towards reading. She stated that she likes reading, although she experienced some difficulties with reading. When examining her responses to the data questions, it is evident that she was making the choice to not read. The choice she makes to not engage with her reading will further negatively impact her poor reading proficiency and her reading competence and that will result in a lowering of her reading

confidence. Her pre-intervention reflection shows her low value of reading in that she finds something ‘better’ to do.

4.5.2 Readers Perceived Value of Reading

The pre-test AMRPRS, raw scores for the construct ‘perceived value of reading’, generally reflect readers who have a clear idea of the value of reading in their lives. They are articulate about the values and benefits of reading, but this recognition does not translate into making reading for pleasure a priority in their lives, when compared with studying for exams, tests and reading to learn for school performance and academic achievement. These academic pursuits appear to take preference in their schedules. The average/mean raw score for this construct was 30/40 (75%). The highest score was 40/40 (100%), while the lowest score for this construct was 13/40 (32%).

The following pre-intervention reflections illustrate the high value of reading held by most of these participants.

I love reading because there are so many stories you can fill your imagination with! ... I love to read, and I don’t think I could live without books ...
(Participant 5, 13 years old)

I like reading because it takes me on an adventure and makes me open my mind for options and creativity. Reading makes me happy. (Participant 79, 13 years old)

I am an avid reader. You’ll never see me without a book even if it’s not physically in my hand ... (Participant 121, 13 years old)

Below is a narrative of the combined pre-AMRPRS responses chosen by Participant 64 who was 13 years old and scored the lowest ‘perceived value of reading’ score (13/40). Although her post-score for value rose by one point (14/40) after the use of GR, she remained a non-reader.

Knowing how to read well is sort of important but reading a book is something I never like to do. As an adult I will spend none of my time reading. I think reading is a boring way to spend time. Libraries are a boring place to spend time. People who read a lot are boring. My best friends think reading is no fun at all, so I never tell my friends about the good books that I do read. I would like for my teachers to read out loud in my classes occasionally.

a) Pre-intervention reflection:

I don’t like reading at all. I am just a sporty person; I truly never have time to read. I never finish books and can’t find the time to read.

b) Post-intervention reflection:

I haven't really read anything because I don't enjoy reading. I have only read 1 book this year. In terms of GR, I'm not really into the whole thing of planning on what to read. It's a bit boring to plan out your books. I don't get enough time to read books because I am busy studying.

Participant 64 had a negative attitude towards reading because she appeared to see no value or enjoyment in reading. She was making a choice to be involved in sport, or study and therefore had no time for reading. The value of reading for her appeared to be non-existent. Within the research participants, Participant 64 was an exception.

4.5.2.1 Summary of Changes to students' View of Themselves after use of the Intervention GR

While investigating the changes to the participants' self-concepts as readers, and the change to their perceived value of reading, I collated the quantitative data responses from the AMRPRS pre-intervention and post-intervention responses and tables and figures were compiled to reflect the combined total percentage mean score that the participants had attained on the AMRPRS pre- and post-surveys (Tables 4.5 and 4.6, and Figures 4.17 and 4.18). The change over the research period was minimal. The self-concept percentage, for example, recorded a one-point gain on the raw score (3%).

Table 4.5: Summary of self-concept pre-intervention and post-intervention total scores

Pre-intervention test raw score, average, raw score total and percentage Self-concept	Post-intervention test raw score, average, raw score total and percentage Self-concept
30,056 = 30/40 = 74%	30,632 = 31/40 = 77%

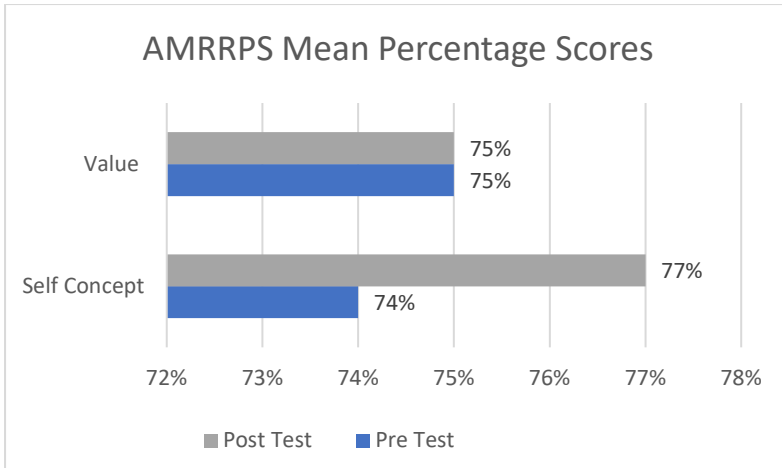


Figure 4.17: AMRRPS pre- and post-mean percentage scores

Table 4.6: Summary of value of reading pre- and post-total scores

Pre-intervention test raw score, average, raw score total and percentage Value of reading	Post-intervention test raw score, average, raw score total and percentage Value of reading
29.688 = 30/40 = 75%	29.744 = 30/40 = 75%

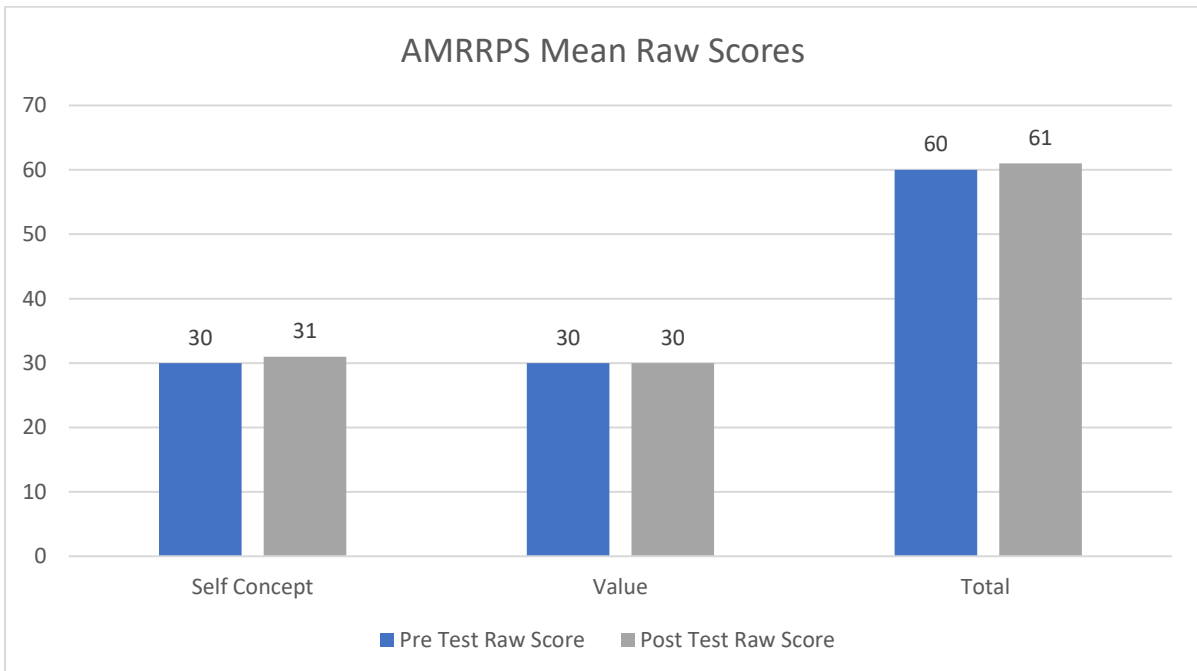


Figure 4.18: Comparison of AMRRPS pre- and post-mean raw scores

The AMRRPS scores show both the mean percentage and raw scores of the readers' self-concept of themselves as readers, and their perceived value of reading as a worthwhile

activity. Previous research has shown these constructs to be closely related. They relate directly to the level of motivation readers will have when engaging with their reading from start to finish – from choosing a book to completing the book and sharing about it with others (Miller, 2014; Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). Analysis of these participants' mean percentage scores reveal that participants showed a self-concept percentage score of 75% (30/40) in the pre-intervention survey. After the intervention of Goodreads, and the post-intervention survey was completed, and the participants mean percentage score for reader self-concept had risen to 77% (31/40). This shows that the self-concept of the participants had increased minimally over the research period. This suggests that the participants' reader self-concept had made a very minor improvement over the research period.

The participants' mean percentage score for perceived value of reading on the pre-intervention survey was 75% (30/40). After the intervention of Goodreads and the post-survey was completed, and the mean percentage score of the participants perceived value of reading had not increased but remained the same at 75% (30/40).

The findings show that analysis of the mean for perceived value of reading showed no change. The percentage score remained the same at 75%. There was also no change to the post-intervention survey raw score of 30/40. The perceived value of reading had remained the same despite the use of the GR platform.

With the results of the two constructs being quite similar and indicating very minimal positive and/or neutral movement, it suggests that a possible positive relationship exists between these two constructs within this participant group. Reader self-concept may be positively or negatively affected by the reader's perceived value of reading. Conversely, the reader's perceived value of reading is negatively or positively affected by their reader self-concept. For example: A positive effect is that if I think I am a good reader and I enjoy reading I will value the activity of reading and think highly of reading. If I think reading is a worthwhile activity, I will engage in it and through my positive engagement I will develop a good reader self-concept. Conversely a negative effect is that if I think I am a poor reader and I do not enjoy reading or have difficulty with reading, I will not enjoy the activity of reading and so my perceived value of the activity will be low. I will therefore not engage in this activity often and I will develop a negative self-concept of myself as a reader.

In my attempt to attain a generalised view of how the participants saw themselves as readers, and what value they ascribed to reading after the GR intervention, I needed to ascertain

whether any changes to their self-concept and value of reading that occurred while they used the GR site were the result of the reader experiences they had on this site. This would largely be information gleaned from research or teacher-librarian observations and an analysis of the participants' post-reflections and will be discussed in the next section.

Below are participant reflections about their use of GR:

My reading goal was forty books and I am happy to say that I have read more than that and, no I have not updated all my reads to GR, the reason for this is because I feel like it takes a bit too much time to state what I have read and whether or not I liked it, but I would love to do so ... my goal on GR has definitely motivated me to carry on reading and I find myself taken away by all the books I have read ... all these new books have changed my mind set towards reading and I am very grateful for that. (Participant 1, 13 years old)

The reading challenge had been going ok until I forgot my password for GR ... so that sucks. I have read 11 books and I love reading ... I hate writing reviews ... I dislike the challenge due to this fact ... I don't like GR only being a social platform ... you should be able to read books online ... I do like the fact you can find new books ... (Participant 8, 13 years old)

This challenge has helped me to read a lot more. I used to never read books, but it has been really nice to get into it again. I love GR and use it during my free time, it has helped me find books that I have an interest in ... I personally think I have improved in reading although I find myself doing something else when I'm supposed to be reading ... I enjoy it a lot more than I used to. (Participant 22, 13 years old)

4.6 Research Question 4: In what ways does the use of GR influence the Grade Eight students reading?

When analysing the percentage scores of all the participants' self-concept and value, over time, the possible interpretations of the positive change in the raw score of the self-concept construct are that such changes may be due to one or more of the following:

- Increased reading activity, whether it was time spent reading or
- an increase in the volume of reading.
- Involvement in reading activities on GR.
- New feelings of positive engagement and enjoyment of reading, for example e.g. "Now I enjoy reading", "I like reading more now than I used to before".

The participants' self-concept improved slightly while their perceived value of reading remained constant. Although a minimal shift in both self-concept as a reader and perceived

value of reading was noted, it will be interesting to look at individual participants in more detail to be able to interpret the changes meaningfully.

The participants were asked to respond in their post-intervention reflections on their use of GR and how they felt it had worked for them alongside their independent reading for pleasure and enjoyment. For presentation and discussion purposes in this chapter I have purposefully selected eight participant post-intervention reading reflections which I perceived to reflect the variety of responses. The first three participants selected reflect positively on their use of GR, and the second three reflect negatively on their use of GR. The last two reflections were chosen because these responses were both negative and positive and showed different aspects of the participants' use of GR.

4.6.1 Participant Post-Intervention Reflections on the Use of GR

a) Positive responses to GR include the following reflections:

My goal on Goodreads was to read twenty books. This year I have read twenty-four books. Goodreads has helped me to discover a variety of books ... I was influenced to read 'The Fault in our Stars' by just using Goodreads ... I hope to remain an avid reader. (Participant 2, 13 years)

This challenge has helped me to read a lot more ... I love Goodreads and use it during my free time ... I personally think I have improved in reading ... I enjoy it a lot more than I used to. Participant 22, 13 years old)

My goal on Goodreads has really motivated me to read more books and to complete my goal. The recommendations on Goodreads were really helpful to see other's opinions on the specific books I am interested in ... (Participant 104, 13 years old)

b) Negative responses to GR include the following reflections:

I don't like Goodreads only being a social platform ... I do like the fact that you can find new books ... but the reading challenge is annoying because I don't like writing reviews... (Participant 8, 13 years old.)

I don't like reading at all. I am just a sporty person, I truly never have time to read. I never finish books and I can't find time to read... (Participant 64, 13 year old)

Goodreads has not helped me in any way ... I think that simply walking up to a person and asking them to recommend a book that they think is good enough for others to read is easier and less time consuming (Participant 41, 13 years old)

c) Variable responses to GR include the following reflections

Goodreads is a very interesting website and I would love to be more on it, but I am having trouble getting on it because it will not accept my username or password leaving me unable to use it ... (Participant 17, 14 years old)

My reading challenge was to read twenty-four books ... I have now completed my goal. I am proud of myself. I enjoy using Goodreads because it helps me find books according to a genre which I like. I can also find the author of a book and ask her questions about the book ... The thing I don't like about Goodreads is that you can't read books on the site ... my aim is to try to finish ten more books in the time I have left this year. I hope I can do it. (Participant 51, 14 years old)

The following participant, Participant 101, who is 13 years old, was the most active participant on GR. She set her goal at 100 books and read 114 books. This is her post-reflection. She remained active on GR even after the completion of this research study.

My goal has not really affected the way I read this year, as I was not reading to reach the goal but rather, I was reading for myself. I think I have improved my reading since the beginning of the year. Goodreads has changed the way I'm reading my books. I can document the books I have read, and I am able to read previews of other books. It is also nice to read recommendations from friends ... overall reading this year has been enjoyable.

In my assessment of the participants' use of the online platform GR, one of my data collection methods was an online poll via Poll daddy. I posted the poll in the virtual library classroom Edmodo. The poll consisted of nine questions about the participants' use of the platform. The questions covered basic frequency of use, what activities they participated in on the platform and how they felt about the platform. The poll was anonymous and was completed by 29 participants. Although a small sample, it does give an intense 'snapshot' of the use of GR by the participants who chose to respond to it. It has added valuable data to the post-reflections and provides a more generalised view of participants use of GR. Questions on frequency of use were covered by three questions that ranged from never going on, to sometimes going on, to going on every day.

Four questions covered the participants use of and activity on, GR. The activities ranged from finding books, reading reviews, loading books read, planning my reading, meeting my reading challenge goal. One question asked participants if GR motivated them to read more frequently. Lastly, three questions highlighted the participants possible socialising and creative communication on GR: "I chat to my friends about the books I've read", "I write reviews about the books I've read", and "I've joined a group to share my reading with others and to chat about books and reading". See Appendix 11.

4.6.2 Registration and Participant Frequency of Use of GR

Of the 29 participants from this poll, 69%, stated that they went onto the platform sometimes, while 21%, said they never returned to the site after registering. 10% stated that they went onto the site daily.

A poll response rate of 23 (79%) active GR participants and 6 (21%) non-active GR participants is a positive response to the use of the GR site, in this small sample. Sixteen (13,33%) of the participants said that they read reviews on GR which means that 13 participants did not read a book review on the site. Nine participants (7,5%) stated that they wrote reviews on GR which means that 20 GR participants did not write book reviews. Six GR participants stated that they planned their reading on GR (5%) and 20 participants (16,67%), said that they tried to meet their GR reading challenge goal they had set on the GR site. Nine participants stated that they did not try to attain a set reading goal. Seventeen participants (59%) stated that they loaded their books read on to the platform on the supplied shelf. This means that by omission, it appears that 13 participants (43%) did not load their books read onto the GR shelf. Five participants stated that they chat to friends on the GR platform (4,17%) and seven stated they joined a reading group on GR (5,83%). Lastly, 11 (37.93%) of the 29 respondents on this poll stated that they found GR motivating. This means that most participants in this GR poll (18, 62.07%) did not find GR motivating (assumption based on omission).

4.6.3 Summary of Findings from the GR Poll

This online data sample was small, but the responses were mostly favourable. It appears that the activities engaged in by the participants had a minimal but positive impact on their independent reading for pleasure. By omission, a number of participants appear to have been inactive on several items questioned. It is interesting to note that there is some similarity between this small sample and the data analysed from the participants post-intervention reflections presented and discussed earlier in this chapter. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, I did use the #Act pedagogy to view the participants levels of engagement on the GR platform in the vignettes. This was done in a cursory manner as an in-depth analysis was not within the bounds of this case study. Their general level of activity and engagement moves between the consumption, curation, conversation, and the creation level, of the #Act pedagogy.

When looking for GR data in the large sample of the participants' post reading reflections, some of which I presented earlier in this chapter, the general finding was that the majority of Grade Eight participants had registered on the platform, but only one participant had completed a profile. Everyone had gone into the site and looked at the various features of the site. All had made friends with classmates on the platform and most had also made friends with me the teacher-librarian and researcher. They had explored the various features of the site and browsed for books.

4.6.4 Summary of Findings of General Participant use of GR

Generally, the setting of a reading challenge goal on GR motivated the participants to read more, and they had enjoyed the challenge goal aspect of the site. This increased reading volume may have contributed to the participants feeling better about themselves as readers and hence account for the increased score in the reader self-concept as seen in the post-intervention test scores. Some participants had really tried seriously to attain their reading goals, which meant they were possibly reading more than usual and extending themselves beyond their comfort zone. Some participants had used the reading record-keeping aspect of the site and loaded their books on the platform on to the shelves the site offered. No one had created their own reading shelves. Very few participants wrote reviews or rated the books they had read.

4.6.5 Participant Challenges with GR

Although most participants registered on the platform, their use of GR was not sustained by many of them past the research period, despite time for this in the reading programme. Most sustained their activity over the research period, with a few maintaining activity until the end of the academic year with some still using this site to the current day. Two participants sustained their use of the platform over a longer time. Some participants registered and set up a minimal profile and then only visited the site not more than two or three times afterwards.

The general problem raised by most of the participants was the lack of time for reading which needs further research investigation as it is not clear why they did not sustain their activity on GR. However, my conclusion as a researcher is that the main reason is indeed the pressure of "a lack of time". The reasons given by the participants for the unsustainability of GR were:

- A "lack of time" for updating books read due to scholastic and academic pressures.

- Time consuming procedure to rate a book, write a review, find friends, follow peers or authors and they did not have this time.
- Technical hassles such as login problems, password problems, slow speed of the internet when logging in. No data/wi-fi at home. No use of their phones for this activity due to technical issues.
- Irritating and frustration to have to sign in all the time and update one's books read.

Several participants exhibited misunderstandings of what the site could afford them and found the site confusing. For example:

- At least 15 participants would have liked the site to offer online reading and found this lack of not being able to read the book you have chosen right then and there, very frustrating.

In the post-intervention reflections 18 participants reflected negatively about their experiences on GR, with comments such as “boring”, “irritating”, “useless”, “a chore”, “don't like it”, “don't see the point”, “not exciting”. Whilst some felt face-to-face talking and recommendation of books was a better idea

4.7 Qualitative Analysis – Four Selected Participants

Further analysis of individual readers comparative AMRPRS scores and their post-reflections was warranted to allow for richer, more authentic information about the participants use of GR, revealing its possible benefits, influence and impact on the participants' reading self-concept and perceived value of reading as they journey towards becoming life-long readers. For this purpose, I selected four participants for final qualitative analysis: one participant from the top range of the AMRPRS post intervention scores, two from the middle range and one from the bottom range. These participants provided me with rich authentic, qualitative data that I analysed to furnish me with more answers to my Research Questions 2, 3 and 4 as outlined below. The data set consists of four students ranging in age from 13 to 16 years old and they are a demographically mixed group.

In answering the following three questions, I completed a detailed and full analysis of all the data available for each participant. This included:

- Quantitative data from their Papyrus borrowers' profile.
- Quantitative and qualitative data from their pre- and post-AMRPRS scores and question responses.

- Qualitative data from an analysis of their pre- and post-reading reflections as well as either a face-to-face interview or their responses on an online questionnaire (depending on which one they completed).
- Qualitative data from my reflexive journal where I recorded my observations of their activity on GR.

These reflections provided rich data on their use of the GR platform and provided a more nuanced investigation into:

- How did the individual participant's view of themselves as a reader change when using the online book platform?
- How did the individual participant utilise the online social book networking platform GR?
- In what way did the use of the online social book networking platform influence/impact the individual participant's reading?

I will begin each individual participants' data analysis with a short vignette of each participant. As mentioned in the introduction in Chapter 1, all students attend a top public, all girls' secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. In everyone's vignette, I include a quoted comment from each participant's pre-intervention and post-intervention reading reflections on their use of GR. I have used pseudonyms for the participants to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of each participant.

Following on from the vignettes, I will use the pre-intervention quantitative and qualitative data to compile a reader profile of each participant. Their profile outlines their reading habits, their self-concept of themselves as a reader and their perceived value of reading before the intervention. I report on their use of the GR platform. When looking at the participants use of GR, I have used Activated Classroom Teaching (ACT) Pedagogy, "which is an attempt to create a digital-age taxonomy of teaching approaches for the 21st century ..." (Blewett, 2018 p. 2). "a cohesive set of digital-age pedagogies that leverage the affordances of technology to maximise learning while developing key 21st-century skills by encouraging a range of cognitive activity." (Blewett, 2018, p. 1). Lastly, I will show their post-intervention, quantitative and qualitative results, highlighting changes to reading habits, reader self-concept and their perceived value of reading, commentary on the use of the GR platform and its influence on their reading habits, reader self-concept and perceived value of reading. Semi-structured interviews and/or an online interview option (due to time constraints) were

completed toward the end of the research period. Emergent themes and subthemes have already been discussed previously in this chapter when looking at the general reading habits of the participants.

I have showed the data themes in Table 4.7. I will discuss and talk to them in relation to the vignette sample of four students' use of the intervention (GR), and their respective changes in scores, post the intervention. AMRPRS items that show the individual participant's changes in raw scores, either positively or negatively, which have been purposively used for this analysis, are shown in Tables 4.7 to 4.9.

Table 4.7: Research themes from data analysis

Questions	Themes
2, 14	Time spent reading
2, 5, 7, 13, 14	Engagement / Feeling & attitudes towards reading / reading motivation
1, 2, 6, 9, 15, 17	Self-concept as a reader
8, 9, 12, 16	Value of reading
5, 7, 15, 13	Reader strengths and struggles
2, 14, 8, 12, 16	Perception of reading benefits
1, 3, 4, 6, 17	Socialising about books and reading

Table 4.8: Comparison of AMRPRS self-concept pre- and post-intervention scores

Name of participant/reader	Pre-intervention AMRPRS Reader self - concept of reading raw score /40	Post-intervention AMRPRS Reader self-concept of reading raw score /40	Increase (+) or decrease (-) in raw score
Purity #118	39	34	-5
Shreya #105	34	37	+3
Linda #74	32	30	-2
Naledi#64	22	22	-

Table 4.9: Comparison AMRPRS Value of Reading pre- and post-intervention scores

Name of participant/reader	Pre-intervention AMRPRS Value of reading raw score /40	Post-intervention AMRPRS Value of reading raw score /40	Increase (+) or decrease (-) in raw score
Purity #118	35	37	+2
Shreya #105	32	35	+3
Linda #74	36	37	+1

Naledi #64	13	14	+1
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The three tables above show no signs of a consistent all-round improvement in the group of four readers in reader self-concept, but all four of the participants' perceived value of reading showed variable but positive improvement when comparing the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores. Reader self-concept increased over the research period in one of the participants in this sample. It revealed a decrease or remained the same in the other three participants over the research period. The changes in the four participants' individual scores over the research period are reported upon in their vignettes that follow. All names have been changed for privacy and confidentiality.

Table 4.10: Pre-intervention and post-intervention AMRPRS scores showing self-concept and value score changes after the intervention (GR)

Participant	Self -concept (SC) as a reader		Value of reading (V)		+ increase	- decrease	TOTAL SCORES	
	Pre-	Post-	Pre-	Post-	Increase	Decrease	Pre-	Post- /80
# 171 Nora	39	35	39	38		SC-4 V-1	74	71
# 105 Shreya	34	37	32	35	SC +3 V + 3	-	66	72
# 74 Linda	32	30	36	37	V+1	SC-2	68	67
# 64 Naledi	25	22	13	14	V +1	SC-3-	35	36

Shreya shows a score increase in both reading self-concept and reading value increase. Naledi shows a one-point score increase in reader value of reading while her reader self-concept score showed a decrease of three points. Nora's scores consistently decreased in both constructs, with reader self-concept show the highest score decrease in this sample (three). Linda showed a negative decrease in her self-concept score of two points while her score for reading value increased by one point.

4.8. Vignettes

4.8.1. Nora - Participant 171, 13 years old

Nora is a 13-year-old adolescent. She presented as a quiet but very confident and chatty student. She loves reading and is positively motivated about her reading. She is conscious of the benefits of reading and believes that reading calms her down. She says reading makes her

feel good about herself. “I feel lost without my books to read.” This acknowledgement of the benefits of reading shows an understanding of the immediate affective benefits of reading.

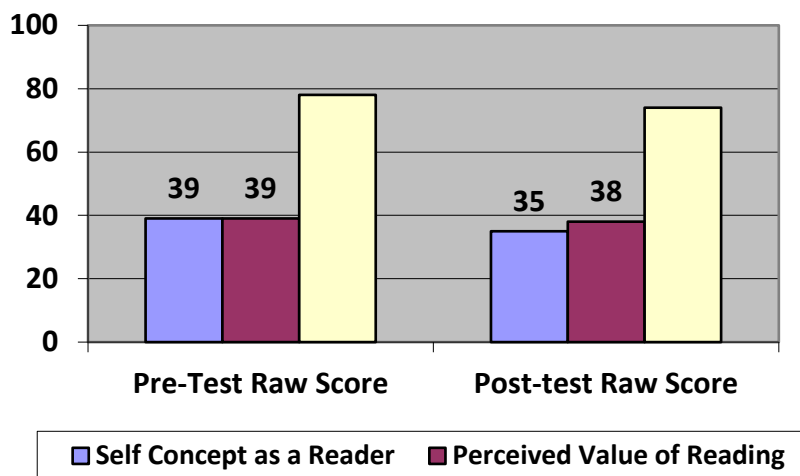


Figure 4.19: Nora’s AMRPRS results

Nora’s borrowers’ profile on the Papyrus Library data system, revealed a healthy borrowing pattern. She appeared to be an active library patron. She borrowed +74 books. She completed reading 15 books. Nora’s initial pre-intervention test scores for self-concept as a reader (39/40) and her perceived value of reading (39/40) were both high. Her total raw score was 78/80 (97%). Nora had begun her Grade Eight year seeing herself as a capable and skilled reader. Her quantitative high score for perceived value of reading meant that she valued reading and thought highly of reading, regarding it as an important activity to engage in. This was corroborated by her pre-intervention reading reflection, in which she stated that she loved reading. She understood the positive benefits of reading, saying that it calmed her down and made her feel good about herself. She said that she was a very good reader and that she felt lost without her books to read. In her post-intervention test raw scores Nora showed a decline in her self-concept as a reader. Her post-test self-concept score was 35/40 which meant a drop of four points. Nora’s self-concept or perception of herself as a reader appeared to decline over the research period. Her self-concept score went from 39/40 to 35/40. This shows a raw score decrease of four points. Her responses in the AMRPRS post-intervention test reflected this lack of reader confidence. An unusual comment by Nora in her post-intervention reading reflection was a mention that she had discovered she had some reading weaknesses. She was not very forthcoming about what they actually were. She appeared to have lost confidence in her own reading ability and in her eagerness to share her ideas. For example, she began the reading year with a response that stated that she almost always

figured out words she didn't know to ending the reading year with a response that was less confident – “I sometimes figure out words I don't know”.

In her pre-intervention perceived value of reading, her raw score was 39/40 which shows a high value of reading as an activity. This then dropped in her post-intervention score to 38/40, a one point decrease. AMRPRS post-intervention test responses showed a one-point score decrease over the research period as depicted in Table 4.11. Her perceived value of reading also declined minimally as shown in her response to item 16. For example, her initial pre-intervention response showed she valued reading highly by stating she would spend a lot of time reading as an adult. Then in the post-intervention response that value for reading appeared to be less. For example, her post-intervention response was that she would spend some time reading as an adult.

She shared that she felt positive about GR and was active on GR. But she really wanted the platform to offer online reading which it did not. “I would LOVE it if Goodreads could become an online reading site for teenagers”.

Table 4.11: AMRPRS pre- and post-responses changes

Item stimulus	Pre-test response with raw score	Post-test Response with raw score
Item 5 - (Self-Concept) -1 When I come to a word I don't know, I can ...	almost always figure it out (4)	sometimes figure it out (3)
Item 17- (Self-Concept) -When I am in a group talking about what we are reading, I ...	always talk about my ideas (4)	sometimes talk about my ideas (3)
Item 19- (Self-Concept) -1 When I read out loud, I am a ...	very good reader (4)	good reader (3)
Item 16 - (Value) -1 As an adult I will spend ...	a lot of my time reading (4)	some of my time reading (3)

Face-to-face Reading Conference Interview

During the reading conference/face-to-face interview, Nora presented as confident and relaxed and was very 'chatty'. In the interview I suggested that she re-look at her GR goal, which was to read 100 books. I wanted her to reflect on whether her goal was realistic and achievable. She said that even though she was reading a lot of books, she did realise that her goal was unrealistic. But she did not change her reading goal during the research period. We discussed her comment that “she had discovered ‘some’ reading weaknesses” but she did not initially elaborate on these perceived weaknesses when prompted to. In her prereading

reflection and pre AMRPRS test scores, her view of herself as a reader did not reflect someone who had had problems with reading. The following factors were mentioned as possible causes for her reading weaknesses:

- Time constraints with her reading, due to sport (mainly swimming), chores at home, music and drama and other school and homework pressures.
- Distraction and lack of focus
- Moodiness – just not in the mood to read.

Her reading goal was to read for one to two hours per day. Nora still seemed to see reading as important enough to want to spend consistent daily time engaged in the activity of reading but she expressed feeling pressurised by “so little time”. Her post-reading reflection did not reflect her lower self-concept scores from her post AMRPRS. She still presented as bouyant and excited about her reading saying: “I’ve taken my challenge to the next step ... I’m reading a whole lot of books because I really want to achieve my goal ...” Possible reasons for this lower self-concept could be her feelings of wanting to read but not being able to find the time to read and the resultant feelings of frustration regarding her lack of reading.



Figure 4.20: Analysis of Nora’s use of Goodreads (GR) (1)

Nora registered and joined in April 2016. She set up a basic profile with a name and no avatar (Figure 4.20). She did not manage her privacy settings. She made online GR friends with three of her peers from her class and me, the teacher-librarian and researcher. She followed one other person, but she did not ‘friend’ them. She added one book read in April, another was completed in May and added to her ‘read’ shelf. In June, another book was completed and added to the ‘read’ shelf. This showed she was reading consistently at this time. She had completed six books by June. She was then not actively engaged on the site until September. A lapse of two months.

She then recorded another book read but did not add it to her ‘read’ shelf (Figure 4.21). She searched for books she wanted to read. She added 15 books to her ‘want to read’ shelf. She had read six books, which was a long way from achieving her set reading challenge goal of 100 books.

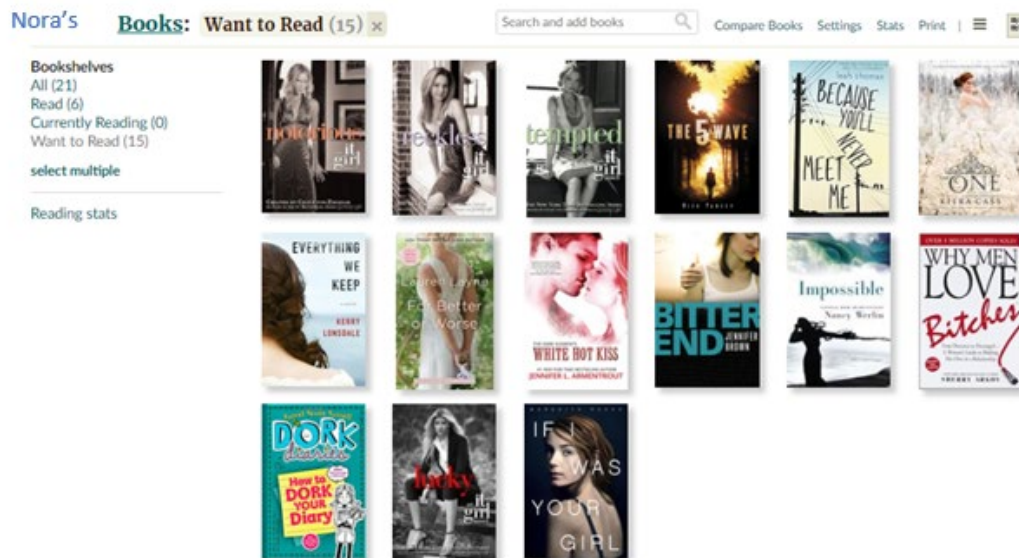


Figure 4.21: Figure 0.22: Analysis of Nora’s use of Goodreads (GR) (2)

In terms of the ACT pedagogy, Nora’s activity on the platform did not make full use of the affordances offered by the platform, nor did she fulfil her own literary potential on the site. She began with enthusiasm and engagement but appeared to lose impetus and enthusiasm. She registered, got to know the site, found her way around it and became engaged and active on the site as a participant. She was involved in making connections. She was confident online, exposing herself as a reader, communicating and networking with peers. She was actively using her GR shelves, expressing herself in uploading the books she had read. She showed an intent to read consistently, by setting a GR reading challenge goal and by browsing, selecting, and uploading her chosen books on her ‘want to read’ shelf. She did not create any custom shelves. She confidently rated one book before she uploaded it on the shelf. Nora’s rating of her “read” books (Figure 4.23).


cover	title	author	rating	rating	my rating	read	added
	Romeo and Juliet	Shakespeare, William	3.74	★★★★☆	★★★★★ edit shelves	Aug 05, 2016	Sep 05, 2016

Figure 4.23: Figure 0.24: Analysis of Nora’s use of Goodreads (GR) (3)

Nora was mainly involved in using the online skills of the curation pedagogy, which is the lowest level of online activity. She used the skills of:

- Finding, e.g., friends to follow, books she might like to read.
- Active reading, e.g., reading reviews of books, reading book synopses, friends’ recommendations.
- Filtering and selecting, e.g., selecting which books to put on her different shelves, filtering those she wants to read next.
- Filtering, selecting and deciding on covers for her books, which friends to follow, which friends to like.
- Arranging, e.g., choosing and arranging covers for books and which books go on the appropriate shelves.
- Sharing and engaging, e.g., sharing book recommendations with friends, sharing reviews with friends, sharing your reading challenge goal with friends.
- Making choices, deciding, rating books, looking for new books, choosing ‘want to read’ books, friends and followers, reading challenge goal, profile information.

She amplified some of her content by rating one of her books read. She did not move further than this entry level activity online.

4.8.2 Shreya - Participant 105, 14 years-old

Shreya is a very confident and chatty 14 year-old adolescent, who absolutely loves reading. She reads voraciously and talks with great delight about reading from “as far back as I can remember”. She is a highly motivated reader who actively chooses to read daily or whenever she can. “If I had to choose between shopping for shoes or reading a book, I would choose the book any day.”

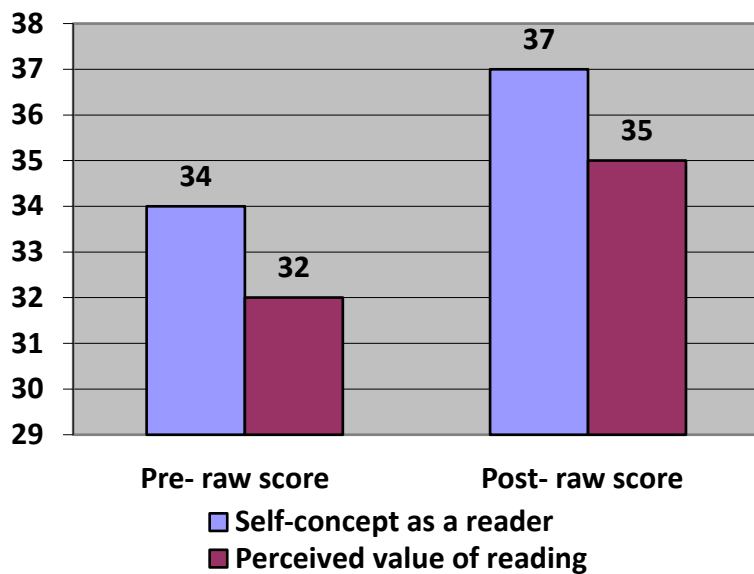


Figure 4.25: Shreya's AMRPRS results - pre and post and total raw scores

Shreya's borrowers' profile on the Papyrus Library data system (Figure 4.25) showed that she borrowed 54 books throughout the year. This is a very good borrowing pattern which results in 4.1 books per month. This a very high volume of books borrowed. Of those borrowed, Shreya read 40 books which was three books per month. This shows consistent and regular reading, which places her in the very active readers (VAR) group of participants, mentioned earlier in chapter 1.

Her AMRPRS results revealed that her pre-intervention self-concept score was 34/40 (85%). Her value of reading pre-intervention score was 32/40 (75%). Her total pre-intervention raw score was 66/80 (83%). The high pre-intervention scores indicate that her self-concept of herself as a reader and her value of reading are both high. Shreya describes herself as a reader in her pre-intervention reflection. "I am someone who loves reading to an extent that you will always find a book in my room. If I had to choose between shopping for shoes or reading a book, I would choose the book any day ... reading is my escape from reality". She relates how her mother has been a very strong and positive influence on her reading.

Table 4.12 shows that Shreya's post-intervention score for self-concept was 37/40 (92%), an increase of three points (+3). Her value post-intervention score was 35/40 (87%), an increase of three points (+3). Her total post-intervention raw score was 72/80 (90%).

Shreya showed a positive increase in both her self-concept and her value of reading scores. She appears to be in a supportive peer group who enjoys reading as much as she does. She feels she reads better than them and yet she rates herself lower as a reader on her post-score

item 9 response than on her pre-score response. Her responses show a self-report rating increase in comprehension and in socialising about her reading.

Table 4.12: AMRPRS pre- and post- responses for self-concept and value

Item stimulus	Pre-raw score response	Post-raw score response
Item 3- Self-concept +1 I read ...	a little better than my friends (3)	a lot better than my friends (4)
Item 5 - Self-concept +1 When I come to a word I don't know, I can ...	sometimes figure it out (3)	always almost always figure it out (4)
Item 9 - Self-concept -1 I am ...	a very good reader (4)	a good reader (3)
Item - 19 – Self-concept +1 When I read out loud, I am a ...	good reader (3)	very good reader (4)
Item 4 – Value of reading +2 My best friends think reading is ...	OK to do (2)	fun (4)
Item 6 – Value of reading +1 I tell my friends about good books I read	I do this some of the time (3)	I do this a lot (4)
Item 10 – Value of Reading +1 I think libraries are ...	an interesting place to spend time (3)	a great place to spend time (4)

Face-to-face Reading Conference Interview

During the face-to-face interview Shreya presented as a very confident and self-assured young lady. Shreya believed that she was the kind of reader she was because of the role model her mother played in her life – her mum read to her and shared books with her from a very early age. She was relaxed and chatted easily. She shared her thoughts with passion. Her responses on the survey and in her interview and reflections all showed a reader who was sure of her own reading ability, was engaged and enjoyed her reading immensely. They also reveal that she valued reading as a de-stressor, and as a fun activity – something that she could do “for the whole day ... book after book after book.” She said: “From as far back as I can remember, reading has been something that has made me happy whenever something was stressful or even boring at school”.

When asked how she chose what books to read, she said that she got recommendations from her mum, friends at school and GR, and she read the cover, book blurb and the first few pages. She mentioned that she was a library helper at primary school and that she “read a lot”. She reads at home in her room, at school at break-time and in ‘batting’ lessons (these are lessons in which the regular subject teacher is absent so students have a substitute/relief

teacher who looks after them and they are allowed to do anything they choose – this is called ‘batting’ in SA education terminology), but finds this year that studies and homework have made her reading “slow down”. She still felt her reading was going well. She had favourite genres, like true life and fantasy, and she stated she was currently engrossed in a sci-fi novel. “Most of the time I read for fun because it’s something that I enjoy doing all the time”. She said: “this year in Grade Eight has been a bit hectic as there has been so many new things to learn that I haven’t read as much as I would’ve liked to ... reading is something I look forward to ...” Shreya said that she often wondered what the world would be like without books to read. Shreya’s positive attitude towards reading translated into her making regular time for reading and her time spent reading, as well as her reading volume, was high. This would improve her reading proficiency and her reading skills, and these high levels of engagement and enjoyment mean that Shreya would feel successful and confident as a reader and see reading as a highly valued activity.



Figure 4.26: Analysis of Shreya’s use of Goodreads (GR) (1)

Shreya registered and joined in April. She set up a basic profile with a name and no avatar as can be seen in Figure 4.26. She did not manage her privacy settings. She made online GR friends with eleven peers and me, the teacher-librarian and researcher.

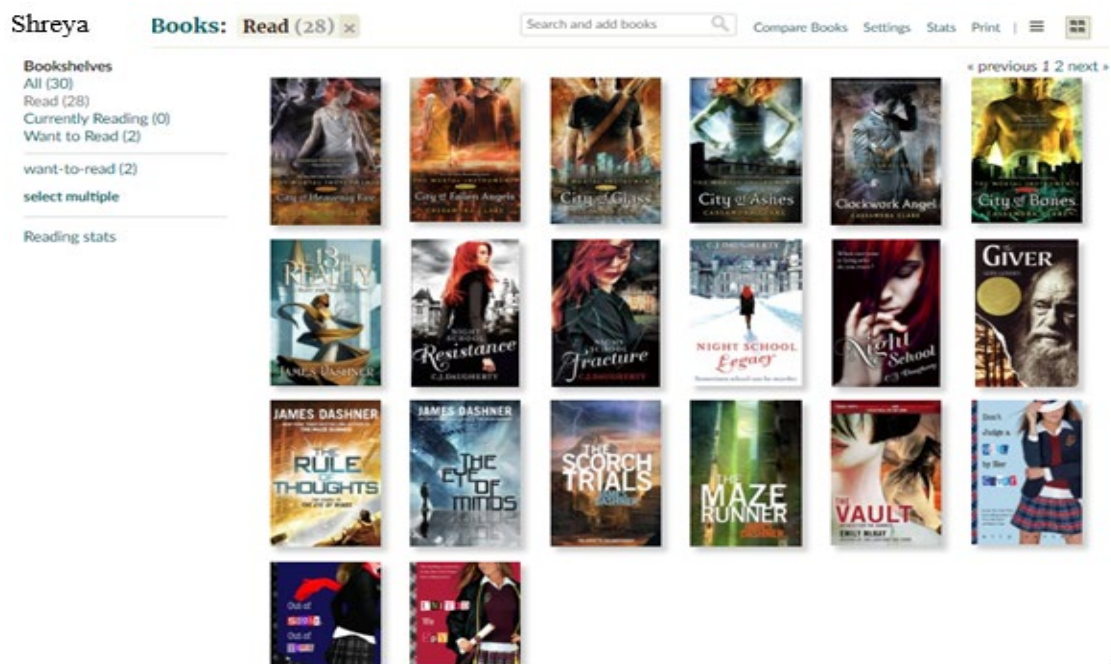


Figure 4.27: Analysis of Shreya’s use of Goodreads (GR) (2)

Shreya used the default shelves on GR and added books in April, July and September (Figure 4.27). She added 28 books to her ‘read’ shelf and two books to her ‘want to read’ shelf. She did not rate a single book. She stayed active on GR for a sustained period after the research period was completed. She joined the YA Reading ‘junkies’ group, but she did not contribute to this group at all. She did follow the prompts online and allowed GR to create her favourite genre list (Figure 4.28).

FAVORITE GENRES

Business, Chick-lit, Crime, Fantasy, Fiction, Horror, Humor and Comedy, Mystery, Philosophy, Science fiction, Suspense, Thriller, Travel, and Young-adult

Figure 4.28: Shreya’s favourite genre list

In terms of the ACT pedagogy, Shreya’s activity on the platform was very minimal and she did not make full use of the affordances offered by the platform. She did not appear to fulfil her passion for reading on this site. She chose to use this site as a live book list and did not appear to explore the site and discover its possibilities. Shreya was involved in using the online skills of the curation pedagogy, which is the lowest level of online activity. She used the skills of:

- Finding, e.g., friends to follow, and plenty of books she might like to read and that she did read.
- Active reading, e.g., reading reviews of books, reading book synopses, book summaries written by GR.
- Filtering and selecting and deciding, e.g., selecting which books to put on her different shelves, those she wants to read next, which books she is currently reading and those she has completed reading; deciding on covers for her books, deciding which friends to like and follow.
- Arranging, e.g., choosing and arranging covers for books and which books go on the appropriate shelves.
- Sharing and engaging, she did not appear to engage with anyone online.
- Making choices, deciding, looking for new books, choosing ‘want to read’ books, choosing friends and followers.

Although Shreya was a capable reader who valued reading for fun, she surprisingly did not move further than an entry level of activity online, even though she continued her use of GR after the research. She did not fully engage with the platform despite her positive reading attitude and good reader self-concept. The following quote is taken from her post-intervention reflections. “I wonder how people survive without reading, books is where I go first ... there is a whole library here and many books to choose from and I’m sure that by the end of the school year, I would have fitted enough books in my daily life to make it happy”.

4.8.3 Linda - Participant 74, 13 years old

Linda is a 13 year-old adolescent. She was a confident, outspoken young girl who feels that she is a moderate/good reader. Her spoken and written vocabulary were above average. Her activity and talk about her reading indicated high motivation. She was reading more online (fanfiction and articles) than “real” books. She wrote her own fiction and poetry. “I’m a reader who prefers ... complex stories, not conventional titles”.

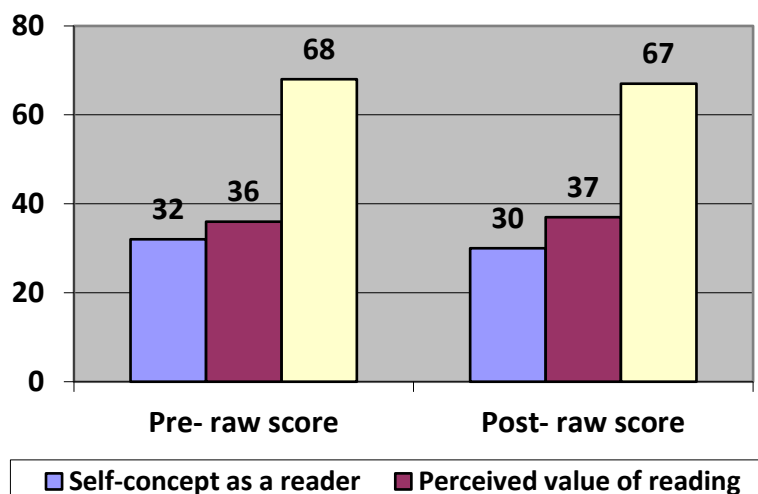


Figure 4.29: Linda's AMRRPS pre- and post- and total raw scores

Linda's borrowers' profile on the Papyrus Library data system (Figure 4.29) revealed that she had borrowed 33 books throughout the year, though she was mainly active in the second half of the year. She set her own reading goal at six books. In her post-intervention reading reflection she says: "I only read one book and the main reason for this is because, in between having to study for school and completing projects of sorts, I haven't been able to obtain the time". Her AMRRPS raw scores revealed that her pre-intervention self-concept score was 32/40 (80%). Her value of reading pre-intervention score was 30/40 (75%). The high pre-intervention scores indicate that both her self-concept of herself as a reader and her value of reading are both good. Her total pre-intervention score was 68/80 (77%).

Linda had started out her Grade Eight year seeing herself as "quite a moderate reader ... it's something to do with my personality" (pre-intervention reading reflection). Her quantitative high score for perceived value of reading, although lower than her self-concept score, still revealed that she valued reading as a recreational activity. This was consistent with her borrowing statistics (33 books) but inconsistent with her actual number of books read (1). In her pre-intervention reading reflection she says she had grown fond of some genres more than others – she preferred philosophical and mystery books with a good plot. She called herself a "reader who prefers to think and observe complex stories instead of conventional titles". She appeared to be a mature reader who knows herself as a reader, being aware what she likes to read and what she does not like to read.

As can be seen from Table 4.13, Linda's post-intervention test scores showed a two point decline in her self-concept as a reader. Her post-intervention survey self-concept score was

30/40 (75%), a drop of two points. In her perceived value of reading, her score was 37/40 (93%) which shows an increase of one point. Her total post-intervention survey score was 67/80 (84%) which is a five point increase overall. Linda revealed in her post-intervention reading reflection that she “absolutely loves reading ... just not in the conventional way... I prefer reading all sorts of unpublished pieces of work e.g. fanfiction and articles”. She says she reads every single day and she states: “I find it to be rather therapeutic in times of stress which is essentially all the time”. She also revealed that her reading has encouraged her to write her own fiction and poetry. She shared further, saying: “I currently am still trying to read actual books [electronically], because although paperbacks and hardback are wonderful and carry that tell tale archaic book smell, they are a bit tedious to carry around, and I find I am not doing too bad a job on it either”. She also shared in her post-intervention reading reflection that in-between having to study and complete projects she had not been able to read towards her book reading goal of six “published and tangible” books. She appeared to have not been consistent in her book reading and was reading much more online texts than real books. Linda’s self-concept dropped by two points over the research period possibly due to lack of reading practice and possibly the disappointment of not meeting her own reading goal. Her response in the post-intervention AMRPRS score for item 11 reflected a concern about her peer group and what they think about her reading (see item 11 in Table 4.13). She showed some inconsistency in her self-concept scores as she showed a gain in comprehension (see item 13 in Table 4.13) when the teacher asks her a question. Yet, in item 15 (Table 4.13) she showed an apparent lowering of her belief in herself as a reader as she scored herself one point lower, saying “reading is kind of easy for me”.

In the pre-intervention perceived value scores Linda showed a one-point increase in item 4 (Table 4.13). Linda felt her friends had improved in their attitude towards reading and become more positive. This may be the reason why she felt concern about what they were thinking of her reading. Linda’s post-intervention AMRRPS responses showed a total two-point self-concept score decrease over the research period, and a one-point increase in her perceived value of reading, as depicted in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: AMRPRS pre-intervention and post-intervention self-concept responses changes

Item stimulus	Pre-response with raw score	Post-response with raw score
Item 11: (Self-Concept) -2 I worry about what other kids think about my reading ...	never (4)	almost every day (2)
Item 13: (Self-Concept) +1		

When my teacher asks me a question about what I have read, I ...	sometimes think of an answer (3)	always think of an answer (4)
Item 15: (Self-Concept) -1 Reading is ...	very easy for me (4)	kind of easy for me (3)
Item 4: (Value of reading) +1 My best friends think reading is...	fun (3)	really fun (4)

Face-to-face Reading Conference Interview

During the face-to-face interview Linda presented as very confident. She was relaxed, very much at ease and happy to share her opinions. Her answer to the question “Do you consider yourself a reader?” was “Definitely!”. She said that she is a bit of a mood reader. She reads more at home than anywhere else. She reads on her phone, her eReader and her laptop. She chooses books by reading reviews or blurbs and the first few pages of the book. She looks at the genres she likes and the cover of the books. She finds the small print and having to turn the page in ‘real books’ a frustration. She felt that her reading last year was more consistent as she read weekly and seemed to read more. She said that this year her studies had to be her priority, because she could get carried away with reading online and has to keep an eye on that. She was reading *Gone Girl*, by Gillian Flynn (psychological thriller) as opposed to her last read which was *Fang Girl* which was YA romance. She was enjoying reading Natsuo Kirino, a Japanese author who writes contemporary mystery thrillers. I feel that Linda is a mature reader with a very good self-concept as a reader. She enjoys reading but she also knows that she must focus on school at this time, so reading has not been her priority.



Figure 4.30: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (1)

Linda registered and joined GR in April. She set up a basic profile with a name and no avatar (Figure 4.30). She did not manage her privacy settings. She made online GR friends with 10 peers and me, the teacher-librarian and researcher. Linda follows two Japanese authors on

GR. One of them is the author of one of her books on her read shelf. Linda used the default shelves on GR and added three books in April and one book in May to her read shelf, one of which she rated (Figure 4.31). This conflicts with the total number of books she mentioned having read in her reading conference, which was 1.

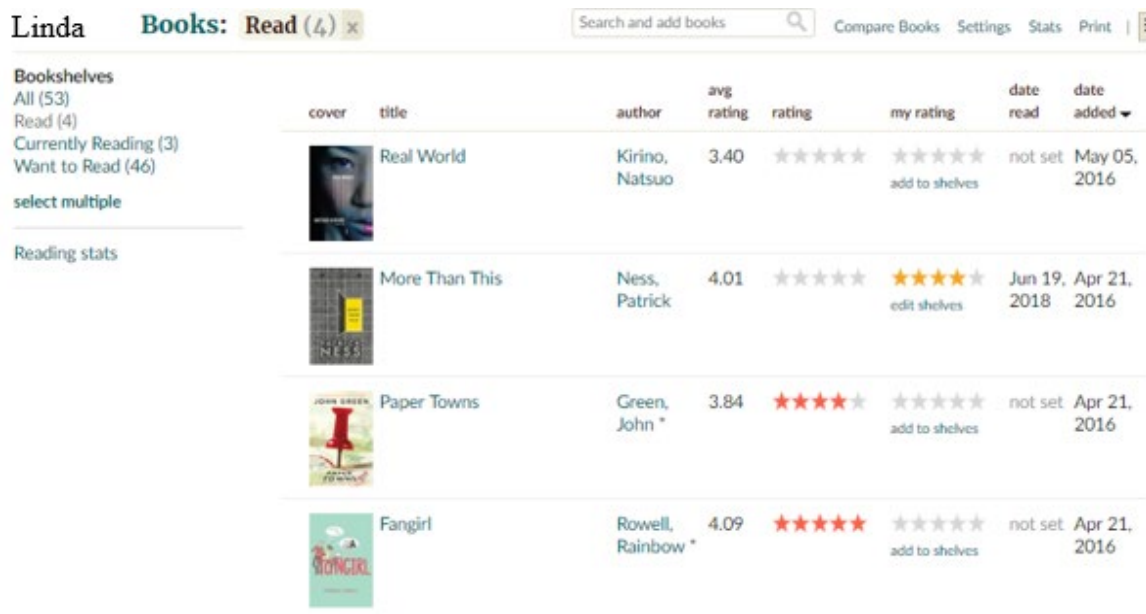


Figure 4.31: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (2)

She added one book to her ‘currently reading’ shelf, in April, and another two books were added to this shelf in July. None of these books were completed and put onto her ‘read’ shelf. However, she did rate one of the books. Linda added to her ‘want to read’ shelf consistently through the research period and rated six of those books. Did she read them? Rating the books and loading them on the ‘want to read’ shelf shows a great intention to read but this was not followed up with actual reading or completion of any of the books from her ‘want to read’ shelf. It appeared that she may have been reading but not logging the books as read, nor putting them onto her ‘read’ shelf. She set her GR reading challenge goal at ten, but only logged four books as read. Her one book took two months to read. She did stay on GR for a sustained period after the research period was completed, but only logged one book as read. She also rated it during this time.

In terms of the ACT pedagogy, Linda’s activity on the platform did not make full use of the affordances offered by the platform, nor did she fulfil her own reading potential on the site. She chose to read mainly online but did try to use GR, beginning with enthusiasm and

engagement but not really being consistent about logging and rating her books read. She registered, got to know the site, found her way around it, became engaged and active on the site as a participant. She was involved in making connections. She was confident online, exposing herself as a reader, communicating and networking with both peers and authors. She was largely inactive using her shelves merely as repositories and seemingly not actually reading nor logging books completed. She did rate books. She had great intentions to read large volumes of books. She set a GR reading challenge goal, browsed, selected and uploaded her forty-six specifically chosen books on her ‘want to read’ shelf. She did not log any of these books as read. She did not create any custom shelves. She did respond to GR prompts about her likes and dislikes regarding genres, and Figure 4.32 shows the genre list compiled by GR for her.

FAVORITE GENRES

Art, Business, Children's, Classics, Comics,
Contemporary, Crime, Ebooks, Fantasy, Fiction, Gay and
Lesbian, Graphic novels, Horror, Humor and Comedy,
Manga, Music, Mystery, Non-fiction, Paranormal,
Philosophy, Poetry, Psychology, Science, Science fiction,
Suspense, Spirituality, Thriller, Travel, and Young-adult

Figure 4.32: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (3)

Figure 4.33 is a picture of her ‘want to read’ shelf with forty-six books loaded, that she intended to read. Several of the books are rated by her, which suggests she did read them but did not log them as read.

Want to Read (46)
select multiple

Reading stats








46		Gone Girl	Flynn, Gillian *	4.06	★★★★★	★★★★★ edit shelves	not set	Jul 25, 2016
45		Six Four	Yokoyama, Hideo	3.46	★★★★★	★★★★★ add to shelves	not set	Jul 25, 2016
44		1Q84 (1Q84, #1)	Murakami, Haruki	3.99	★★★★★	★★★★★ add to shelves	not set	Jul 25, 2016
43		Looking for Alaska	Green, John *	4.05	★★★★★	★★★★★ add to shelves	not set	Jun 21, 2016
42		Binge	Oakley, Tyler *	4.25	★★★★★	★★★★★ add to shelves	not set	Jun 21, 2016
41		The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	Twain, Mark	3.81	★★★★★	★★★★★ edit shelves	not set	Jun 21, 2016
40		The Hidden Oracle (The Trials of Apollo, #1)	Riordan, Rick *	4.28	★★★★★	★★★★★ add to shelves	not set	May 14, 2016

Figure 4.33: Analysis of Linda’s use of Goodreads (GR) (4)

Linda was involved in using the online skills of curation pedagogy, which is the lowest level of online activity. She used the skills of:

- Finding, e.g., friends to follow, authors to follow, and plenty of books she might like to read.
- Active reading, e.g., reading reviews of books, reading book synopses, friends’ recommendations, author information, book summaries written by GR.
- Filtering and selecting and deciding, e.g., selecting which books to put on her different shelves, those she wants to read next, which books she is currently reading and those she has completed reading; deciding on covers for her books, deciding which friends to like and follow.
- Arranging, e.g., choosing and arranging covers for books and which books go on the appropriate shelves.
- Sharing and engaging, e.g., sharing your reading challenge goal with friends.
- Making choices, deciding, rating books, looking for new books, choosing ‘want to read’ books, friends, and followers, reading challenge goal, profile information.

She amplified some of her content by rating her books. She too did not move further than the entry level activity online. She did not fully engage with the platform and shared the

following. “I, however, love reading ... just not in the conventional way that would be credited in Goodreads”.

4.8.4 Naledi - Participant 147, 14 years-old

Naledi is a confident, 13-year-old adolescent who does not like reading at all and therefore never chooses to read. She is sporty and never finds the time to read. She ‘struggles with finishing books. She was quite outspoken about her reading feelings and her emotions around reading are very negative.

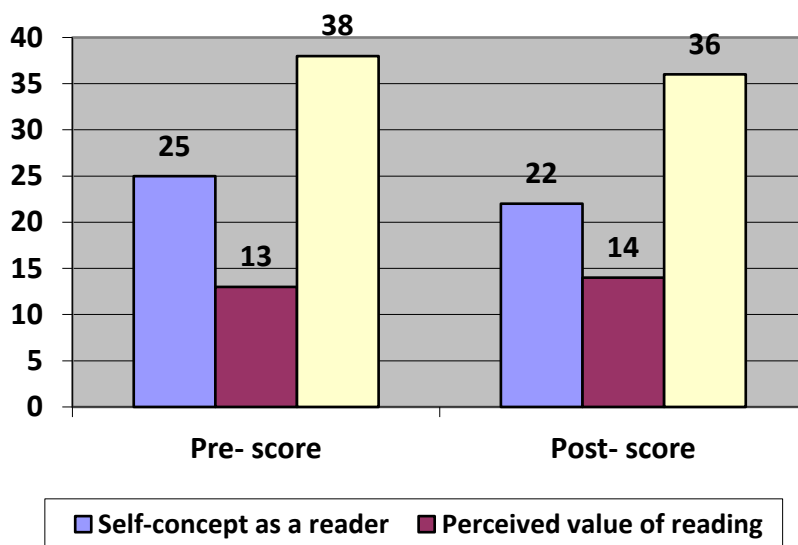


Figure 4.34: Naledi’s AMRPRS Results of pre-intervention and post-intervention total raw scores

Pre-intervention and post-intervention reading conferences

Naledi was a relaxed and chatty young lady who shared that she really didn’t like reading. Her borrowing statistics supported this statement in that she had only borrowed four books throughout the entire year. This means she was an inactive reader and was not reading much at all. She said she found it quite boring. She shared that she does have the time to read, but when she does read, she often never finishes the book. She stated that she just never chooses to read because she would rather play sport and be outdoors.

I don’t like reading at all ... I am just a sports person, truly I never have the time to read and I never finish books.

She shared that she had only read one book this year. She said it was boring to plan out your books so that is why she was not really into GR. She stated that as an adult her dad only reads because he must, because he is a lawyer.

Figure 3.43 shows that Naledi’s AMRPRS pre-intervention scores were extremely low especially her perceived value of reading score 13/40 (32%). This indicates that she did not see much value at all in the practise of reading for pleasure. Her self-concept pre-intervention score was 25/40 (62%). This was slightly above average and shows that she was slightly more positive about herself as a reader, but she did not really think she was a good reader. Her post-intervention survey score for self-concept as a reader dropped to 22/40 (55%), which suggests that her idea of herself as a reader worsened during the research period. She felt that she was not as competent a reader now as she was earlier in the year. Her perceived value of reading rose by one point to 14/40 (35%) which is still extremely low.

The analysis of her post-intervention AMRPRS responses may shed more light on her negative feelings and attitudes towards reading (Table 4.14). Naledi’s self-concept as a reader lost four points, but gained two points on the response items, which is a total loss of three points and shows a decrease of her opinion of herself as a reader. Yet her response on item 9 was not consistent with this. She appeared to have some peer pressure around her reading proficiency as she rated her peer group expectation of her ability very poorly, whereas her own rating of herself as a reader improved from “poor” to an “ok reader”. Her item 5 and 13 ratings appear to suggest that she may have experienced some comprehension difficulties which may have arisen because of a lack of reading practice, but then her response to item 7 contradicted this assumption, because this expressed her assessment that her understanding had improved. Without any regular reading practice one can expect Naledi’s reading skills to weaken and her self-concept as a reader to be less. Her responses on the value of reading items were also contradictory, in that she improved her rating on two items and then lost one point on another item. Her scores suggest some confusion about herself as a reader and about the value of reading as an enjoyable activity.

Table 4.14: Naledi’s AMRPRS pre-intervention and post-intervention self-concept response changes

Item stimulus	Pre-intervention AMRPRS response with raw score	Post-intervention AMRPRS response with raw score
Item 1 – (self-concept) -1 My friends think I am ...	an ok reader (2)	a poor reader (1)
Item 5 – (self-concept) -1 When I come to a word I don’t know, I can ...	almost always figure it out (4)	sometimes figure it out (3)
Item 7 – (self-concept) +1 When I am reading by myself, I understand ...	almost none of what I read (2)	some of what I read (3)

Item 9 – (self-concept) +1 I am a ...	a poor reader (1)	an ok reader (2)
Item 13 – (self-concept) -1 When my teacher asks me a question about what I have read, I	sometimes think of an answer (2)	can never think of an answer (1)
Item 19 – (self-concept) -1 When I read out loud, I am a ...	good reader (3)	ok reader (2)
Item 4 – (value) +1 My best friends think reading is	no fun at all (1)	ok to do (2)
Item 8 – (value) +1 People who read a lot are ...	boring (1)	not very interesting (2)
Item 20 – (value) -1 When someone give me a book for a present, I feel ...	sort of unhappy (2)	unhappy (1)



Figure 4.35: Naledi’s use of GR

Naledi registered on GR in April and did not create a profile (Figure 4.35). She friended five of her classmates including the teacher-librarian/researcher. In the same month she loaded one book on the default ‘read’ shelf. She did not rate it. She did not make use of any other shelves. She did set herself a GR reading challenge goal which was twelve books but she only read one book towards this goal. She followed prompts on GR and allowed GR to compile a list of her favourite genres, which is evident in Figure 4.36.

read (1) currently-reading (0) to-read (0)

FAVORITE GENRES

Crime, Fantasy, Gay and Lesbian, Mystery, and Young-adult

Bookshelves

All (1)
Read (1)
Currently Reading (0)
Want to Read (0)

[select multiple](#)

[Reading stats](#)

cover	title	author	avg rating	rating	my rating	date read	date added
	The Book Thief	Zusak, Markus *	4.37	★★★★★	★★★★★ add to shelves	not set	Apr 25, 2016

Naledi a wants to read 12 books in the 2016 Reading Challenge



Apr 25, 2016 05:16AM · [like](#) · [comment](#)

Figure 4.36: Analysis of Naledi’s use of Goodreads (GR)

Naledi’s use of GR was not consistent. Her time spent online was very unproductive despite it being a period of seven months –April to October. She did not do much during that time. She did not engage in discussions, nor did she plan her reading. She did not create any book reviews. She did not rate her one book that she recorded, as read. She did not use many of the affordances that GR offered her, nor did she use her reading skills on the platform.

4.9 Findings and Themes

This case study investigated the influence of GR on the affective processes of reading, namely reader self-concept and the reader’s perceived value of reading. The following findings and resultant themes arose from this research:

4.9.1 Self-Concept of Reader

Most participants had good and positive views of themselves as readers which they acknowledged in their reading reflections and on the AMRPRS score for self-concept. The self-concept of the participants showed a raw score increase of 3%. Participants who struggled with reading were able to identify and articulate where and why they struggled. For example: choosing other activities instead of reading, not finding time to read, poor book choices, moodiness and boredom with reading were some reasons mentioned.

4.9.2 Perceived Value of Reading

The participants perception of the value of reading as an activity of choice was high at the beginning of the study (pre-intervention results for reading value were 75%). It remained high after the GR intervention, showing that the use of the GR platform had no negative influence upon the participants' perceived value of reading, but no direct causal relationship in relation to the participants use of GR could be found. It is suggested that GR motivated participants and their reading volume increased, and this increase resulted in more engagement and enjoyment that perhaps would account for the increase in the participants value of reading.

4.9.3 Time for Reading

The research results appeared to show a consensus amongst many of the participants in this study that there was no time available for reading during the secondary school day due to the increased volume of work and the pressures of academic achievement. There also appeared to be a myriad of new and varied extra-murals on offer in secondary school which may also have contributed to the decline of reading for pleasure as an activity of choice for some of the participants. Some participants specifically mentioned that their love of sport interfered with their ability to prioritise time for reading but this is a matter of personal choice. This is consistent with research completed by Merga (2013 and 2019). In most participants the lack of time does not correlate with a lessening of the value of reading as an activity.

4.9.4 Engagement, Reader Motivation, Feelings and Attitudes

Reader motivation was high and many participants 'wished or 'longed' to be able to read more despite the lack of time for reading. Their attitudes and feeling about reading were positive and they valued reading. A very small minority had very negative to moderately negative attitudes and feelings about reading. This appears to be in contrast with the literature

that suggests that all young adolescents do not enjoy or want to engage in reading for pleasure. The participants of this study although not always finding the time to read, are still motivated about reading, enjoy reading when they get to read and value the activity of reading for pleasure.

4.9.5 Reader Strength and Struggles

The findings revealed that a few participants suffered from poor book choices, and some had various reading difficulties, for example, poor focus and concentration when reading, and poor motivation for reading so they could not sustain reading for any length of time. These are common struggles and book choice is a skill that can be learned. Readers can be encouraged to grow their reading focus and concentration by reading for shorter timespans. Research has also shown that respecting the reading choices of readers and the acceptance of their abandoning books when they do not interest them would result in a lessening of problems with focus and concentration and “indicates self-awareness of personal preferences and engagement” (Miller, 2014, p. 188.) (Hinchman et al, 2017; Ripp, 2018; Miller, 2014.).

4.9.6 Reading as a Social Activity

Most of the participants appeared unwilling to engage in online, home or classroom discussions about the books they had read. According to both self-report data and answers to the survey items, socialising around books with their friends appeared to be favoured over classroom related book talk.

4.9.7 Technology and Reading

Goodreads was used as an intervention with the hope that it would capture the participants' enthusiasm for technology and direct it toward their reading, increasing reading motivation and volume. This in turn would improve reader confidence and enhance the readers' self-concept. The readers would 'catch' the passion of reading through online observation, modelling, retention and practise. However, the most noticeable effect of GR shown by both qualitative and quantitative data, was the affordance it offered that allowed the reader to set a reading challenge goal. The goal motivated some readers and it appeared to encourage a higher volume of reading. Another positive effect afforded by GR was the site's automatic book recommendation affordance that allowed for the participants to find books they enjoyed more easily. This appeared to encourage feelings of enjoyment and success in reading, which

in turn resulted in a higher volume of reading and positive reader confidence and an enhanced reader self-concept.

4.9.8 More than just Reading and Readers

The findings of this research demonstrate, as has previous research, that the cognitive, behavioural and affective processes of reading are relational and associated with one another. The findings support the idea that the affective processes are strongly linked to the behavioural processes of reading. For example, those participants who found the time to read, and were engaged in reading, enjoyed their reading and read more frequently. These readers showed higher scores in reader self-concept and perceived value of reading.

The use of GR by the participants was not conclusively linked to any improvements in the affective processes or reading. An association was assumed to exist between the GR challenge goal, the sites' automatic book recommendation affordance and reading volume and frequency of reading. This association would need further investigation and research to examine and confirm the nature of the association. The findings will be further elucidated in the following chapter.

4.10 Conclusion

The findings of this case study reveal that each adolescent's reading journey is complex, varied and unique. The findings suggest that reading is a personalised experience. Each participants' experience with books and reading and their understanding of reading for pleasure within the secondary school context may be influenced by many factors. For example, the value given to the activity of reading within the school and/or the value that their family and friends give to the activity of reading. The participants' self-concept as a reader may also influence their reading development and enjoyment, either positively or negatively, depending on their beliefs of their own reading ability and their past and current reading experiences. The GR experience was intensely different for each reader and was used differently by the participants producing differing results.

The transition of the adolescent from primary school (Grade Seven) to secondary school (Grade Eight), appears to be at odds with the adolescent finding time for reading for pleasure at the secondary school level. The secondary school focus is more academic, and is performance and results driven, as teachers, parents and students strive towards the final matriculation examination and the ultimate achievement of a Bachelor's pass.

The findings show that at the beginning of the study, most of the participants were confident readers with a positive reader self-concept, and they appeared to value the activity of reading and enjoyed spending time reading. Most participants expressed positive attitudes and feelings about reading (90% regarded themselves as OK, good or great readers). Seventy one percent of the participants said they would read a book sometimes or often and 84% agreed that reading and knowing how to read is important or very important. These quantitative results were confirmed with the qualitative results from the pre-intervention reading reflections. Most of the participants did not appear to socialise or talk about their books and reading. A small minority of participants (2% to 7%) had negative feelings and attitudes about reading. These ranged from difficulty with book choice, poor reading skills and no time for reading.

At the conclusion of the study, it is disappointing to note that no significant positive changes could be observed that were assumed to be directly related to the participants' activity on GR. The post scores on both self-concept as a reader and perceived value of reading as an activity, both showed variable increases and decreases, and these were both positive and negative dependent upon the reader and their reading experiences over the research period. Generally, the self-concept scores decreased slightly. I suggest that this could be a result of the lessened time the participants spent reading. Time allocated to reading became greatly reduced as the academic year progressed and the competing demands on the participants time meant they did not allocate time for reading for pleasure. The participants perceived value of reading scores were generally more positive. I feel this was a result of the conscious effort made by the Teacher-Librarian to make the participants aware of the known benefits of reading through videos, discussions, library displays and informal reading chats of our own experiences of the benefits of reading we felt we experienced. A further disappointment is that research has shown that task valuing usually leads to an increase of engagement and involvement in the task. In this research this relationship was not visible. Possible reasons for this discrepancy will be discussed in the next chapter.

“Reading can change your life, it can inform, motivate, inspire and elevate; but it must be reading you do for yourself, at your own pace, in your own way and that has a bearing on your own background, interests, values, beliefs and aspirations...” (Woods, 2001, p. 74 quoted by Cremin, 2007).

5. “Catching Reading” – Directions, Implications and Recommendations

“A primary purpose of reading research is to inform theory, from which we may derive educational policy and practice...”

(Kamil, Pearson, Moje, & Afflerbach, 2011, p xxi.)

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I recap the research setting and its context. I provide a summary of the instruments used to collect the data and outline my key findings relative to the literature and my research questions. I outline the conclusions of my overall findings, with a discussion of these findings and the resulting implications for the young adolescent readers and their reading development within a secondary school. I reflect on the implications for educational policy, educators, librarians, and other literacy practitioners. I outline the limitations of my research and highlight topics which may benefit from future research opportunities.

The results of this research were extremely disappointing to me as both Teacher-Librarian and Researcher. Whilst there was initial excitement and fervour around the use of GR with our reading programme this interest waned quickly as the year progressed. The use of the GR platform was not sustained by most of the participants. This does not mean that my research failed but instead provides interesting information that will need to be incisively interrogated to discover why my strategy to boost reading motivation and impact the participants reading habits positively, did not work as well as I had anticipated.

5.2 Research Setting

Using an exploratory case study methodology, I investigated the influence of the use of GR on young adolescent girls’ reading habits and explored changes to the participant readers’ self-concept and their perceived value of reading. The participants were Grade Eight students, aged between 12 and 16, who attended an affluent public girls’ secondary school that was known for its credible academic record.

5.3 Research Context

Research recognises that young adolescents are in a world that is daily becoming more complex, interconnected, and dynamic. There is research evidence and much discussion of an

apparent global decline, or not, of the activity of reading for pleasure amongst adolescents (Scholastic, 2019; OECD, 2010; Twist, Sainsbury, Woodthorpe, & Whetton, 2007).

At the onset of my study, it was my premise that I needed to foster the intrinsic motivation or reading 'will' of the young adolescents in my library. As a passionate reader myself, I saw in my own use of GR that there was a potential and a possibility that in the use of the platform the participants may be afforded an opportunity to ignite their reading passions and create for themselves, a positive reader identity and experience the value of reading for pleasure. The theories I had chosen were chosen to facilitate this 'taking ownership' of their own reading journey and development, and I had hoped that the technology of GR might be a catalyst for this, as well as stimulate socialisation around reading. This was in line with Ripp's comment that "the change in the young adolescent readers' perception, starts with us, but ends with them" Ripp (2018, p. xxxiii). In this study I used both qualitative and quantitative methods and had findings from both pre-intervention (before the use of GR) and post-intervention (after the use of GR) data.

Guided by Bandura's social learning theory, where learning is seen to occur through observation, imitation and modelling, GR appeared to offer this type of reading experience to the participants. Bandura's self-efficacy theory was explored as I analysed the readers' reading identity and who they were as readers. This was explored together with the idea that task value impacted how a reader approached reading and how much time was spent on reading. I explored the readers' perceived value of reading. The AMRPRS instrument was used to evaluate the readers self-concept as a reader and their perceived value of reading.

Ryan & Deci's self-determination theory allowed me to explore the idea of giving the students voice and choice in their reading development, thinking, and acting autonomously about their reading and being intrinsically motivated about their reading. This intrinsic motivation or 'will' was what I was hoping GR would ignite within the readers. My choice of GR as a platform was also influenced by the platform's affordances of autonomy, relatedness, and competence. GR afforded autonomy by the readers being able to visit the site whenever they felt like it and use whatever aspects of the site they enjoyed. GR afforded relatedness by allowing readers to mingle online discussing books, book reviews and book choices, as well as allowing them to choose online friends on GR that were book lovers and passionate readers thus developing a sense of community around their reading. GR afforded them competence both in their use of the site and in their reading because of their intrinsic

motivation was ignited by their use of GR, it would allow them to read more frequently, become more engaged and active in their reading. The aspects of the reading experience and the reading development of the participants that I hoped to influence using GR were the affective aspects of the reading experience – reading will, reading motivation, reader self-concept and perceived value of reading.

I acknowledge that the participants had differing cultural backgrounds and had differing reading proficiencies. Guided by my theories and my research questions, it was a conscious decision not to analyse the participants' responses according to demographics, race, home language or home culture. My focus being on the participants' current reading experience through an affective aspect reading lens. Whilst I realise that home culture, reading proficiency, race and home language are all a part of the participants' current reading identity and that they shape their reading experience, I explored how the participants used the GR intervention and investigated its influence on their current reading experiences. I therefore made the decision that it was beyond the scope of this research to analyse the data according to reading competence, home culture, home language and race. This analysis could provide an opportunity for future research and/or an opportunity to write a follow up academic research paper.

5.4 Summary of Instruments and Findings

Four quantitative instruments were used in this study: the AMRPRS, the Papyrus Library Program, the ORIS Survey and the GR Poll. The main quantitative instrument used was the AMRPRS consisting of 20 items that examined a reader's self-concept and their perceived value of the activity of reading. This instrument was chosen for its flexibility in that although primarily a quantitative tool, it afforded much qualitative data when individuals responses were analysed and when questions were grouped according to the themes that were identified during the data analysis.

The ORIS survey provided some interesting and very positive data, but this may be skewed because, the kind participant who would have taken the time to complete this separate online survey, probably all participants in this data subset, were proficient and passionate readers and hence were happy to dedicate their spare time to answer questions on an online survey. The data was very positive and is possibly skewed towards not being reflective of the larger participant group.

Although the Papyrus Instrument only looked at book reading data, the participants were free to engage in any form of reading for pleasure. Some participants wrote about their online reading exploits in their reflections and chatted about reading online in reading conferences and discussion groups during our library lessons. As mentioned previously the school's online platform was not open to students at the time of this research so data from that source was not forthcoming. Data received from the participants reading reflections, that included information about their online reading was mentioned in the findings chapter of this research paper.

The GR poll was a data subset and yielded specific data about the participants use of GR. The when, how, why of they used the platform. This was collated with qualitative data on their use of GR from their post-reading reflections.

Four qualitative instruments were used to provide rich and thick descriptive data about the participants' individual reading experiences: individual participant written reading reflections, researcher/teacher observations, individual reading conferences and qualitative analysis of specific items from the AMRPRS. The main qualitative instrument used was the participants' pre- and post- written reading reflections, together with the qualitative analysis of specific items from the AMRPRS. These were anecdotal reflective narratives of each reader's personal reading experiences and reading feelings and attitudes and their answers to questions regarding their reading journey and experiences with the GR platform.

These two main instruments, the reading reflections and the AMRPRS, used in the study, were completed in the initial stages of the research before the participants were introduced to GR and again at the end of the research period after they had used the GR platform, so that pre-and post-findings could be compared and correlated to find similarities and show differences in the data obtained and analysed. Themes derived from the data provided more detailed information on the individual participants' and their reading journeys. The key findings relate to the four research questions listed below. I will list each question and provide a focused summary of the results pertaining to that question and a discussion will then follow.

5.5 Research Question 1: What are the current reading habits of the Grade Eight students?

The mean raw score for reader-self-concept was 75%. The mean score for reading value was 74%. This pre-intervention AMRPRS result showed that the participants generally had well

developed, positive reader self-concepts, were engaged in reading and enjoyed reading for pleasure. They see themselves as readers. The readers viewed the activity of reading highly. They experienced reading as a worthwhile activity to engage in.

Individual participants' pre-intervention responses to selected questions within the AMRPRS were analysed qualitatively for more in-depth data about the individual readers' reading behaviours and reading attitudes and feelings. This data set was compared to the quantitative findings from the AMRPRS results, and the findings were consistent.

The pre-reading reflections and the participants individual responses to items in the AMRPRS consistently showed that generally the participants had a positive intent to read for pleasure. They enjoyed being engaged in spending time reading for pleasure. The feelings and attitudes towards reading were largely positive. They exhibited strong and positive reader self-concepts and a high value for reading. There were some varied and personal reasons for not reading and these were directly related to a participant's personal life context and previous and current reading experience. Participants also articulated in their reflections, a good knowledge of the value and benefits of reading related to emotional, physiological, to cognitive and academic benefits and many participants often chose to read specifically because of the benefit they derived from reading. In this research context, the Grade Eight school, cultural and sporting curriculum is heavily laden with competing demands and priorities. The participants struggled to find time during their school day for what they, their parents, and the teachers at the school saw as an optional extra. Time availability and time allocation for reading for pleasure became a challenge for these participants as they adjusted to the many new demands of a secondary school. I believe that this may explain why their knowledge of the value and benefits of reading did not appear to motivate them to choose to read more frequently.

Merga (2018) suggests that readers perceptions of the importance and the value of reading can influence their motivation to read. She investigated if readers perceived value in reading once they had acquired skills competence in reading was sustained. She found that for some children once they were proficient in reading, they did not recognise the value in reading for pleasure. Her research implied that "fostering greater value in reading regularly may enhance reading engagement with valuing of reading found to be an important component of [reader's] reading motivation. Further research would be needed to explore the apparent

disjuncture between high value of reading by the participants but the lowering of their reading frequency and subsequent lower reader self-concept scores in these results.

There was a small group of participants who felt negative about reading and said they would not choose to read in their spare time, with one participant even stating that they “hated” (Participant 115) reading because they found it difficult. These difficulties mostly appear to be extrinsic factors, arising from outside of the participants, seemingly seen as outside of their locus of control. Very few participants were intrinsically negative and/or de-motivated about reading, but they had poor self-concepts as readers stating that they were not good readers. This low self-concept as a reader would result in less reading engagement as they did not enjoy reading and thus a resultant low value on the activity of reading. This too was consistent with the findings in the AMRPRS where 10% of participants saw themselves as poor readers, 13% stated that they found reading ‘kinda hard’, and 7% said that reading is not very important. Their negative feelings and attitudes and low reader self-concept would prevent these participants from engaging and enjoying reading for pleasure and further exacerbate their reading negativity. They need to see that their reading is within their own control and take ownership and responsibility for their reading for pleasure.

In their reading reflections, some participants said they found reading boring, preferring other text types to books, and some seemed ambivalent in their feelings about reading. This was a small number of participants. For example, they said they liked to read but did not often choose to read. The negative feelings and attitudes reflect, by association, little time spent reading (Merga, 2018b). Spending less time reading would result in little to no development of their reading skills, and a resultant negative reader self-concept. They also show, by assumption, that these participants do not value the practice of reading for pleasure. They lack the intrinsic motivation which would encourage and enable them to persist in their reading for pleasure. These results were also consistent with the AMRPRS quantitative data which showed that 6% of participants found reading boring. In this data there appears to be a relationship between reading value, reader self-concept, reading attitude and time spent reading. For example, those participants who say reading is boring (6%) do not value reading, (2%-7%), do not read often (2%-7%), and have a poor reader self-concept (10%) (2%-7%). Merga related “finding reading boring to ‘preference’. These participants would rather do other things with their free time or rather read something other than a book. This held true in these readers reflections (Merga, 2018). Another small group of participants reflected that

they enjoyed reading but did not spend time reading due to other interests and pursuits that took up their time. They exhibited a strong reader self-concept and a high value of reading, but because of choices they made, they did not prioritise reading.

These research results show the personal nature of reading and the power of choice in independent reading and reading for pleasure. The results also highlight the issue of time not being allocated within the secondary school curriculum for reading for pleasure, silent reading, or independent reading. If there was time within the curriculum for reading, I believe that these readers would be engaged in reading (Merga, 2019).

The findings revealed very few participants (1%) who mentioned comprehension difficulties. Reflecting on possible causes for poor comprehension, I suggest that it may be their lack of reading practice due to poor motivation for reading. Lack of reading practice may result in a 'dulling' of their reading skills, which would then cause a loss of reading proficiency and weaker understanding. This area would have to be further researched and investigated to find conclusive causation for their comprehension difficulties, but it was not the focus of this research.

Themes were drawn from the participant responses, and these were consistent with the two AMRPRS constructs of self-concept as a reader and value of reading and were consistent with data from the ORIS. Other important themes were gleaned from the data and included time for reading, reading strengths and struggles (difficulty choosing books, being bored with reading, speaking of poor reading comprehension and or reading skills), attitudes and feelings about reading and knowing the benefits of reading. These themes were related back to both quantitative data and qualitative data and the consistency of the findings from both sources of data was clear.

- Time for Reading during the school day

The research findings reveal that readers articulated that there was a lack of time for reading. Some respondents stated that they did not have enough time for reading at school (67%). Interestingly, the ORIS results showed that all the respondents read for learning consistently throughout the week (99,9%), while their reading for pleasure responses showed that 5% of the respondents did not read for pleasure in a week, 11,11% did less than one hour, and 83,33% did from one to five or more hours per week. These results were consistent with the AMRPRS findings and the pre-intervention reading reflections but higher than the current research of book reading (National Library Board, 2016; Twenge, Martin, & Spitzberg, 2019;

Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010; Scholastic, 2013; National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). The results from the ORIS may be skewed since the anonymous participants may have been passionate and capable readers, as they took the time to answer an online survey. It is likely that only passionate and capable readers would take time to answer online questions about their reading. However, the issue of a lack of time for reading for pleasure was a consistent finding throughout the research, within both the qualitative and quantitative data findings.

Not enough time for reading was a major source of reading frustration. The participants shared that they can never get to read despite wanting to read, because of no time for reading. This apparent lack of time resulted in some readers becoming non-readers. Merga (2018b) talks about the competitiveness of other pursuits on the time of the adolescent. She suggests that if the readers understood the immense benefits of book reading for pleasure, they may make better choices on how to use their time or develop the habit of “making” time to read despite their busy schedules (Merga, 2018c). These participants appeared to realise and articulate many benefits of reading, yet consistently their reading was lost to a supposed “lack of time”. In exploring the contextual factors of these participants, I pondered their extremely academic school programme with its focus on achievement and excellence – the pressure of self, peers, teachers, and parents on the participants to achieve and ‘do well’. I realised in revisiting the pre-intervention reflections that many of the issues related to time were an attempt by the participants to balance schoolwork, studying, homework and other extra-murals as well as reading for pleasure. Unfortunately, when time allocation was tight, the option of choose to read for pleasure became a non-option. Participants also shared that they were often reprimanded by parents for reading when they should have been studying or doing homework.

The CAPS curriculum as mentioned previously in Chapter 1 does not allocate time for reading for pleasure within the English First Language curriculum, nor in the Second Language curriculum. The reading for pleasure offered, is time to read independently, but it includes the necessary practicing of various reading strategies and skills. This is contrary to the true nature of reading for pleasure as defined by the National Literacy Trust - reading that is done independently for one’s own pleasure with a book of one’s own choosing. Not prioritising this kind of reading, lowers the social capital of reading for pleasure. Teachers are therefore less inclined to prioritise time in class for this kind of activity - reading for pleasure. They would rather be focused on those sections of the reading curriculum that are a priority

within the CAPS curriculum; these are literary elements referred in the CAPS document (Republic of South Africa, 2011) as pre-reading, during reading and post reading. Student and teacher reading focus is on guided reading, group reading and independent reading. Different texts are studied, for example poetry, short stories youth novels, newspapers, and magazines, plays and cartoons. At no point in the Grade Eight CAPS Document for Languages is there any mention of the students engaging in reading for one's own pleasure.

I believe that one of my most significant findings was that because the secondary school curriculum at both national and school level does not make time for independent reading for pleasure, either during the school day or at home (homework reading), this results in a devaluing of the activity of reading for pleasure. It also results in less reading engagement and reading activity for pleasure, which negatively impacts the students' reading engagement, literary skills and prevents them from being afforded the many benefits that reading bestows upon the reader. The more we read the better we will be at reading (Merga, 2018c). The question has been asked whether silent reading for pleasure should be a regular feature of the secondary day? In her research on this topic Merga (2013) says "One of the most significant indicators in favour of the continuance of Silent Reading into the secondary years was the number of students for whom this was the *only* book reading they did" Allowing Silent Reading to drop in year 10...may mean that a significant number of Year 10's are not reading books for pleasure at all, thus missing out the literary benefits which can significantly impact on their vocational out-comes post-school (Kirsch et al. 2002) in addition to their academic performance at secondary school (Dagget & Hasselbring 2007; Marks, McMilland & Hillman 2001).

We need to use research to argue for a pedagogical strategy change at both a national and a school level. Reading for pleasure or silent, independent reading, whatever we call it, needs to have a place and time in the crowded school curriculum. Allocating time for reading for pleasure within the curriculum would result in reading for pleasure being viewed as a more valuable activity, it would raise the social capital of reading within education and result in increased engagement in reading. But this alone will not be enough. (Merga, 2018c).

- Book Choice

Poor book choice was another finding that frustrated the participants who were both avid readers and readers that did not read avidly but enjoyed reading. They stated that poor book choices resulted in them reading less, or not at all. This lack of engagement in the activity of

reading affected most readers at some time during this research period. On the ORIS survey 17% stated that they could not confidently choose books that they would enjoy. This difficulty appeared to be a considerable one for a small number of the participants and resulted in them choosing not to read or in them reading infrequently. Merga (2014e) mentions the issue of book choosing strategies and suggests that if the adolescents had efficient book choosing strategies they would read more. Much has been written about student choice and self-selection of books in promoting interest in reading for pleasure (Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2012; Manuel & Carter, 2012). Choice is vital for adolescent readers. It allows for the students to become independent in their reading and develop the skills to become more self-directed in their reading which would, in turn, motivate them as readers. Ross (2000, p. 111) contends that every “successful book choice makes it more likely that the ... reader will want to repeat the pleasurable experience by reading something further”. Poor book choices of the adolescents in my research resulted in a mismatch between the book chosen and the adolescent’s interests or mood. This then resulted in an unsuccessful reading experience, which in turn resulted in less frequent reading or no reading – the frustrated adolescent eventually ceased to read. Further exploration of this book choice construct in the secondary school context is needed to explore in detail the relationship between poor book choices and reader motivation, self-concept, and value of reading. The skills of choosing the right book can be taught. Readers need to familiarise themselves with who they are as a reader and develop their reading tastes, likes and dislikes get to know themselves as readers. Ripp (2018) believes that knowledge of one’s reader identity can be developed, and students can be shown that book abandonment is appropriate at times and is, indeed, a valid reading behaviour of a reader who knows what they like to read.

Statistical data from the Papyrus library program consisting of participant borrower/user profiles were analysed for information about participant book usage/book issues and assumed reading volume and frequency. These could be drawn at any stage in the study period, but were drawn in the early stages of the study before the use of GR and again at the end of the study after the use of GR. The Papyrus statistical data showed that the participants borrowed a total of 6 633 books. This is a monthly average of 2,23 books per student per month and an average of 27 books per learner, per annum, Participants were grouped into readers who borrowed a great deal of books, those readers who were moderate borrowers and those readers who borrowed few to no books. Most of the participants fell into the high borrowing category, the next largest group was the moderate readers, and the smallest group was the

readers who borrowed a few books or no books at all. These borrowing statistical patterns show reading intention and a healthy and active use of the library. They revealed when the students were active in borrowing books and this linked directly to the schools' academic calendar and it was assumed that the high borrowers were also prolific readers, moderate borrowers were moderate to sporadic readers and the 'little to no' borrowers, were infrequent or non-readers. Most of the participants had good borrowing patterns and used the library regularly. Reading online although not a focus area for this research was included by the participants when talking about their reading in reading conferences and when writing about their reading in their reading reflections.

The small sample of the online reading interest survey, (ORIS), consisted of three items that explored the readers' self-concept and value of reading and two questions that explored the time the participants spent reading for pleasure and for learning (18 respondents). This data was analysed, and the findings were used comparatively to corroborate previous quantitative data findings relating to reader self-concept and the value of reading as well as time spent reading and reader feelings and attitudes about reading. The online reading interest survey data, although a small subset of respondents, further corroborated these Papyrus results. The information from this survey showed that most respondents enjoyed reading at the present time and believed they were good readers (89%). They saw reading as valuable (72%) and important, especially so for their English class. They displayed a sense of ownership of their own reading for pleasure. Relative to the self-determination theory, these students were displaying an intrinsic motivation for reading for pleasure. They were self-determined readers. Their positive self-concept as readers allowed them to become positively engaged and motivated about their reading. They were able to sustain their reading activity, choose books regularly and be engaged in reading for pleasure, despite other pressures such as academics, social media, cell phones, studying, tests, etc.

5.6 Research Question 2: How do the students use the online platform, Goodreads (GR)?

The online Poll results were consistent with the teacher's observations of the participants' use of GR. The views of 29 anonymous respondents on the poll reflected that participation on the online platform varied according to each individual participant. Here are the positive findings of the online poll in summary.

- 20 participants (67%) said they sometimes went onto GR.

- 16 participants (13,33%) said they read reviews about books on GR.
- 17 participants (14,17%) said they loaded their books that they had read onto their GR shelf.
- 20 participants (16,67%) said they tried to meet their GR reading challenge.
- 11 participants (9,17%) said they found GR motivating and that it made them read more.

The research findings showed that all the participants registered on the platform during a library lesson. The registration problem in quite lengthy and it was a favourable result having had the participants register during a library lesson. Some participants had technical problems with accessibility due to data at home, and others forgot passwords or had other login problems. Due to frustration, they did not return to the platform. Perhaps if I had some structured GR lessons at school during library time, this would have afforded those participants with the time to overcome their registration and login difficulties and perhaps be more active on the GR site.

Despite being referred to as the technological or digital generation, or digital natives, my experience with the participants was that they were very technologically adept when using their phones. But they lacked the technical ‘know-how’, resilience and patience needed to overcome difficulties they encountered online, and often struggled to solve online problems. My experience with the participants is supported by research that Teens and young adults remain at the forefront of this rapid technological and mobile internet and the “always on the go lifestyle it has made possible”. (Anderson & Rainie, 2020) But as noticed by researchers, they are mainly tied into two aspects of technology – the mobile and the social. “in reality young [adolescents] are a far more diverse group with different digital literacy skills and interests and they often make use of a relatively limited scope of digital technologies” Merga, 2018 citing Leonard et al, 2016; & Thompson, 2012).

Participant activity on GR was mainly limited to basic activities. Findings were discussed in detail in the previous chapter, and they serve to highlight two important points.

Firstly, the fact that no reading intervention is a one-size-fits-all success or failure. Every child’s use of GR was different. Some found the GR reading challenge motivating while others had technical issues like login problems and forgetting their GR password and never persevered past these issues. This lack of easy access was so frustrating for them that it resulted in less motivation for reading and a decline in their reading engagement and less

time spent reading. Others did not enjoy having to load all their ‘read’ books onto the platform. Others stated they did not like to write reviews.

Secondly, I feel that the use of the platform could have been scaffolded more for the students and each activity that the platform afforded them could have been introduced and demonstrated to them and they could have given it a try, in class. As not all young adolescents are interested in or competent with online applications and computers and some participants did mention specific problems with the platform, this scaffolding may have made these participants more comfortable and adept and consequently more trusting, engaged, and motivated to return to the platform. They may have become more familiar with its affordances and therefore been more open to explore and investigate the platform more freely during their own time (Agee et al., 2009). This means that I would have to allocate a large chunk of the initial reading time at the beginning of the year to “teaching” the participants about the platform and allowing them more time in class to become familiar with its functionality. But I did not. It is pertinent to mention here that a consistent time for GR was not given to the students on a regular basis once they were registered on the platform. Activity on the platform was encouraged and initially discussed and they were shown the platform and given time to register, but time in library lessons was allowed very infrequently. Activity on the site was to be done in each participant’s own free time. This is perhaps a limitation of this study and may be the reason for participants’ waning interest in the GR site.

The findings revealed several GR affordances that appeared to motivate the participants in their reading. The most motivating activity that GR afforded the participants of this research appears to have been the GR reading challenge. The GR activity of setting a reading challenge is a ‘works based’ and words-based activity that involves the ACT pedagogy of curation, conversation, correction, and creation and affords the reader communication, construction, and control. We see that activity tensions exist between what the participant chooses as a reading challenge and what they do (read books and record them on GR read shelf). This challenge is time bound to the year in which you participate on GR; for example, here is my reading challenge goal for 2016 (Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1: Mrs Reid’s 2016 Reading Challenge photo courtesy of I. Reid GR Profile

This is the activity on the GR site that enables a user (reader) to set a reading goal. This reading goal can be set for any time-period and adjusted at any given time that the reader chooses. GR keeps an annual tally of the books that you put on your ‘read’ bookshelf and marks them off against your reading challenge goal. The reader using the GR reading challenge goal is be afforded instant feedback on their progress towards their reading challenge goal. This appeared to very motivating for many of the participants involved in this research. Research about reading and goals has shown that the setting of goals is motivational and leads to a change in behaviour relevant to the goals. Goals also energise effort, increase persistence and perseverance, encouraging effort over time (Locke & Latham, 2006 cited in Cabral-Marquez, 2015; Forster & Souvignier, 2014; Schunk, 2009; McTigue, Washburn & Liew, 2009) In line with the self-determination theory of motivation applied to the activity of reading, specific and detailed goal setting will enable a reader to regulate their own reading progress, may activate self-evaluation and reflection and increase their reading motivation, and improve their self-concept of themselves as readers. This is because setting a goal that is specific and accurate to one’s reading level and ability allows one control and autonomy over a reading outcome and gives one a feeling of competency in reading when it is achieved. However, theory does note that proximal goals are more likely to boost reading motivation and increase a reader’s self-concept as a reader. Cabral-Marquez (2015, p. 465) states that goals need to be precise, time-bound and must be moderately difficult.

Another affordance the GR reading challenge offered was to make the readers more conscious of what, when and how they were reading. Regarding the use of the GR reading challenge, I encouraged participants to use the acronym they had learned in Life Orientation, which was ‘SMART’ goals. This stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound goals. In reading conferences with individual students, we discussed adjusting goals to match their reading progress made over time and we talked about setting smaller reading goals as stepping-stones to their GR reading challenge.

In the vignettes of four participants the following GR activity was recorded. The activity was varied and personal, and activity was restricted with regards to what the participants did on the platform. The participants engaged in the following activities:

- Registration: all four participants registered.
- Choosing an avatar: none of the four participants chose an avatar.

- Making friends and following peers and others: all four participants ‘friended’ peers, and the teacher-librarian, with some following authors and other book lovers.
- Uploading books onto GR shelves: all the participants uploaded at least one book onto the read shelf provided. Some also uploaded books they wanted to read on the ‘want to read’ shelf provided.
- Rating books: all four participants rated their read books.
- Setting a reading challenge: all four participants set a GR reading challenge. None were active on the platform about recording the achievement of their GR reading challenge.
- Writing book reviews: none of these four participants wrote book reviews on the books that had read. Some did read reviews that other readers had written.
- Joining groups: three participants joined the ‘YA junkies’ group but were inactive on the group.
- Recording dates of books read and completed rating of books read: only 1 participant rated books read.

These results yet again speak to the limited activity and engagement of the participants on GR despite them stating that they enjoyed the platform and found the reading challenge motivating. This suggests that perhaps time was an issue for them. I will discuss this later in the chapter.

5.7 Research question 3: How is the Grade Eight students’ view of themselves as readers influenced using the GR platform?

A reader’s view of themselves as a reader is referred to as ‘reader self-concept’ in this research and was measured on the AMRPRS both before and after the GR intervention. The way the participants see themselves as readers is vitally important in relation to reading growth and development. Their self-concept as a reader will assist them in developing an internalised reader self-image – a view of themselves as a reader. Reading becomes incorporated into their personal identity and becomes a part of who they are. It is not something special, it is just something that they do (Miller, 2014, p. 3).

This research looked at the affective processes involved in reading both a reader’s self-concept as a reader and their perceived value of reading, and how these were influenced using the GR online platform.

In the large participant sample the mean pre-intervention raw score for self-concept as a reader was 30,056/40 (74%). This translates to 74% of the participants feeling positive about themselves as readers before they used the GR online platform. They participants were largely confident readers who were engaged in their reading and were enjoying their reading.

Reading for pleasure affords readers many varied benefits, and research has shown that the reading of fiction books is associated with a wide range of benefits (Merga, 2017a, and 2018b). This research investigated the readers' perceived value of reading before and after the use of the intervention GR. Wigfield (1997 cited in Merga, 2018a) suggests that perceptions of how important reading is are related to the readers subjective values of the various tasks related to reading. For example, interest value, attainment value and utility value. This means that how valuable reading is to a reader, depends upon how interested they are in the reading activity, how important they view the reading activity and how useful it is to them. Task valuing has been found to be linked to motivation across many academic subjects and situations (Merga, 2018c citing Ball et al, 2016; Guo, Parker, Marsh & Morin, 2015).

In my research I assume a relationship between the value the reader perceives in reading and their ability and will to engage in reading. Merga (2018c, p. 21-22) states that often the importance of reading beyond "skill acquisition" is not made clear to students. This perceived low valuing of reading in turn manifests in the readers as less frequent reading. The author further suggests that as teachers and parents we need to understand for ourselves the benefits and value of reading and of becoming a life-long reader and make this known to our students presenting reading as an enjoyable, valuable, and necessary activity that is important for life.

The large sample of this research showed very positive perceived value of reading raw scores with the pre-intervention AMRPRS mean score was 29,688 (30/40, 75%). This suggests that the readers valued the activity of reading and had a clear idea of the value of reading in their lives. They saw reading as an activity that was enjoyable and worthy of spending time on and being engaged in. These results were very positive and encouraging but it must be borne in mind that they are reflecting a very short time of high school reading experience. The pre-reading reflection was written in late January, as was the pre-AMRPRS. Thus, these results are therefore considering about three weeks of secondary school experience. They are reflective of the participants' primary and middle school reading experiences, feelings and attitudes as well as their limited secondary school reading feelings, attitudes and experiences.

5.8 Research Question 4: In what ways does the use of the online platform Goodreads influence the Grade Eight adolescents' reading?

This research revealed that these participants showed an awareness of the inherent benefits of reading for pleasure which Merga and Roni (2018) describe as powerful intrinsic motivators. The importance of reading is shown by Merga and Roni (2018), to extend beyond the immediate, but “it cannot be assumed that children view reading as important ... it is imperative that more is done to foster reading valuing and will” (p. 16). Many of the participants had grasped the idea of the benefits of reading extending into their lives, into their family, their social life, and spoke freely about these benefits. An analysis of their pre- and post-intervention reading reflections revealed many varied and valuable reasons that these young adolescents gave, for why they read. They ranged from physiological, to psychological and emotional benefits. For example, reading is fun, relaxing, transportive, transformative, interesting, relaxing, and even mood altering. The participants said that it changed their feelings, freed their imaginations, and even grew their imaginations. Other participants mentioned the various scholastic and academic benefits that they could get from reading. For example, information from reading, learning of new knowledge while reading, increasing their vocabulary, and improving their spelling and writing skills because of their reading practice.

One reader shared that you learn “to put yourself in the character’s shoes” and imagine what it must be like to be that person. This is the development of empathy through reading.

Another participant referred to reading as her “oxygen ... my life blood”. (Participant 158, 14 years-old). Others related how reading offered vicarious experiences. For example:

“I like reading because you get to go in a different world” (Participant 22, 13 years-old)

“I love reading because it takes me to another place. This place is sometimes better than reality” (Participant 31, 13 years-old)

The value attached to reading as an activity by most of the participants in the research was immense and was possibly the result of their recognition of the many benefits of reading. Following the research of Merga This relationship between the benefits of reading and seeing a value in reading is important. Merga (2018c) states that “for children to view reading as important, they need to be conversant about its benefits” (p. 26.) The participants’ various reasons for reading and the associated value attached to reading as an activity is supported by

much current research around the benefits of reading for the reader (OECD, 2010, 2011 Sullivan & Brown, 2013; Mol & Bus, 2011; Berns et al., 2013; Krashen, 2012; Allington, 2014; Merga & Roni, 2018; Wilson et al., 2013; Merga, 2014c). “We need to share these benefits so that they are less of a surprise and are instead common knowledge that can subsequently influence how our young people allocate the leisure time that they have at their disposal” (Merga, 2019, pp. 229-330).

5.8.1 Changes in Reader Self-Concept

The individual readers’ vignettes which discussed in detail these participants reading habits both before and after the GR intervention can be found in Chapter 4. In summary, these readers’ self-concept scores reveal intensely individualised results and reveal, again, the variety of results from reader to reader. See Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Participant pre and post intervention self-concept raw score changes

Name of participant/reader	Pre-intervention AMRPRS SC raw score /40	Post-intervention AMRPRS SC raw score /40	Increase (+) or decrease (-) in raw score
Nora	39	35	-4
Shreya	34	37	+3
Linda	32	30	-2
Naledi	25	22	-3

Nora’s AMRPRS raw score for self-concept as a reader was very high at 39/40 (97%). The changes in her survey item responses reveal a slight loss of confidence in her reading and an emerging reticence to share her ideas within a group, which may be connected to her loss of confidence in her reading. This is despite a healthy borrowing profile, and a fair amount of GR activity over the research period.

The SDT theory of motivation was first introduced in 1985 in by Ryan and Deci in their book entitled *Self-Determination and Intrinsic Motivation in Human Behaviour*. I have looked at the SDT theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), in relation to the use of GR (and the GR affordances), for example, how the GR reading challenge might allow the participants’ autonomy, competence and relatedness in their reading as they set a reading goal and attempt to achieve it. This control or ownerships of their own reading that the readers experienced through meeting their reading challenge goal would make them feel motivated to read more, and they would experience success. With the use of the GR book recommendation option, they would enhance their book choosing and reading skills and improve their reader self-concept.

Motivation is closely linked to reader identity and reader self-concept. Reader self-concept or reading self-efficacy is the belief or expectation by the reader that they can be successful at reading. It is important because it can be easily influenced by the reader's own motivation, their choice of book, their experiences of reading and engagement in reading, their attitudes to reading, peer group and friend influences, as well as what value they attach to the activity of reading. Conversely, their reading self-concept can affect their book choice, their engagement and enjoyment of reading, their attitudes towards reading and the value they see in reading. The reader's self-concept or self-efficacy in reading is vitally important because it contributes in part to whether they engage in reading, or not. It helps sustain a reader's perseverance while reading or may even determine the effort a reader puts into reading. It may determine the anxiety levels a reader has about reading (Bandura, 1984). Reading time and skill will also impact on the reader's self-concept as a reader.

The following reading reflections by participants are a reminder to us and demonstrate how complex reading development and motivation are, "demanding the integration of cognitive, language and motivational processes" that intertwine to create life-long readers (Cabral-Marquez, 2015, p. 471).

"I was influenced to read [certain books] just by using GR ... I hope to remain an avid reader"

"I love GR and use it during my free time ..."

"I can also find the author of a book and ask her questions about the book ..."

"Recommendations on GR were really helpful to see other's opinions ..."

5.8.2 Changes in the Readers' Perceived Value of Reading as an Activity

After using GR, the participants post-intervention AMRPRS mean raw score showed a very slight improvement to 29,744 (30/40, 75%). This positive perception of the value of reading by the participants did not translate into prioritising reading in their lives at a time when their lives got busy and they were under academic, sport or extra-mural pressure – although valued, reading was easily discarded for other competing pursuits. The variation in the raw scores of this construct ranged from 40/40 (100%) to 13/40 (32%). We see that there was a wide range in the way these readers valued reading (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Changes of AMRPRS raw scores of the construct ‘perceived value of reading’

Name of participant/reader	Pre-intervention AMRPRS raw score /40	Post-intervention AMRPRS raw score /40	+ increase or -increase in raw score
Nora	39	38	-1
Shreya	32	35	+3
Linda	36	37	+1
Naledi	13	14	+1

Everyone’s raw score change was varied and the results showed both positive and negative gains in the scores after using GR. But the overall change in perceived value of reading was positive. I believe that the participants recognition of the importance of reading was because of my deliberate intention to inform the readers about the benefits of reading available to them as readers. We had informal discussions about the benefits they experienced first-in their reading journey. We watched videos and read articles about the different benefits that research has shown reading to bestow upon readers. I also organised a display in the library visually relating the benefits of reading upon readers of all ages.

The disappointment was that even though the participants knew of the benefits of reading, when pressured for time or when making decisions on how to spend the limited recreational time available to them, the choice to read was often not chosen as an option. Merga, quoting Weinstein, 2010, states aptly that “book reading does not give the instant dopamine rewards of first-person shooter gaming”, so can we expect it to be the recreational first choice? (Merga, 2018, p. 253). Books and reading are not promoted and advertised in the same ways as technological devices and online activities, toys, movies, and television. The benefits of the endorphin rush from sports and the positive body feelings are enjoyed by young adolescents. Can we expect reading for pleasure to compete with this?

For many participants in this research, reading could not compete with the other recreational choices available to the participants, nor could it compete with the academic pressures of a first year in a secondary school that has a driven focus on academic excellence.

Shreya’s perceived value of reading score showed positive gains of three points. Shreya appeared to be supported in her reading by a peer group who valued and enjoyed reading as much as she does. She also related in her reading conference that her mother was a reading role model, giving testimony to the importance of reading role models in the lives of young adolescents. Her interest and enjoyment in reading was high and this would result in her

valuing the activity of reading. Her improved value of reading speaks to the positive role model of her mother as a reader and the fact that she has peers and friends who share her enjoyment and interest in reading. These relationships would build her confidence as a reader. As evident in her reading conference chat, she was also very articulate about the benefits she received from reading. For example, she talked about the immediate affective (relaxing and de-stressing) benefits of reading, the fun in reading and sharing about books – she stated that she “looks forward to reading”. She did share that the Grade Eight academic schedule had reduced her reading frequency.

The research showed in the quantitative pre-and post-intervention reading responses (which correlated well with the reading reflection pre- and post-responses) that the use of GR had increased positivity about themselves as readers. This augurs well for the further development of the Grade Eight participants’ reading development and for the possibility of them becoming lifelong readers. In Bandura’s (2007) self-efficacy model, it is suggested that positive reader self-concept has the potential to encourage reading engagement. The participants’ reading frequency and reading volume were influenced by using the GR intervention. It is hoped that the current positive reading self-concepts of the participants will be sustained further and promote even more reading practice. As readers enjoy reading and feel that they are good at it, they may choose to read more often. These Grade Eight readers are more likely to improve their proficiency in reading because of the increased time spent reading and the increase in their volume of reading. They may feel a sense of accomplishment in their reading. An increased self-concept as a reader, will allow the reader to choose books with increased confidence. They would have more pleasurable reading experiences and they would get to know themselves as a reader, know their reading likes and dislikes, develop a taste for a favourite author or genre and increase their volume of reading thereby increasing their reading stamina, skills, and passion.

Other variables may also have been at play in how GR influenced their reading, for example, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the scholastic and academic pressures that the students are exposed to from their parents, teachers, and the school systems cannot be ignored. This includes, for example, extra lessons, tests, exams, and homework. Other conflicting and competing interests related to other pleasurable pursuits may have also been a factor in reducing time spent on GR. For example, sporting and cultural clubs and activities, community outreach clubs (Interact), enviro-club, religious clubs, time with friends and family, social media distractions, cell-phones, screens, and their television. The possible

impacts of these variables were not investigated in this study but may have impacted on the time spent on GR thus negatively impacting the results because of less time being available for reading for pleasure and for using the GR platform.

It is important in this digital age that we take time to consider the impacts, both positive and negative, that the changes of this digital age and our acceptance of “all things digital” will bring into our lives, our schools, and our learning (Niemann, 2016, p. 31) The digital age is seen to present a ‘danger’ for reading, specifically for the young adolescent. We have seen that they are reading less. Literature on the benefits of reading, particularly book reading is vast. Technology is also seen to be of benefit to learning because of its social nature, and its popularity in the young adolescent age group. Its incorporation into learning and teaching appears to make sense. The young adolescents will be living and working in this digital world and need to become proficient in the use of this technology.

My use of GR, an online platform for book lovers and readers, was an attempt to capture the popularity of technology, and the social nature of learning online, to motivate the young adolescents in their reading. The platform had much to afford the readers. This however was not made explicit to the readers and many readers for the various reasons discussed previously, failed to use the platform to its fullest. The impact of GR upon the reading ‘will’ of the readers in this study was not consistent amongst all participants. This speaks to the complex nature of reading as an activity and to the complexity of the young adolescent reader engaged in reading. It also talks to the importance of how we use technology within the classroom. As the Teacher Librarian I feel that the way in which I introduced the intervention and the fact that I did not scaffold their learning on the use of the platform in lessons during Library time has impacted upon the results.

Young adolescents are said to be technologically astute but reflecting on my implementation of the use of GR, I did not offer them enough support to grow familiar and secure in their use of the platform. I could have inculcated the use of an ‘intervention cycle’ where a series of six scaffolded sessions would have been delivered on a fortnightly basis to the students on the use of GR (Cockcroft & Atkinson, 2017 p. 46). The ability of the participants to engage with the intervention GR more successfully would have been improved by using the above intervention strategy. These six sessions could have been grouped as follows:

1. Registration and profile.
2. Setting a reading challenge goal.
3. Following and friending friends, peers and other book lovers and authors.

4. Capturing books read to be read or currently reading on shelves, rating them and making recommendations.
5. Writing book reviews.
6. Creating new shelves, book quizzes and loading new books onto GR.

5.9 Reflections on the Role of Myself as Teacher-Librarian and Researcher

Retrospectively, I feel as both researcher and teacher-librarian that there were areas where I may have been able to improve. As a researcher I feel that I did not use my time as effectively as I could have, due to lack of experience. Especially when ‘getting to grips’ with the in- depth rich data that I collected from the participants. This lack of intense follow up and deeper analysis of their answers from this rich data has impacted upon the depth of my explorations with the participants and their use of GR, and their self-concept and perceived value of reading.

As a novice researcher combining the research with my role as Teacher-Librarian means that research time with the participants was limited, and that my positionality as the Teacher-Librarian will have caused some participants to withhold their true feelings and answers and this will have skewed the results.

5.10 Methodological Challenges

As a novice researcher I used a mixed method approach in my case study. I collected my data throughout the research period, but because of the volume of data, I became overwhelmed. It was only when writing up my findings that I realised that I could have collated individual reader data more efficiently and had more pertinent and relevant reading information on each young adolescent in time for their reading conferences. Time became a major problem for me as a researcher within the school setting. I have learned a great deal about how to plan the research steps and follow through immediately with the analysing of the data gleaned.

A young adult and reading researcher that I have followed intensely is Margaret Merga. She has been inspirational and motivating to me during my research and continues to be a part of my Professional Development Learning Network. During this research thesis I have learned a great deal about research and about the topic of young adolescent reading, as well as about reading motivation, reader self-concept and a reader’s perceived value of reading. It has been both exciting and frustrating, but it is a learning and research journey I plan to continue.

5.11 Suggestions and Recommendations for Parents, Librarians and Teachers

5.11.1 Reading Relationships and Role Models

“The relationship between human practice and the production, distribution, exchange, refinement, negotiation, and contestation of meanings is a key idea ... reading is always reading something in particular with understanding, ... we have to make sense of reading... and meaning-making as integral elements of social practices” (Knobel and Lankshear, 2007, p. 2).

The reading relationship is a cornerstone for building life-long readers. (Miller, 2009; 2013; Kittle, 2013; Atwell, 2007, Routman, 2003). Encouragement and the development of reading for pleasure should be a priority at home, at school in the individual teachers’ classrooms, as well as in the library. This reading relationship should foster trust, be a safe place for all, and should invite and allow for reading vulnerability. It must also be a relationship that allows for a sharing of books loved, abandoned, and hated. In sharing these real reader experiences, we can help the young adolescents to see that adult readers abandon books, favour certain genres and authors, and dislike some types of books, and that this is OK. All good readers do this!

As teachers, parents, and librarians we need to be encouragers and motivators, talking about books and authors and leading and guiding the young adolescent through new reading challenges that are at their level. You can only do this if you know these young adolescents, know about young adult literature and are a reader yourself. The focus of this relationship is to spread the enjoyment of reading, allowing them to “catch” your passion for reading. This relationship should also encourage thoughtful self-reflection about their reading journey, progress, and development.

Parents, teachers, and librarians must be exemplary and passionate reading role models for the young adolescents by sharing their own reading and reading experiences. Sharing involves relating one’s own reading experiences whether good or bad and letting the adolescent readers see how you too have faced reading difficulties and overcome them. The young adolescents must recognise that you are a reader. You must be promoting and advocating for reading events and activities within your school and home. Regular visits to the library and reading aloud together are beneficial no matter what age (Krashen, 2012; Allington, 2012; Atwell, 2007; Gallagher, 2009; Kittle, 2013; Miller, 2009;2013).

5.11.2 Value of Reading

Communities, schools and homes should endeavour to raise the social capital of reading by promoting reading for pleasure without limitations and restrictions.

Firstly, we really need to fight for the pedagogical changes we need in the school curriculum that will support the allotment of time within the school day for reading for pleasure.

Secondly, communities and schools must promote the benefits of reading and raise the social capital of reading and create a culture of reading within our communities and schools. The following actions would assist to promote and elevate the status and position of reading throughout the school and classroom, and as such will improve the readers' perceived value of reading. These activities would help to create a culture of reading within the school, and with a daily allocated time for reading as a regular valued activity, the readers' reading will be activated and in turn will further enhance their desire to read, encouraging them in this habit that could result in them becoming life-long readers. "Excellent classroom libraries, school libraries and public libraries [as well as home libraries], are the cornerstone of a successful reading programme" Routman, 2014.

- Easy and open access to a wide range of books is vital for readers to develop their reading. It heightens interest and engagement and develops interest in reading.
- Giving readers free choice about what they read has been shown to promote more enjoyment and motivation with regards to reading for pleasure. Choosing the right book is a skill that can be taught by the librarian or teacher and learned by the reader. The readers can be taught the concept of book shopping – choosing a book that is the perfect fit. They can be encouraged to discover more about themselves as readers and this information can also assist in choosing a 'good fit' book.
- The benefits of reading should be extolled to the young adolescents, and they should be encouraged to discover the reasons why they read, and how reading could further benefit them. Recognising reading value is shown in research to be associated with a reader's 'will' and motivation to read, and to increase the readers desire to engage in reading. The Librarian and teacher can assist the readers in developing their reader identity which will help them become more conscious about 'who they are as a reader' and allow them to grow and challenge themselves as readers.
- Allocating and structuring time for reading within the school curriculum daily, celebrating literary events, putting up reading displays, engaging readers in reading

competitions, book and reading clubs, should all be included as part of the literary programme offered at school. The school librarian and classroom teachers should work closely together to achieve this and make the value of reading visible to the young adolescents.

- Parents can raise the value of reading in the home by allowing adolescents to have their own shelf of personal books, their own space for reading for pleasure, encouraging them to become a member of and visit a library regularly, and having special times for reading. For example, a daily time for the family to read. These activities would position the place of reading in the home as a priority and it would be viewed and valued as a worthwhile activity. Parents can also assist in talking about books and reading with their children. Lindsay believes that the presence of books of all sorts, within the home profoundly impacts a child's academic achievement. (2010).
- Secondary school librarians, with the guidance of the subject teachers, should establish subject libraries for each classroom. This would encourage reading around the various subjects that the students' study and further promote the value of reading within the school and assist in taking the readers into the exciting realm of reading for learning.
- Opportunities to talk about reading. Readers need opportunities to talk, discuss, share, and reflect about their reading. This will enhance their comprehension and teach them to listen to other points of view and opinions. Parents, classroom teachers and librarians can structure times for book discussion, encouraging and promoting talking around books. This must be accepted by school management and the Department of Education as a worthwhile and valuable.
- Reading as a Social Activity statistics in my study are perhaps the lowest in the research. They suggest that the participants need more experiences in sharing and talking about their reading to grow in confidence to express their own opinions and ideas about their reading and learn to see reading as a social activity. The establishment of reading relationships with other peers who love reading, with friends, teachers, parents, authors, is vital in developing reading habits that create a life-long reader. Cambria and Guthrie (2010) suggest that developing relationships with your students regarding their reading has enormous benefits for improving student motivation and effort. This relationship engenders an atmosphere of trust and respect for others and creates a safe place where readers can share and be vulnerable

with one another. Being a reading role model is a powerful motivator and builds confidence in your readers. Bandura's social learning theory believes that students learn through modelling, imitation, and observation, so being the reading role model for your readers could afford them many positive reading behaviours to imitate and model their own reading on. Merga's latest research provides examples of how teachers and librarians promote book discussion in different ways. For example, peer book promotions, book talks, book discussions and recommendations, talking with authors, working on a one-to-one basis with individual readers, teacher led book talks and teacher book discussions, building book collections, discussing reading benefits and teachers and librarians modelling being readers. She states that book discussion fosters reading engagement and time allocated towards book talk and discussion should be viewed as "making an important contribution to young people's perceptions of books and reading ... fostering reading for pleasure (Merga, 2020, p. 27). There is a point of view in the research literature that I connect with strongly with, that states that the student teacher relationship can be inspiring. I believe that my personal passion and love of books and reading can inspire students to love reading, that they can "catch" the reading bug from me as I share and become vulnerable and open about my reading experiences and passion. This is aptly described and explained by Miller (2009). "These days, I share that reading changes your life. Reading unlocks worlds unknown or forgotten, taking travellers around the world and through time. Reading helps you escape the confines of school and pursue your own education. Through characters [both] real and imagined, reading helps you be a better human being ... as long as I hold onto my love of books and show my students what it really means to live as a reader ..." (p.18) to experience the "catching of reading.

5.12 Conclusion

My focus has been on reading will, not reading skill. Yes, not all young adolescents who have a degree of independence in reading are competent readers, but my focus has been on those who can read and should read but who do not read for the many reasons I have explored in this research.

My research has contributed to the research available about the role of the affective processes in reading amongst secondary school readers in South Africa. While the AMRPRS findings highlighted inconsistencies between the students' perceptions of themselves as readers and the value that they placed upon reading, themes of insight still emerged. The reading

reflections and reading conference interviews provided me with insights around several themes. These merging themes were:

- the disjuncture between the readers perceptions of themselves as readers and the value they placed upon reading as an activity of choice;
- the importance of choice in what they read;
- the lack of time to read and the low social capital that reading for pleasure had within the secondary school curriculum.

The reading reflections completed with the students allowed the readers to begin an inward reading journey and encouraged them to participate in deep metacognitive reflection about their reading, and who they were as reader. They were challenged to set reading goals and reflect upon their reading progress. Despite the disappointment the GR platform not playing the motivating and pivotal role I believed it would, valuable insights into the way the participants used the platform and their aspirations for its use have been gleaned.

The results offer some new, valuable and interesting findings about young adolescent reading, especially regarding reader self-concept and a reader's perceived value of reading, with particular emphasis on reading motivation or the 'will' to read, together with the use of GR in the reading programme, an excitement about reading was ignited and readers who had set a reading challenge goal and achieved it felt proud of themselves and their reading effort and enjoyed their reading more. This enjoyment and competence instilled in them a sense of being a good reader – their reading self-concept became more positive.

My research suggests that further investigation is needed to:

- Explore the relationships between reader self-concept and reader value of reading.
- Explore and investigate the construct of time for reading in the secondary school, and the influence of more time for reading for pleasure upon the reading proficiency engagement and motivation of the readers. Research based suggestions can then be made to our Department of Education for making policy changes that recognise the importance of time for reading for pleasure in the secondary school curriculum.
- Investigate the readers reading journey using a longitudinal study of the scaffolded use of GR and exploring the impact of this upon their reading identity and motivation, attitudes, and feelings towards reading for pleasure over time.
- Explore ways to encourage and support young adolescents in becoming more social about reading.

My research also highlights the use of technology within a secondary school reading programme, as something that requires deliberate teaching and scaffolding when it is introduced and explained. The readers need to see and experience its use, consistently and over a long period of time. They should also be explicitly made aware of how the platform can assist and benefit them in their reading journey.

The findings highlighted that any reading intervention cannot be a simple ‘one-size fits all’ solution, each reader’s reading journey is unique, and their reading needs, problems, successes, and failures all differ and are personal to them. Nevertheless, the GR intervention met them where they were and provided some modicum of enjoyment, interest, and motivation in their reading journey.

The Grade Eight young adolescent is a complex being who has begun secondary school life in a new school, with new peers and teachers. They face new curricula, timetables, procedures, and ways of being. They are also at that vital physiological stage where they are experiencing massive physical, hormonal, and emotional changes. They are looking for validation in their peer group. They are becoming social and digital citizens, and their cell phones and screens demand their attention. Reading remains a gateway skill and an essential part of their academic lives, and their future lives. As such, it should be fostered so that it becomes a pleasurable and exciting part of their lives, allowing them to receive the many benefits of reading both in the immediate present and into the future.

I believe that this research shows that parents, teachers, and librarians are all well situated within the lives of secondary school adolescents to effect positive change in their reading development and to positively impact their reading journey. This view is supported by previous research (Merga, 2015c & 2019a). They can also assist these readers to discover who they are as readers, ensuring that they grow and develop their own reader identity/reader self-concept, take control of their reading, and become accountable for their own reading progress and enjoyment. They can aid in making these readers aware of the value of reading by living their own reading lives, and being a reading role model, showing them the pathway to becoming lifelong readers.

Grade Seven literacy and reading teacher Pernille Ripp says we should all make reading visible: “if reading is merely something we teach, and not something we live, then why should students take us seriously when we tell them how important reading is to future success?” (Ripp, 2018, p 10).

So, whenever a child tells me they do not read, that books are not for them, that they hate reading, I always think of the little change that perhaps I can help inspire ... But that will only happen if we purposefully create the conditions for this shift in identity. If we purposefully create a community where all children can be supported and challenged in their reading journey ... creating conditions in which students can uncover their reading identity, so they can strengthen and further it, is vital as we try to create passionate readers. (Ripp, 2018, p. 89).

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical clearance UKZN



17 October 2016

Mrs Irene Rose Reid 215079508
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Reid

Protocol reference number: HSS/1173/016M

Project title: "Catching Reading": An Investigation Into the use of online social book networking platforms and their influence on Grade Eight students' reading habits

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 29 July 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Kathy Arbuckle
cc. Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc. School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8360/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4809 Email: ximban@ukzn.ac.za / snymenm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

Appendix 2: Department of Education gatekeeper permission



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref: 24160339-2

Mrs IR Reid
42 Balmoral Drive
DURBAN NORTH
4051


Dear Mrs Reid

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN D&E INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "THE INFLUENCE OF THE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY ON ADOLESCENT READING HABITS DURING SCHOOL BASED LIBRARY LESSONS", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 March 2018 to 31 March 2017.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Pietermaritzburg


Nkabinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 19 February 2018

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0800 898 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: www.kzndoe.gov.za

Appendix 3: Parent consent form

Dear Parents,

You are invited to an informal meeting in to discuss with Head Librarian Mrs Reid, the research that she will be doing as part and parcel of the Grade 8 Library programme in 2016/2017.

The research will be investigating the use of Goodreads as a digital reading tool, exploring the relationship between this digital reading platform and the students' reading behaviours.

A reading pre-test will be given, as well as pre and post reading activities, reading attitude, perceived value of reading and reading motivation questionnaires and interviews.

All information will be treated as private and confidential and as a UKZN student I will be bound by the Universities ethical clearance policy and procedures. Permission has also been sought and granted by the KZN Education Department.

Please complete the consent form and bring it along with you to the meeting.

Yours in Reading



Mrs Irene Reid
Head Librarian

Consent Form

I _____ parent/guardian of _____ in Grade 8 _____

Hereby give consent for _____ to be included in the Research project of the Head Librarian and UKZN Masters student, Mrs Irene Reid. This Research Project will be an integral part of the Grade 8 students Library and Information Science lessons and their Reading Programme.

Appendix 4: Papyrus library data system – Borrower's Profile



Member Issues

Friday, September 21, 2018

Member Number	ISBD	Date Issued	Date Due	Fine Due	Fine Paid
2015/01175/ EF	Control [EF] / Lydia KANG. - London : Speak, 2015. - 9780142423615	12 Jan 17	26 Jan 17	0.40	0.40
2015/01310/ EF	Salt and Stone [EF] / Victoria SCOTT. - Frome : Chicken House, 2015. - (Fire and flood). - 9781910002063	12 Jan 17	26 Jan 17	0.40	0.40
2016/00823/ EF	City of helms [EF] / Lucy INGLIS. - London : Chicken House, 2014. - 9781909489097	28 Nov 16	18 Jan 17	0.00	
2012/01346/ EF	Intern [EF] / Dillon KHAN. - London : Penguin, 2012. - 9780141338040	28 Nov 16	18 Jan 17	0.00	
2015/00844/ EF	Dads, Geeks & Blue Hired Freaks [EF] / Brie PHILLIPS. - London : Electric Monkey, 2012. - 9781405258197	23 Nov 16	18 Jan 17	0.00	
2015/00808/ EF	Ruins [EF] / Dan WELLS. - London : Harper Collins, 2014. - 9780007465248	23 Nov 16	18 Jan 17	0.00	
2015/00176/ EF	death cure [EF] / James DASHNER. - Frome : Chicken House, 2012. - (Maze Runner). - 9780386736774	23 Nov 16	18 Jan 17	0.00	
2013/00719/ EF	Fragments [EF] / Dan WELLS. - London : Harper, 2013. - (Sequel to Partials). - 9780007465231	17 Nov 16	18 Jan 17	0.00	
2015/00827/ EF	Life after theft [EF] / Aprilynne PIKE. - London : Harper Collins, 2013. - 9780007515561	17 Nov 16	18 Jan 17	0.00	
2013/00499/ EF	Shadow's edge [EF] / Brent WEEKS. - London : Orbit, 2008. - (Night Angel). - 9780356500720	20 Sep 16	13 Oct 16	0.00	
2013/00742/ EF	shadow of Malabron: the perilous realm [EF] / Thomas WHARTON. - London : Walker, 2008. - (Book 1). - 9781406312508	29 Sep 16	13 Oct 16	0.00	
2015/00870/ EF	Earth girl [EF] / Janet EDWARDS. - London : Harper, 2012. - (Earth). - 9780007443499	27 Sep 16	11 Oct 16	0.00	
2013/00232/ EF	way of shadows [EF] / Brent WEEKS. - London : Orbit, 2012. - 9780356500713	23 Sep 16	11 Oct 16	0.00	
2016/00827/ EF	le tree [EF] / Frances HARDINGE. - London : MacMillan, 2015. - 9781447264101	23 Sep 16	11 Oct 16	0.00	
05/01117	Eyewitness Travel Guide: Morocco [NF] / Dorling KINDERSLEY. - 1 - London : Dorling Kindersley, 2002. - 350 Pages : Illustrations. - 9624210668	14 Sep 16	28 Sep 16	0.00	



Appendix 5: Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey

Pages 1 & 2

Figure 1
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey

Name: _____ Date: _____

Sample 1: I am in _____.

- Sixth grade
- Seventh grade
- Eighth grade
- Ninth grade
- Tenth grade
- Eleventh grade
- Twelfth grade

Sample 2: I am a _____.

- Female
- Male

Sample 3: My race/ethnicity is _____.

- African-American
- Asian/Asian American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Native American
- Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic
- Other: Please specify _____

1. My friends think I am _____.

- a very good reader
- a good reader
- an OK reader
- a poor reader

2. Reading a book is something I like to do.

- Never
- Not very often
- Sometimes
- Often

3. I read _____.

- not as well as my friends
- about the same as my friends
- a little better than my friends
- a lot better than my friends

4. My best friends think reading is _____.

- really fun
- fun
- OK to do
- no fun at all

5. When I come to a word I don't know, I can _____.

- almost always figure it out
- sometimes figure it out
- almost never figure it out
- never figure it out

6. I tell my friends about good books I read.

- I never do this
- I almost never do this
- I do this some of the time
- I do this a lot

7. When I am reading by myself, I understand _____.

- almost everything I read
- some of what I read
- almost none of what I read
- none of what I read

8. People who read a lot are _____.

- very interesting
- interesting
- not very interesting
- boring

9. I am _____.

- a poor reader
- an OK reader
- a good reader
- a very good reader

(continued)

JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT & ADULT LITERACY 50:5 FEBRUARY 2007 381

Figure 1 (continued)
Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey

Name: _____ Date: _____

10. I think libraries are _____.
- a great place to spend time
 - an interesting place to spend time
 - an OK place to spend time
 - a boring place to spend time
11. I worry about what other kids think about my reading _____.
- every day
 - almost every day
 - once in a while
 - never
12. Knowing how to read well is _____.
- not very important
 - sort of important
 - important
 - very important
13. When my teacher asks me a question about what I have read, I _____.
- can never think of an answer
 - have trouble thinking of an answer
 - sometimes think of an answer
 - always think of an answer
14. I think reading is _____.
- a boring way to spend time
 - an OK way to spend time
 - an interesting way to spend time
 - a great way to spend time
15. Reading is _____.
- very easy for me
 - kind of easy for me
 - kind of hard for me
 - very hard for me
16. As an adult, I will spend _____.
- none of my time reading
 - very little time reading
 - some of my time reading
 - a lot of my time reading
17. When I am in a group talking about what we are reading, I _____.
- almost never talk about my ideas
 - sometimes talk about my ideas
 - almost always talk about my ideas
 - always talk about my ideas
18. I would like for my teachers to read out loud in my classes _____.
- every day
 - almost every day
 - once in a while
 - never
19. When I read out loud I am a _____.
- poor reader
 - OK reader
 - good reader
 - very good reader
20. When someone gives me a book for a present, I feel _____.
- very happy
 - sort of happy
 - sort of unhappy
 - unhappy

Note. Adapted with permission from the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996)

Appendix 6: Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile reading survey scoring sheet



Figure 6
MRP reading survey scoring sheet

Student name _____

Grade _____ Teacher _____

Administration date _____

Recoding scale
 1=4
 2=3
 3=2
 4=1

Self-concept as a reader	Value of reading
*recode 1. _____	2. _____
3. _____	*recode 4. _____
*recode 5. _____	6. _____
*recode 7. _____	*recode 8. _____
9. _____	*recode 10. _____
11. _____	12. _____
13. _____	14. _____
*recode 15. _____	16. _____
17. _____	*recode 18. _____
19. _____	*recode 20. _____

SC raw score: _____/40 V raw score: _____/40

Full survey raw score (Self-concept & Value): _____/80

Percentage scores Self-concept _____
 Value _____
 Full survey _____

Comments: _____

Note. Reprinted with permission from the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996)

Appendix 7: Book and reading chat tool

A live google document in which children booked a time slot to chat about their current book and reading journey.

Mrs Reid's Meeting Sign Up for an Independent Reading Chat
Choose the time and day that works for you.

- Sign up only once.
- Please add your name grade and book author & title in one slot - IR (Independent Reading)

May Week 1, Week 2, Week 3				
Date Week 3 Monday	Time	Grade 8 Student Name & Grade	Independent Reading (IR) Fill in your Book Title & Author	Discussed (Teacher's Notes after the interview)
18/05	8:30	<input type="text"/>		
18/05	8:45			
18/05	9:00			
18/05	9:15			
18/05	9:30			

Appendix 8: Reading Conference #1 & #2 Questions

Reading Conference Questions – Question Exemplars

Reading conference #1 Reading reflections - Written

What are you currently reading?

How do you feel about reading? Do you enjoy reading? Why or why not?

How many books did you read last year? How much time did you spend reading last year?

Why do you read? (what purpose? - for learning or pleasure)

Who would you consider to be your reading influence?

What is your favourite book? Who is your favourite author?

What genres do you enjoy reading?

Do you read non fiction? Why / why not?

Do you know what you would like to read next?

How do you find good books?

What kind of reader do you consider yourself to be? (how do you feel about yourself as a reader)

What motivates you to read?

Reading Conference #2 Goodreads Usage Questions (open ended)

Tell me all about your experience with Goodreads this year.

The questions below were used as prompts if the participant was hesitant or not forthcoming about their GR experiences.

How did you feel initially about being introduced to Goodreads?

Did that feeling change at all throughout your use of Goodreads?

How was Goodreads useful to you and your reading throughout the year?

Did you participate fully in the Grade 8 Goodreads Group?

Why? Why not?

Did you respond to book conversations started by myself as Teacher or by other students?

Why?

Why not?

How did using Goodreads impact on your reading behaviour throughout the year?

What are your views on Goodreads after having used it?

Should we continue to use it with Grade 8 students in the future?

Do you have any suggestions, ideas, feedback that you think could benefit myself as the Reading Teacher, and or be of benefit to other Grade 8 who may become users of Goodreads.

Appendix 9: Online Reading Interest Survey (ORIS) Questions

Question 1

Q1

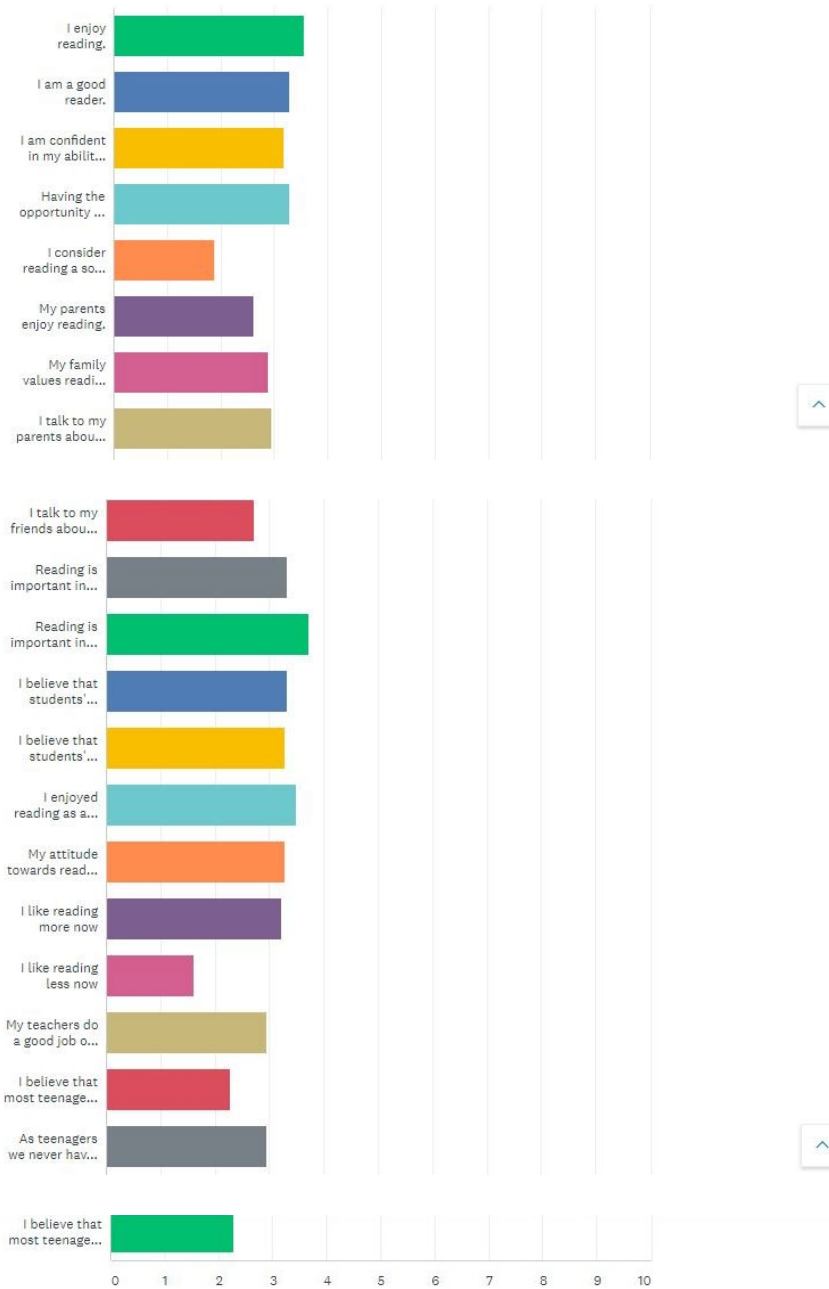


Customize

Save as ▼

Rate the statements using the Likert scale provided.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



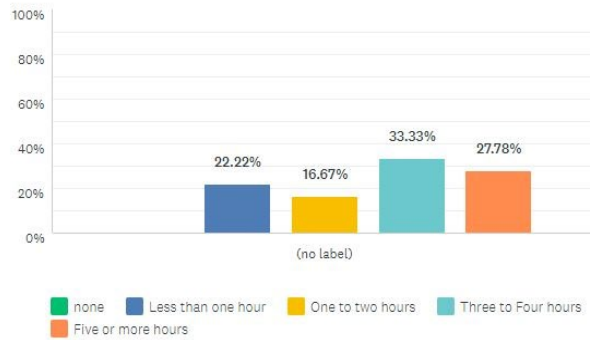
Question 2

Q2

Customize Save as

In a typical week, how many hours do you spend on reading for school?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0

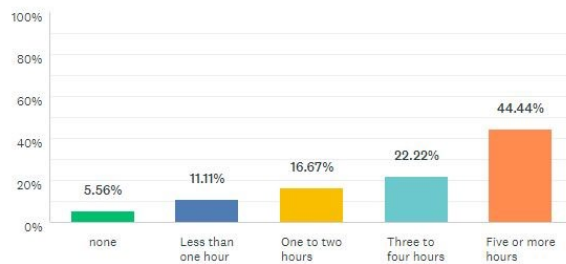


	NONE	LESS THAN ONE HOUR	ONE TO TWO HOURS	THREE TO FOUR HOURS	FIVE OR MORE HOURS	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00% 0	22.22% 4	16.67% 3	33.33% 6	27.78% 5	18	3.67

Question 3

In a typical week, how many hours do you spend on reading for pleasure?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
none	5.56%	1
Less than one hour	11.11%	2
One to two hours	16.67%	3
Three to four hours	22.22%	4
Five or more hours	44.44%	5
TOTAL		18

Appendix 10: ORIS Participant 18's Responses

Q1 Rate the statements using the scale provided.

• I enjoy reading.	Strongly Agree
• I am a good reader.	Strongly Agree
• I am confident in my ability to choose a book that I will enjoy.	Agree
• Having the opportunity to choose what I want to read is important to me.	Agree
• I consider reading a sort of homework.	Disagree
• My parents enjoy reading. Disagree	
• My family values reading and encourages me to read.	Disagree
• I talk to my parents about what I am reading.	Disagree
• I talk to my friends about what I am reading.	Agree
• Reading is important in all my classes at school.	Agree
• Reading is important in the English classes at my school.	Strongly Agree
• I believe that students' reading is important to the teachers at my school.	Agree
• I believe that students' reading is important to the management at my school.	Agree
• I enjoyed reading as a child.	Strongly Agree
• My attitude towards reading has changed as I have gotten older.	Agree
• I like reading more now	Agree
• I like reading less now	Disagree
• My teachers do a good job of motivating me to read.	Disagree
• I believe that most teenagers enjoy reading.	Agree
• As teenagers we never have enough time to enjoy reading	Strongly Agree
• I believe that most teenagers are good readers.	Disagree

Page 2: 2. In a typical week, how many hours do you spend on reading for school?

Q2

In a typical week, how many hours do you spend on reading for school?

(no label)

Five or more hours

Page 3

Q3

In a typical week, how many hours do you spend on reading for pleasure?

Three to four hours

Appendix 11: Goodreads Poll Questions Poll Questions

(used Poll daddy now known as Crowd signal as it appears online)

- I go onto Goodreads everyday.
- I never go onto Goodreads.
- I sometimes go onto to Goodreads.
- I read the reviews about books on Goodreads.
- I load my read books on my Goodreads shelf.
- I plan my reading on Goodreads.
- I try to meet my reading challenge goal on Goodreads.
- I find Goodreads motivating and it makes me read more.
- I chat to my friends about books we've read on Goodreads.
- I write reviews about books I've read on Goodreads.
- I have joined a reading group on Goodreads to share my lov

Questions typed out

I find Goodreads motivating and it makes me read more.

I try to meet my reading challenge goal on Goodreads.

I go onto Goodreads every day.

I sometimes go onto to Goodreads.

I never go onto Goodreads.

I load my read books on my Goodreads shelf.

I plan my reading on Goodreads

I read the reviews about books on Goodreads.

I write reviews about books I've read on Goodreads.

I have joined a reading group on Goodreads to share my love of reading with others.

I chat to my friends about books we've read on Goodreads.

Appendix 12: Reading Reflection Questions and Exemplars

Reading Conference Questions – Question Exemplars

Reading conference #1 Reading reflections - Written

What are you currently reading?

How do you feel about reading? Do you enjoy reading? Why or why not?

How many books did you read last year? How much time did you spend reading last year?

Why do you read? (what purpose? - for learning or pleasure)

Who would you consider to be your reading influence?

What is your favourite book? Who is your favourite author?

What genres do you enjoy reading?

Do you read non fiction? Why / why not?

Do you know what you would like to read next?

How do you find good books?

What kind of reader do you consider yourself to be? (how do you feel about yourself as a reader)

What motivates you to read?

Exemplar 1 Student #74

Reading Reflection

I consider myself to be quite a moderate reader. I myself don't really know why, I am a moderate reader but I think it has something to do with my general personality (I tend to observe and listen rather than talk). As a moderate reader, I've grown fond of some genres more than others. I prefer mystery and philosophical books with good plot as opposed to romance and happy endings. In summary, I am a reader who prefers to think and ^{observe} rather than ~~conventional~~ steric complex stories instead of conventional tales.

Reading Reflection

Good Afternoon Mrs Reid!

Unfortunately, I don't think I'll be able to reach my current goal of 6 books (which are published and tangible, which I will elaborate on later) for the year. The main reason for this is because, in between having to study for school and completing projects of the sorts, I haven't been able to obtain the time.

I, however, absolutely love reading...just not in the conventional way that would be credited in Good Reads. I prefer reading all sorts of unpublished pieces of work (that are still legitimate to read regarding spelling and grammar etc.) (in other words, fanfiction and sometimes articles). I read every single day and find it to be rather therapeutic in times of stress (which is essentially all the time). Sometimes I even find myself reading entire "booksworth" of fanfiction in one sitting. It has also encouraged me to write fiction and poetry of my own.

I currently am still trying to read actual books (electronically, because although paperbacks and hardbacks are wonderful and carry that tell tale archaic nook smell, they are a bit tedious to carry around) and I find I am not doing too bad of a job on it either.

If anything new occurs, I'll be sure to update you about it.

Thank you for reading
[Redacted]

Goal = 6 books →

↑
↓
self-public

Exemplar student #114

I am an average reader because I can never really find a book that I like or that I want to read. I also can't find the time to read because I play a lot of sport and finish late in the afternoons.

Reading Reflection

I haven't read any books this year because I am not very interested in reading and I just find it quite boring. I think that Good Reads is a good site because it helps me to see what type of books may interest me and which books I want to read. What I don't like about Good Reads is that you can't read the books online, which would be really nice. I don't think that the reading challenge is very helpful to me because it doesn't make me want to read more books but it could be helpful for other people to motivate them to reach a goal of 12 books a year.

Same student - pre- + post reading reflection

Exemplar student #116

Pre-reading reflection

I don't like reading a lot, but when I do read I like to read books about animals and dogs. I like animals and dogs that's why I like reading about animals. I don't really have a lot of time to read. I normally read before I went to bed.

reading reflection

Post-reading reflection

Edmodo did not help me because I never go on it so I don't see what other people have posted. On Good Reads I never go on it either I've only been on it twice, now and when we created the account. I did not read any books during the holiday because I was very busy. I don't read after school because I have sport and homework.

Exemplar student #118

Reading Reflection

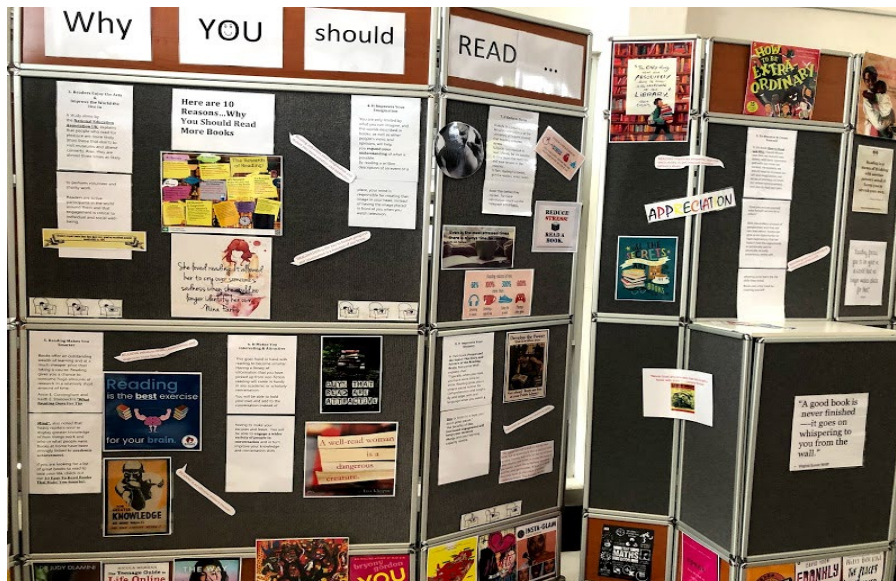
I love reading, I usually read 35 books a week, 5 per day. My favorite authors are Holly Webb, Michael Morpurgo and Suzanne Hobbs, sometimes I don't read their work in particular. I enjoy reading mystery and adventure, my love for books started when I was 6 years old. I like reading in my "reading corner" in my room. But I like to read whenever I can. My mum and I share a strong love of reading.

Reading Reflection

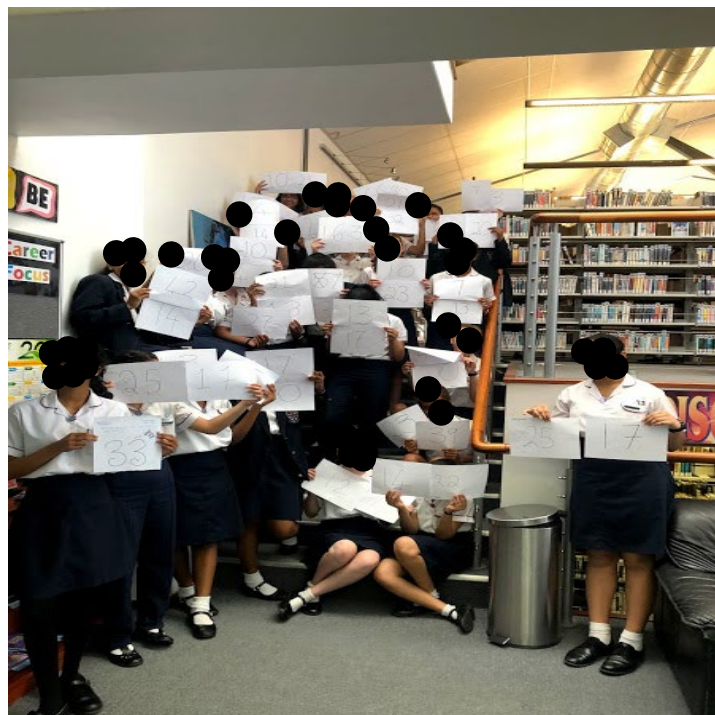
My reading goal was to read 12 books at least, I have read 32 books so far. Goodreads has helped me find more books to read that I have enjoyed/are enjoying. Goodreads makes it easier to record how many books I have read so I know how much I need to improve. I also get to interact with people about the books I/they have read. My reading has decreased from last year but that is probably because I don't do much leisurely activities anymore (reading). I think I should have set my challenge higher as it wasn't really a challenge as it should have been. To be honest I forgot about the challenge. Edmodo is useful, it is easier to interact about school related work. I am going to try to read more by at least 17% during this term and term 4. Reading helps with grammar and literature which I am sure I need help with, therefore if I read more I will learn more and be more educated.

Appendix 13: Library Pictures

Library display on the benefits of reading



Learners # of books read over a year



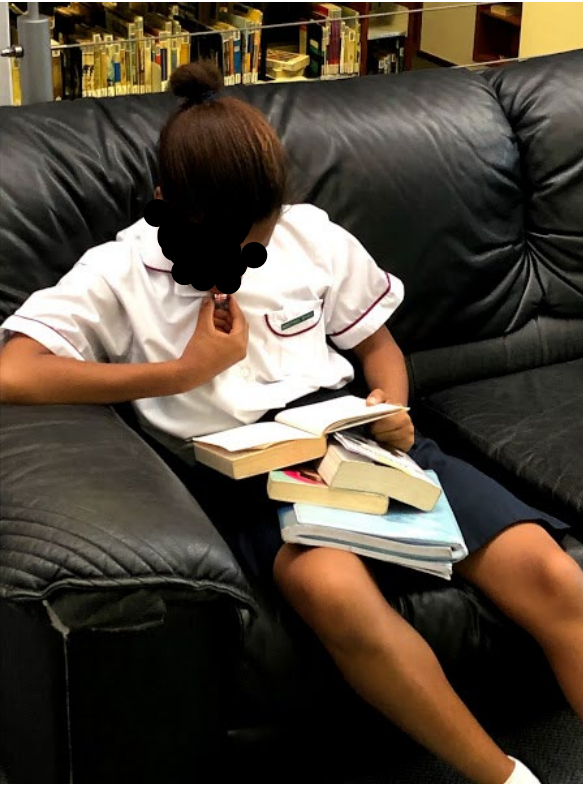
Learners reading in the library at break



Learners choosing books in the stacks



Learners book shopping to choose the right book



The Library



Appendix 14: Editing Certificate

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EDITING CERTIFICATE

Re: Irene Reid

Master's dissertation: **“Catching Reading”: An investigation into the use of online social book networking platforms and their influence on Grade Eight students' reading habits**

I confirm that I have edited this dissertation and the references for clarity, language and layout. I returned the document to the author with track changes so correct implementation of the changes and clarifications requested in the text and references is the responsibility of the author. I am a freelance editor specialising in proofreading and editing academic documents. My original tertiary degree which I obtained at the University of Cape Town was a B.A. with English as a major and I went on to complete an H.D.E. (P.G.) Sec. with English as my teaching subject. I obtained a distinction for my M.Tech. dissertation in the Department of Homoeopathy at Technikon Natal in 1999 (now the Durban University of Technology). I was a part-time lecturer in the Department of Homoeopathy at the Durban University of Technology for 13 years.

Dr Richard Steele
02 November 2020
per email