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## Middle School Teachers' Perceptions About the Implementation of the READ 180 Intervention Program

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# Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Melissa H. L. Betsill

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
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2023

Abstract

Middle School Teachers' Perceptions About the Implementation of the READ 180

Intervention Program

by

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Ed. S, Walden University, 2017

MEd, Converse College, 2014

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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## Abstract

Many states have used the READ 180 intervention program as an instructional tool to improve reading performance outcomes. The problem was that despite teachers' implementation of the READ 180 program, students at Wonderful Middle School were not learning or developing as well as desired despite the intervention. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ180 program. The conceptual framework guiding the study is based on Florida Reading Initiative, a researched-based school-wide reform effort committed to providing the professional development and follow-up support necessary for schools to achieve 100% literacy. The research question explored the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. A basic qualitative design was used to gather the perceptions of eight purposefully selected middle school reading teachers through semistructured interviews. Themes were identified through open coding. The trustworthiness of the study was established through member checking, rich and detailed descriptions, and researcher reflexivity. The findings revealed that teachers need opportunities for professional development, time to collaborate, and direction for using student assessment data to successfully implement programs such as READ 180. A professional development project was created to provide teachers with strategies and approaches for implementing READ 180. This study has implications for positive social change by providing a PD plan to implement improved practices for READ 180 to improve student performance.

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## Dedication

This paper is dedicated to God the Almighty; He is my all in all, The Great I Am. Thank you, Father God, who has provided me with this wonderful opportunity; my chair Dr. Antoinette Myers; my best friend, Linda Bratton, Wesley Bratton, Mrs. Dot; my amazing son Joshua; and my loving parents, Donald and Rachel G. Betsill.

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## Section 1: The Problem

### **The Local Problem**

Despite teachers' implementation of the READ 180 program, students at Wonderful Middle School were not developing as well as desired. Numerous middle schools in the study district in South Carolina have implemented READ 180 for several years as the strategic tool to guide the reading instructional processes (South Carolina Department of Education, 2019). The reading coach at Wonderful Middle School expressed that reading strategies and skills are challenging for the students to grasp. According to the school assistant administrator of Wonderful Middle School, the teachers' lack of reading content knowledge was a possible factor for trending low scores. Simultaneously, the school, teacher, leader, and reading coach suggested a need for improved professional development for teachers to address reading achievement concerns at Wonderful Middle School. This basic qualitative study was conducted to study middle school teachers' experiences, thoughts, and feelings, about the implementation of the Read 180 program, addressing the gap in practice between how the program is implemented by teachers and how the curriculum developers intended the program to be implemented.

The stakeholders at Wonderful Middle School had different opinions on components surrounding the trends of low reading achievement. Regardless, the achievement gap in reading assessment scores was considered problematic. Students who are promoted from elementary to middle school with a weak foundation in reading skills tend to have difficulties in reading as they are promoted to middle- and upper-grade

levels (Salters, 2019). Lack of reading comprehension skills, vocabulary, and understanding of the informational text had been projected as the areas that need academic support (Reading Coach, personal communication, August 23, 2021). The South Carolina State Department of Education (2020) indicated that only 25% of Wonderful Middle School students are proficient in reading tests. The reading coach stated that student achievement scores in reading showed a tremendous decline in reading skills over the past 8 years. The committee agreed that the evidence of students at Wonderful Middle School underperforming in reading tests was unacceptable. The declining trend in reading achievement was an area that encouraged data analysis and collaborative planning reforms (Reading Coach, personal communication, November 21, 2021). The curriculum design and instruction administered by teachers in the classroom could affect students' achievement in reading (Koedel & Li, 2017).

Teachers in the middle school were implementing the rapid-paced READ 180 programs to guide their instruction, but there was not enough evidence of student growth when employing the READ 180 program (teacher, personal communication, April 6, 2021; see Table 1). Improving the reading skills of struggling students who participate in the READ 180 Grades 6–8 is the primary focus of the program. Only students who score two or three grade levels below qualified to be placed in the READ 180 program (Literacy Coach, personal communication, March 5, 2021). One advantage of the READ 180 program is that students who struggle to read can have an individualized self-paced lesson plan (Leko et al., 2015). This individualized lesson plan consists of specific goals for English and language arts learners who will acquire additional support in improving.

**Table 1**

*Percentage of the READ 180 Program Students Scoring Below Proficiency on the South Carolina State Test*

GRADE / SC READY 2016	SC READY 2017	SC READY 2018	SC READY 2019
6 S=20.4%	S=25.2%	S=25.5 %	S=41.0 %
7 S=23.2%	S=32.6 %	S=28.9 %	S=40.14 %
8 S=22.4%	S=31.9%	S=29.1%	S=25.0%

*Note.* S= Students. No. of 6<sup>th</sup> Graders = 89, No. of 7<sup>th</sup> Graders = 84; No. of 8<sup>th</sup> graders = 75.

Source: South Carolina Department of Education, 2019

### **Evidence of the Problem Local Level**

The achievement gaps facing Wonderful Middle School were problematic. Urban students who underachieve in reading tend to qualify for low paying jobs within their communities (Merga, 2020). There is a discrepancy with the middle school communities achieving high reading scores equivalent to their same-aged suburban and rural community peers (Brodersen & Melluzzo, 2017). Proficiency of early reading knowledge and racial disparities are also factors in reading achievement as early as kindergarten (Davis & Farran, 2018). The significant drop in reading achievement was cause for concern for the teachers, administrators, parents, and the school district (South Carolina Department of Education, 2021; see Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Data for Students Below Proficiency Percentages in Reading*

Grade	Numbered Tested	Does Not Meet Expectations	Approaches Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
6	179	40.20%	39.105	18.40%	2.2%

7	188	46.80%	32.40%	17.00%	3.7%
8	188	51.10%	29.80%	16.00%	3.2%

*Note.* SC READY by Grade Level English Language Arts (South Carolina Board of Education, 2021)

In South Carolina, schools face the challenge of showing significant improvement in student learning under the current and increasing accountability standards from both the federal and state departments of education (Principal A, personal communication, February 10, 2021). Attempting to meet all the federal and state-mandated accountability methods can affect student learning as well as the culture in a school. Further, the lack of literacy skills is a primary contributor to the dropout rate nationwide (Perin, 2013). Nearly 6 million U.S. high school students read below grade level, and 3,000 students drop out of high school every day (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 66% of students are below proficiency in reading (National Assessment Governing Board, 2021).

Teacher A stated teachers' mastery of the READ 180 program was a potential indicator of the decline. The READ 180 intervention program relies only on student reading achievement, which may create an environment where the long-term implementation of the READ 180 intervention program may impact struggling readers (teacher, personal communication, April 19, 2021). As a result, the learning environment may change in a way that decreased the effectiveness of the READ 180 intervention program (Learning Coach, personal communication, April 26, 2021). In many schools today, teachers are implementing reading intervention programs, but there ends up being an inconsistency in how teachers utilize reading programs (Leko et. al, 2015). The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they

implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ180 program.

### **Rationale**

The rationale for the study is derived from the need to improve the reading skills of students who are two or more grade levels behind in reading. Despite teachers' implementation of the READ 180 program students at Wonderful Middle School were not learning or developing as well as desired. Many of the students who are enrolled in the READ 180 program were not making the reading growths needed to be successful (Teacher, personal communication, November 4, 2021). For example, in 2016 Grade 6 students participating in the READ 180 program scored 20.4% below reading proficiency on the South Carolina READY exam, and in 2019, they scored 41.0. % below reading proficiency. In 2018, Grade 7 students participating in the READ 180 program scored 28.9% below reading proficiency on the South Carolina READY exam, and in 2019, they scored 40.14% below reading proficiency. The data indicated a large percentage of students are unable to read proficiently on grade level. The inability to demonstrate sufficient reading skills was problematic (Leader A, personal communication, September 14, 2020). Information discovered through the project study may increase the effectiveness of the READ 180 program within Wonderful Middle School.

### **Definition of Terms**

This qualitative project study used definitions to understand words exclusive to the READ 180 intervention program and applicable to this study project. Throughout this study, many educational terms need clarification to establish a clear awareness of their



relevance to the problem. Researchers define terms so that readers can understand the specific language and interpretation used by researchers (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

*READ 180 Program:* READ 180 was a blended learning intervention program building reading comprehension, academic vocabulary, and writing skills for struggling students in Grades 4–12 (READ 180, 2019).

*Response to intervention (RTI):* RTI is a process used by teachers to help struggling readers improve their reading skills (READ 180, 2019).

*Scripted curriculum:* Scripted curriculum is a systematic instruction by way of a script the teacher must follow (READ 180, 2019).

### **Significance of the Study**

Despite teachers' implementation of the READ 180 program, students at Wonderful Middle School were not learning as well as desired. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. Intervention is the first means of enhancing reading skills (Fazal & Bryant, 2019). Consequently, improved reading skills may lead to a more in-depth understanding of the program and the students' abilities. The project study may contribute to a greater understanding and appreciation of the READ 180 program. In addition, the results of this study may intensify the need for additional training while utilizing the READ 180 program. The research findings may have the potential to serve as a guide to improved teacher implementation locally. Teacher implementation may lead to increased quality of reading instruction, improved implementation reflective practices, and readiness levels

for all students (Ronimus et al., 2019). Improved reading implementation standards may support the instructional needs of underachieving rural school communities (Flen et al., 2018). Furthermore, the findings in this project study may contribute to society by adding more precise information to the existing body of literature. Finally, the information from this project study may benefit parents, teachers, schools, and administrators who are looking for effective reading intervention programs.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of this project study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. The guiding research question and the sub-questions developed in a basic qualitative study are open-ended, objective, and unbiased (Rubin & Rubin, 2020). Qualitative research is used to answer questions about the experiences of people and their interactions (Merriam, 2009). The guiding research question that was conducive to this basic qualitative research was “What were the perceptions of teachers of Grades 6–8 about the process of implementation of the READ 180 program?” Sub-questions were

SQ 1: What are Middle School teacher perceptions of the difficulties with the READ 180 program?

SQ 2: What are Middle School teacher suggestions to better prepare to use the READ 180 program?

## **Review of the Literature**

This section includes a literature review containing the conceptual framework, components, and characteristics of the READ 180 intervention program, the benefits of the READ 180 intervention program, and how the READ 180 program interacts and affects reading achievement. The review of literature for this project study included an assortment of sources to reach a level of saturation on the topic reading. Search terms such as *READ 180*, *Scholastic Read 180*, *blended learning*, *middle school reading instruction*, *struggling students*, *reading comprehension*, *decoding skills*, *reading skills*, *student motivation*, *teacher fidelity*, and *reading intervention programs* aided in finding peer-reviewed journals, websites, and dissertations.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework guiding the study was based on Florida Reading Initiative (FRI), which is a research-based, school-wide reform effort committed to providing the professional development and follow-up support necessary for schools to achieve 100% literacy. The FRI is a 5-day face-to-face training for 30 minutes, online professional development (30 hours), 2-day school-wide faculty data analysis and action planning for implementation and interactive training that utilize interactive lessons (Thomas et al., 2015). The FRI conceptual framework is intended to serve as an anchor for teachers to understand how the many complex elements of reading work together to support the central goal of reading comprehension (Thomas et al., 2015). The FRI framework is used to train teachers that reading comprehension was the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement

with the written language (Cross, 2019). FRI offers opportunities for teachers to collaborate with other teachers and find commonalities while implementing reading programs. The impact of building the capacity to implement a reading intervention program is essential to student success (Goodwin & Judd, 2020). The framework was appropriate for this study because I investigated the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they have, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program.

The four components of the FRI framework are language, knowledge, metacognition, and fluency. The FRI encourages teachers to ask what factors influence comprehension. Teachers are taught that students must decode the letters before comprehension is activated. If the student cannot read the words, they are unable to read the text. Teachers are introduced to strategies that will improve word reading accuracy, automaticity, and reading rate. If the student is missing one of these traits, the student may not fully understand what they are reading (Cross, 2019). Teachers are taught factors that affect reading comprehension. For example, the student may not have sufficient prior knowledge, below-basic vocabulary, and issues with interpreting, predicting, decoding, and reading fluency.

The FRI framework allowed teachers to make a connection between research and practices (Lane, 2015). The FRI framework may help guide a teacher's thinking of how reading should be learned. The framework is a step-by-step way of how to model, teach, and assess reading comprehension. Thus, the FRI organizes reading research in a way that may help reading instruction and intervention (Lane, 2015).

## **Review of the Broader Problem**

Despite teachers' implementation of the READ 180 Intervention program students at Wonderful Middle School underperformed on reading standardized tests. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. Several comprehensive search strategies were used to gather information relevant to this study. Databases included Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Psych ARTICLES, Psy INFO, and Psychology: Sage Full-Text Collection. Google Scholar search engine was also used to find relevant articles and dissertations. On rare occasions, an article was in the public domain through Google search. In the attempt to research, I was guided by the themes and concepts related to terms and phrases such as *READ 180*, *Scholastic Read 180*, *blended learning*, *middle school reading instruction*, *struggling students*, *reading comprehension*, *decoding skills*, *reading skills*, *student motivation*, *teacher fidelity*, and *reading intervention programs*. The literature review provided the framework needed for this basic qualitative research. I examined sources relative to the themes: *READ 180*, *blended learning*, *middle school reading instruction*, *reading intervention programs*, *constructivism*, *engaging students in reading*, *teaching material*, *learning styles*, *students' reading comprehension*, and *perceptions of teachers of reading programs*. I reviewed 70 peer-reviewed articles. However, I elected the articles for full consideration that best aligned with my study.

### ***The READ 180 Program as Reading Instructional Tool***

The READ 180 intervention program is a comprehensive reading intervention program created by Scholastic (2018) aimed at improving the reading skills of students with reading deficiencies. There are three stages of the program; Stage 1 was established for elementary students, Stage 2 was designed for middle school students, and Stage 3 was created for high school students (Scholastic, 2018). The READ 180 intervention program is also divided into three stations: independent reading, small groups, and computer time. The READ 180 intervention program is considered a blended learning program. Students develop world knowledge and literacy skills through exposure to different text types across multiple disciplines (McKeown et al., 2018). According to Scholastic, anchor videos and language development activities in the student application improve comprehension by helping students form a mental picture of what they are about to read. Nearly 50 new words in each workshop expand to hundreds more as students study roots, meaning, and word parts (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). Explore, Reading, and Language Zones in the student application help students build general and academic vocabulary through anchor videos, targeted readings, and activities (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). Target passages from level-specific texts in the student application help students build deep comprehension through multiple readings. Spelling and reading sight words in the student application builds automaticity, so students' brains can focus on comprehension and retention (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). The READ 180 intervention program is currently used in 10,000 classrooms in all 50 states (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017).

The READ 180 intervention program was found to have positive effects on comprehension and literacy achievement. Early intervention may improve the reading skills of a struggling reader (Cal et al., 2019; Hall & Burns, 2018; Hein, 2018). Early intervention is the key to combating the lack of reading skills and maximizing a student's overall academic success (Haines et al., 2018). Researchers found that Grades 4–8 students who participated in the READ 180 intervention program showed 1 to 2 years of growth (Haines et al., 2018). At the end of the READ 180 intervention program, the students were reading on grade level, and the below-grade-level students' growth after the READ 180 intervention program was greater than that of their on-grade-level peers with no intervention (Haines et al., 2018). A similar study on 26 different small group reading intervention programs, which included READ 180 intervention programs, indicated how smaller intervention groups, with less than three students, were more effective than an intervention group with 10 students (Hall & Burns, 2018). In addition, reading intervention programs, such as the READ 180 intervention program, are more effective if the teacher started with a specific skill and could use hands-on activities in their classroom.

### ***Instructional Strategies Using the READ 180 Program***

Teachers use instructional strategies to make the learning experience more fun and practical and can also encourage students to take more of an active role in their education. Accountability shapes a teacher's instructional strategies (Horn, 2016). Teachers held accountable for learning want to use all learning methods to ensure the academic success of the students (Horn, 2016). Teachers with a higher success rate use

various activities in their classrooms (Hein, 2018). Some teachers reported that activities allowed the students to make a deeper connection to the concepts being used (Horn, 2016). For example, syllables are one component that facilitates reading (Bhattacharya, 2020). Instruction should focus on correctly identifying letter sounds (Bhattacharya, 2020). By addressing the students' deficiency in syllabic recognition, teachers may improve their students' reading skills. Research indicates that struggling readers who received practice in assembling syllables and morphemes were able to read multisyllabic words (Bhattacharya, 2020).

### ***The READ 180 Program and Blended Learning Skills***

As classrooms become more diverse, teachers are challenged to meet the needs of every student (Brodersen & Melluzzo, 2017). Often this goal is met by utilizing blended learning within the classroom. Brodersen and Melluzzo (2017) suggested blended learning combines online learning with classroom learning. Blended learning was when the teachers used online engagement that is embedded with face-to-face forms of learning (Mild, 2019). Blended learning combines technology with the use of traditional classroom experiences. Blended learning allows students to have control over the pace and place of their learning. Brodersen and Melluzzo (2017); Shamsuddin and Kaur (2020) conducted a study of blended and online learning programs that support that a variety of activities improve comprehension. Shamsuddin and Kaur (2020) described the characteristics of the learning programs and explained explicitly how blended learning allows students to work together during activities. Each program in the study used some type of reading intervention instruction to help students improve their reading skills.



Examples of reading intervention instruction noted in the study were as follows: using reading materials on tape, using a vocabulary list, presenting materials both auditory and visual, using reading buddies, and meeting in small groups to re-teach skills for struggling readers. These reading intervention instructional methods are also embedded in the READ 180 intervention program. In the READ 180 intervention program, a computer station was a tool used by students to listen to the story and the challenging vocabulary words are highlighted. A computer station was a tool used by students to hear and see the information. An independent station was a tool used by students to read materials at varying readability levels. Small group stations were a tool used by the teacher to meet with small groups to re-teach difficult concepts or extend thinking skills (Scholastic, 2017). In addition, Brodersen and Melluzzo explained how the use of blended learning allowed students to work from home. However, the READ 180 intervention program did not allow the student to work on the program from home. The students were required to complete all activities within the classroom. The materials, such as the independent reading books, are not allowed to leave the classroom. There was a significant positive effect was found for four blended learning programs: Cognitive tutor Algebra, LeapTrack, the READ 180 program, and Time to Know (Brodersen & Melluzzo, 2017). Blended learning may promote in-depth learning, improve student engagement, and presents an opportunity for students to connect with their teachers.

In addition, Shamsuddin and Kaur (2020) investigated learning styles among the students and their relationship with perceptions of blended learning. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine the correlation with the learning style of the students. It was

believed that a student's learning style may impact the overall effectiveness of a blending learning program (Fazal, & Bryant, 2019; Shamsuddin & Kaur, 2020). This statement was reflective of the READ 180 intervention program. The READ 180 intervention program was designed for visual and auditory learners. Some students learn best by seeing information in the form of visual representations and graphs; other students may prefer to learn by doing (Premo et al., 2018). Shamsuddin and Kaur (2020), suggested that program designers focus on developing suitable material that reinforces students' preferred learning styles. This quantitative study helped me understand the importance of utilizing opened ended questions to gather information.

Students in blended learning classrooms outperformed their face-to-face classroom peers on MAPS testing (Fazal & Bryant, 2019). MAP is a norm-referenced measure of student growth over time. On the other hand, traditional learning was found to be more impactful on students who took the STAAR test. STAAR is a criterion-referenced test that measures student performance based on curriculum standards for a content area and grade level (Fazal & Bryant, 2019). I understood that face-to-face and traditional learning were beneficial. According to the above researchers, student success depends on which assessment the students were administered; this factor determined which assessment is the most effective.

Ghazizadeh and Fatemipour (2017) conducted a study to determine the effect of blended learning on reading. A quasi-experimental design was adopted to reach this goal. Quasi-experimental research involved the manipulation of an independent variable without the random assignment of participants to conditions or orders of conditions. Sixty

intermediate-level middle school learners were randomly assigned to two groups. The first group used traditional methods to teach reading skills. The second group used blending learning to teach reading skills. The participants were tested before the intervention and after the invention. According to Ghaziadeh and Fatemipour (2017), the results indicated that blended learning had a significant positive effect on reading proficiency. The READ 180 intervention program, like the programs in this study, used a scheduled time frame to instruct students. For example, the students have 30 minutes at the computer station, 30 minutes in small groups, and 30 minutes in the independent reading stations. I have learned from previous researchers that blended learning and traditional learning are beneficial to students.

However, Rasheed et al. (2020) viewed blended learning through a different lens. Rasheed et al. (2020) conducted a systematic review of the challenges of blended learning. The goal was to identify the key challenges that teachers and students encounter while using blended learning. Unlike the above studies, Rasheed et al. (2020) suggested that the following challenges occurred during the study: students' isolation and technological complexity. Students' isolation may occur when a student did not feel comfortable participating online. Technological complexity occurred when the students were not able to fix the technical issues within the hardware or software. Teachers need to have an adequate level of technical competence within the classroom when implementing online programs (Abubakar et al. 2020). The teachers identified that a lack of technological competencies was a major issue for students; teachers explained that they did not understand how to fully integrate technology with traditional learning

(Abubakar et al., 2020). I was able to see from two different perspectives. One perspective suggests that blended learning is essential for teaching. While on the other hand, researchers make a point that students who are not computer literate face challenges engaging with the software. This delay may cause a student to lose time on task. These articles influence my research questions.

### ***The Growing Use of Digital Technology in Reading***

As we utilize more digital technology within the classroom, there was a need to address that digital technology encompasses a broader range of skills (Bahgat et al., 2018). Digital technology may be used as a tool to provide reading skills for struggling readers (Altay & Altay, 2017). Digital technology was one key component that READ 180 intervention program utilizes daily. However, it is believed that digital technology is limiting opportunities for students (Bahgat et al., 2018). Some students did not have the computer literacy skills needed to maneuver throughout the program. As the students tried to learn and maneuver through the program, this delay reduced the time-on-task (Ghaziadeh, & Fatemipour, 2017). The researchers suggested that having a variety of activities may improve comprehension (Bahgat et al., 2018; Brodersen & Melluzzo, 2017). Bahgat, et al. (2018) explored 15 principles that help leave a sustainable impact on learners by promoting active deep learner experience. Bahgat et al. (2018) believed reading should be taught in a more traditional format. The READ 180 intervention program is set in a traditional classroom format. However, the READ 180 intervention program was a tool that allows the teacher to use blended learning to improve reading skills. For example, literature circles are considered a traditional reading strategy. In the

READ 180 intervention program. The students had a copy of the book being read. One student reads aloud. The next student reads aloud. After the fourth student finished reading, the teacher asked questions to check for comprehension. The students were allowed to share prior knowledge with peers (Bahgat et al., 2018). The researchers' revealed that digital technology may also improve reading skills. Digital technology may be used as a tool to help students connect to the books they read. Digital technology may be used as a tool to better evaluate student comprehension. Finally, digital technology may be used as a tool to build essential literacy skills like vocabulary, research, and fluency (Bahgat et al., 2018). Online reading games had been proven to enhance reading skills (Ronimus et al., 2019). These online reading games are a part of the READ 180 intervention program. (Ronimus et al. 2019) suggested that teachers should plan computer lab sessions with students to play online reading games to strengthen their literacy skills. Some reading programs can even adapt to focus on a student's academic weaknesses, which can help students achieve academic success (Ronimus et al., 2019). Bahgat et al., 2018 and Ronimus et al. (2018) supported the idea of using technology to improve reading. I wonder if every child has access to technology.

### ***Blended Instructional Approaches for Reading***

The advancement of technology has changed the way reading skills were being taught (Hrastinsia, 2019). Yang and Chen (2019) explored the use of blended learning using synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid learning as a tool to measure student success. Synchronous learning takes place at the same time. For example, online students are in a class with students who are being taught face-to-face. Asynchronous learning

takes place at different times. The online learner is not in class with the face-to-face students. Hybrid learning was a tool used to teach students who are face-to-face in a classroom setting. According to Yang and Chen (2019), a teacher can use a blend of multiple tools to improve reading skills. The common approaches to utilizing blended learning to improve reading skills are as follows: electronic whiteboard, interactive response system, videos, and audio devices (Bacos & Grove, 2019; Yang & Chen, 2019). Students were allowed to interact with the reading concepts presented. Teachers used the READ 180 intervention program, which incorporates the above tools to improve reading skills. Edwards (2019) explained that students need to be exposed to informational text at an early age to improve their reading skills using a blended instructional program. Once again informational text was a large component of the READ 180 intervention program. Edwards (2019) concluded that small groups, graphic organizers, and tactile activities in science and ELA were essential to improving reading comprehension.

Flen et al. (2018) investigated six school districts' implementation of a blended learning reading intervention program aimed to improve reading achievement in the middle grades. The goal of the reading intervention program was to improve reading achievement in grades 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>. Data for the Middle School Project (MSP) was collected from 25 middle schools within six different school districts across the state of Oregon (Flen et al., 2018). Flen et al. (2018) stated that cognitive delays may affect a student's intellectual functioning, interfering with awareness and causing learning difficulties. Other factors may contribute to students not achieving academic growth in reading (Bahgat et al., 2018). Students with cognitive delays may benefit from blended learning.

(Flen et al., 2018). Thus, blended learning may be beneficial to these students. From the above research, I have concluded that regardless of which intervention tool was used for improving reading, a student's cognitive abilities may impact the success of any reading intervention program.

McKeown et al. (2018) investigated a progression of outcomes from word knowledge to comprehension using a quasi-experimental design. This study used a traditional classroom design. In year 1, two sixth-grade reading teachers and 105 students participated in the study. In year 2 one seventh-grade teacher and 87 students. Half of the students were instructed using word knowledge, retrieval, automaticity, and vocabulary elaboration (RAVE). The remaining students were instructed to use blended learning strategies. McKeown et al. (2018), concluded that academic vocabulary intervention was the most effective method for improving reading skills. Students in the blended learning group gain reading growth. Studies show that reading comprehension and a well-developed vocabulary are essential to any reading program. Like the READ 180 intervention program, which was a blended learning program, McKeown et al., (2018) concluded that instructing students in word knowledge demonstrated greater reading gains than students who were not instructed in word knowledge. Unlike the RAVE intervention used in the study, the READ 180 intervention program did not have a word knowledge component.

### ***Teacher Challenges with Improving Reading Skills***

In an ever-changing classroom, teachers must be allowed to use strategies that improve comprehension and reading skills. When a student reaches middle school,

unable to read, the student has experienced repeated failure (Parenti, 2016). Teachers were challenged with motivating reluctant students to read (Parenti, 2016). It may be difficult to motivate a middle school “struggling reader” to engage in meaningful reading (Parenti, 2016). Frankel et al. (2015) suggested identifying and meeting the needs of the struggling reader was the first step to helping students improve their reading. Frankel et al. (2013) completed qualitative research on students perceived to struggle with reading in school. The researchers’ qualitative study focused on four theoretical approaches. The four theories used in the study were New Literacy Studies, Disability Studies in Education, Bioecological Systems Theory, and Cultural-Historical Activity Theory. New Literacy Studies researchers stressed that reading and writing must be purposeful and engaging in a particular culture. The Bioecological System Theory researchers argued that a student’s comprehension and reading skills are influenced by the student’s environment, family, digital literacy, and friends Frankel et al. (2015). This study was used as a tool to bridge my understanding of New Literacy, Disability, Bioecological, and Cultural -History Activity Theory. According to Frankel et al. (2015), the Cultural Historical Activity Theory researchers supported Dewey’s idea that students learn by doing. The researchers believed using a combination of theories enables the researcher to look at students who struggle with reading differently with a greater awareness of the students’ deficiency. Frankel et al. (2015) concluded by questioning the use of the term “struggling reader” and highlighting the implications of theoretical frames and analyses for both research and practice.



I understood the importance of reading within the culture as being a very important factor when improving reading skills. I was grateful that the READ 180 intervention program provided engaging books that were written for many cultures (Scholastic, 2021). Before reviewing this study, I was not aware of these four theories. I will use this article as a tool to better understand the perceptions of the potential participants within my study. I can correlate these theories with the mission of the READ 180 intervention program which will enable me to gain a deeper representation of the topic as it relates to my research questions.

### ***Teachers' Responsibility in the READ 180 Program***

All teachers have a responsibility to teach students how to read (Learnard, 2016). According to Lee and Tsai (2017), the more a teacher was vested in the learning of the student, the better the academic results. Learnard (2016) stated that literacy is not the responsibility of English teachers, but all teachers are involved. Learnard (2016) conducted a year-long qualitative study. The purpose was to examine how struggling secondary readers, along with their teachers, interact with students with behavior problems (Learnard, 2016). She shadowed eight 14-year-old ninth graders that were identified as struggling readers. The researcher's data included 64 interviews, assessments, 425 hours of observation, and school records. Key descriptors used in this research were: reading difficulties, behavior problems, educational environment, literacy, Grade 9 intervention, discipline, observation, reading tests, reading skills, interaction, and semi-structured interviews. There were two African Americans, two White, one African, one Hmong, one Lao, and one Latino. Learned selected eight teacher participants (two

history, four algebras, and two reading teachers) and 14 comparative teachers to use as focal participant's classroom. Literacy Assessment Data, school records and reports, classroom, and school artifacts were collected data. Learned (2016) concluded that her findings suggested a need for research on the role of institutional behavior positioning in reading intervention. In addition, Learnard (2016) focused on the teaching of literacy in all classes. Learnard (2016) supported that all teachers should demonstrate accountability and utilize engaging activities in all classes. It is believed that with consistency and purposeful hands-on activities in all classes, students have a greater chance of improving their literacy skills (Learnard, 2016).

There is a drive to push online reading intervention programs (Lee & Tsai, 2017). There have been reports that students have made substantial academic gains. Lee and Tsai (2017) stated that students with poor comprehension improved their academic reading levels by participating in online reading programs. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine students with specific poor comprehension (SPC). Lee and Tsai agreed students with poor comprehension excel in intervention programs that provide oral reading opportunities. A teacher's perception of teaching reading was also a major factor in how well a student will improve academically. Lee and Tsai (2017) utilized a pool of 40 studies that included students with specific poor comprehension (SPC) and reading instruction. In this qualitative study, the researchers used 14 studies of the 40 different studies pooled. The results of the study were clear. If a student cannot use inferential skills while reading a complex text, it will be difficult for that student to fully comprehend what was being read. Lee and Tsai (2017) suggested that future research

should address effective reading instructional methods targeting specifically the underlying problems of poor reading comprehension of students with SPC. Leko et al. (2015) probed the perceptions of high school teachers when implementing any online reading programs. The authors pointed out the frustration teachers encountered when teaching reading. Teachers explained how the classroom is becoming more and more diverse when it relates to reading skills. The findings supported that some teachers felt as if they were not equipped to teach reading to students on different academic levels. The teachers agreed that having the option of using online resources and hands-on activities had a positive impact on the student's success (Leko et al, 2015).

Mustafa and Dedeogulu (2015) held a pre-service for teachers who taught online reading and explored different online reading strategies. There were multiple strategies used to meet the needs of the below-proficient readers (Leko et al., 2015). The teachers were motivated to help the students achieve the reading skills needed to be proficient. Teachers are held responsible for the student's literacy skills (Mustafa & Dedeogulu, 2015).

### ***The Difficulties in Reading Comprehension***

Reading comprehension was an essential skill not only during learning but also in successfully navigating everyday life (Gutierrez de Blume et. al, 2021). As the number of students who struggle to read increases, some teachers are trying to address this issue. According to Nation (2019) students who have not mastered decoding and linguistics comprehension, may have a harder time obtaining adequate reading skills. Linguistic comprehension was the ability to understand the different elements of spoken or written

language (Nation, 2019). In addition, Nation (2019) expressed that those students who are not able to speak or understand spoken words by the age of 3, will struggle with reading comprehension.

Several contributing factors delay reading comprehension. According to Smith et al (2020), the role of background knowledge was essential when learning to read. Students who struggle to read often have issues identifying with the vocabulary. This was due to the limited amount of prior knowledge of the word. Students were not able to connect to the written language which leads to poor reading comprehension (Nation, 2019). In addition, another factor that delays reading comprehension was the lack of inference skills. To infer while reading, the student must read between the lines. In other words, the students must be able to infer information that was not explicitly stated to comprehend the text (Martinez- Lincoln, 2021).

### ***Teachers' Collaboration using the READ 180 Program***

With Personal Learning Communities (PLC) meetings being required once a week, teachers are required to collaborate daily at school (Solis, et al., 2020). Spencer et al. (2019) differentiated between development delays and development deficits in oral language and how these delays impact reading comprehension. Development delays are when a student was continually behind in gaining the skills expected by a certain age. In contrast, the development deficit addresses the students' inability to perform regardless of age. Collaboration was most essential (Solis, et al., 2020). One teacher was knowledgeable about an area and one teacher may not be aware of a particular student. Teachers need to collaborate and identify the students who have developmental delays

and those who were reading below grade level. Spencer et al. (2019) made a connection between reading success and development deficit in oral language. A suggestion of many techniques was mentioned to teach students how to read. Wilson, et al. (2015) investigated how student teachers and speech-language therapists (SLTs) felt about collaborating to deliver literacy instruction. The researchers examined the knowledge and perceptions of student teachers and student SLTs in the areas of language concepts, junior school literacy curriculum, service delivery, and professional collaboration (Wilson et al., 2015). An online survey was completed by 58 student primary school teachers and 37 student SLTs in their final year of professional study. There was a lack of communication between the participants in the study. Some participants felt that their feelings and perspectives were not being respected (Wilson et al., 2015). Collaboration was an essential part of any intervention program. Wonnacott et al. (2016) also agreed that collaboration mixed with self-paced reading and engaging activities are beneficial to the students. Self-paced readings allowed students to make a better connection with the text by focusing on reading strategies (Wonnacott et al., 2016). Teacher collaboration was a major component of the READ 180 intervention program (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). Teachers were expected to meet weekly and share experiences within the classroom (Solis, et al., 2020). According to the above studies, teacher collaboration was essential when working to improve reading skills.

### ***Vocabulary Impacts Reading Comprehension***

The READ 180 intervention program had an extensive vocabulary component. Wright et al., (2017) examined how vocabulary recognition impacts reading

comprehension. Thirty-seven studies were used in this study. Researchers have stated there is a direct correlation between the number of vocabulary words known by a student and the level of reading comprehension student (Wright et al., 2017; Bhattacharya, (2020). The students enrolled in the READ 180 intervention program are required to match the word to the definition. Once the students have successfully mastered a level, the students are introduced to the next level of vocabulary words. Wright et al., (2017), argued that matching the word to the definition was a beneficial reading strategy. The researchers suggested that teachers use activities that allow students to interact with the vocabulary (McKeown et al., 2018). For example, the students were asked to create a vocabulary cube that allows the students to show understanding of the word, illustrate a picture, find synonyms, and use the word in a sentence. The teaching of word meanings supported the comprehension of a text containing the target words in all cases (Wright et al., 2017; Spencer, et al., 2019). Vocabulary awareness was a very important aspect of the reading process. Vocabulary contributes to the reader's understanding of the printed text. However, if the reader does not know what the words within the text mean, the lack of vocabulary awareness greatly impacts reading comprehension.

McKeown, et al. (2018) and Spencer, et al. (2019) said that vocabulary acquisition is the most important aspect of reading. Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in the reading process and dramatically impacts comprehension. The primary focus of this study conducted by McKeown, et al. (2018) was to examine how vocabulary words impacted reading comprehension. Robust Academic Vocabulary Encounter (RAVE), the instructional intervention program used within this study, was similar to the READ 180

intervention program. Both intervention programs have a vocabulary component. McKeown et al. (2018) argued that comprehension relied heavily on vocabulary knowledge. Each intervention program exposed the student to more work and ideas within a context that provides proper usage and the correct meaning of the words. The greater the number of words a student knows, the more the student can interpret ideas (Bhattacharya, 2020). The difference between RAVE and READ 180, is that RAVE utilizes multisensory activities that include kinesthetic and tactile activities to enhance student engagement. The students were encouraged to use all five senses when participating in the activities. RAVE was a reading program created for 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students who are reading below grade level. The researchers discussed how all reading was sensory. When you read words, pictures were created in your brain. The pictures in your brain caused you to connect to memories. Memories evoke smells, tastes, colors, and textures. RAVE and the READ 180 program used technology to facilitate vocabulary assessments. Rave utilized tactile assignments and the READ 180 intervention program did not. The proper assessment of vocabulary was also essential to improving the reading skills of a student (McKeown et al. 2018; Bhattacharya, 2020; Wright et al., 2017).

### ***READ 180 Validity and Implementation***

Validity was arguably the most important criterion for the quality of a test (Pas et al., 2019). Pas et al. (2019) quantitative study examined different SET cut points about school-level outcomes across reading achievement in 180 elementary, middle, and high schools participating in randomized trials of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Pas et al. (2019) and Stockard (2020) agreed that the implementation

fidelity of a reading intervention program impacts the validity of a test. The term validity was defined as whether or not the test measures what it claims to measure. The researchers illustrated that more research about the implementation fidelity of reading intervention programs is needed. Stockard's (2020) qualitative study investigated how an administrative decision may impact the validity and effective implementation of a program. Stockard (2020) the students reading success. The researcher presented results from three different studies. The researcher illustrated how administrative decisions such as changing the schedule, professional development of the teacher, and the physical attributes of a class all impact the validity of and implementation of a program.

### ***Synthesis of the READ 180 Program***

Intervention programs may be useful when addressing the needs of students who perform below proficient in reading (Altay & Altay., 2017; Brodersen & Melluzzo, 2017; Haines et al., 2018). The use of technology within the classroom had enhanced academic reading gain by meeting the diverse needs of the students (Bahgat et al.,2018; Mild, 2019). Blended learning was considered the most effective reading intervention program (Baccos & Grove, 2019). Blended learning may be used as a tool for individualized learning opportunities. Because digital materials may be accessed according to students' individual needs, and reviewed upon demand, the provision of digital materials allows students to self-direct certain learning activities to fill their knowledge gaps. Automated assessments often used in online learning environments may also provide immediate, corrective feedback that directs students to revisit materials (Bacos & Grove, 2019; Yang & Chen, 2019). According to research, students were more engaged in a blended learning



classroom (Chicosky, 2015; Fazal & Bryant, 2019; Ghazizadeh & Fatemipour, 2017; Ronimus, et al., 2019). However, the quality of instruction and the environment may impact the effectiveness of blended learning (Shamsuddin & Kaur, 2020). For example, poor quality instruction may disengage the students and negatively impact student achievement when attending a blended learning class. Color, classroom organization, cleanliness, sufficient supplies, and bright lights can enhance the learning experience and boost student achievement. Alternatively, crowded rooms and a high density of students often result in lower student achievement and a poorer student disposition (Jenson, et al, 2018). The overall goal of the READ 180 intervention program is to improve the students reading skills (Scholastic, 2013; What Works Clearing House, 2016,).

Many factors impacted the effectiveness of an intervention program. One factor is teacher accountability (Wilson et al., (2015). Horn (2016) reviewed how accountability shapes a teacher's instructional strategies and effective implementation of a program. Two reoccurring factors were present throughout the review of the literature. The reoccurring factors were lack of vocabulary awareness and cognitive delays, which may affect a student's intellectual functioning, interfering with awareness and causing learning difficulties. (Spencer, et al., 2019).

The READ 180 intervention program was considered an effective reading invention program when implemented correctly (What Works Clearing House, 2020). According to McKeown et al. (2018), the READ 180 intervention program was found to have positive effects on comprehension, reading fluency, and general literacy achievement. McKeown et al. (2018) argued that the READ 180 intervention program

was one of the top 5 effective intervention programs. Having continued support using blended learning appears to be a key factor in improving reading skills. Blended and online learning programs that support a variety of activities improve comprehension (Brodersen & Melluzzo (2017). Shamsuddin and Kaur (2020) concluded that the students learning styles had a significant impact on the overall effectiveness of a blended learning program. Fazal and Bryant (2019) stated that blended learning had a positive effect on some students. Yet not all students favor the blended learning approach. Several students in the study preferred traditional learning experiences (Rasheed et al., 2020).

Finally, the teachers' instructional strategies had been deemed the predictors of a student's reading success in an intervention program (Wilson et al., 2015). Teachers who are held accountable for student success showed a greater success rate than teachers who were not (Learnard, 2016; Mustafa, & Dedeogulu, 2015).). It seemed that regardless of any intervention program, effective implementation of a reading program was essential to reach higher academic student gains.

### **Implications**

It is evident from a review of the literature that the implementation of a variety of activities was paramount to obtaining the desired outcome, which was improved reading skills. (Bahgat et al., 2018). Numerous implications from the result of this study can be anticipated. A training session focusing on a detailed report of the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 intervention program, would serve as the basis of the project for this study. The qualitative findings may include the challenges and

successes experienced in the classroom along with a recommendation for the publisher, district, and schools. The findings may potentially help other teachers who teach the READ 180 intervention program as well. The findings may ultimately improve student achievement contributes to the literature and add to the limited research on the READ 180 intervention programs. This study had the potential to promote positive social change by improving the effectiveness of the READ 180 intervention program. Improving reading skills may lead to academic achievement in all subject areas.

### **Summary**

Teachers are faced with high expectations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; students are expected to be college and career-ready upon graduation (Calet et al., 2019). The number of students not meeting proficiency in reading was of concern (South Carolina Board of Education, 2021). Wonderful World Middle School teachers were required to implement the READ 180 intervention program to better meet the needs of students with reading deficiencies. Middle school students in an urban South Carolina school district were not performing well despite being enrolled in the READ 180 intervention program. Teachers in the school district were implementing the rapid-paced READ 180 intervention program to guide their instruction. This project study explored the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 intervention program. The findings may improve student achievement, also contribute to the literature, and add to the limited research on the READ 180 intervention programs. This study had the potential to promote positive social change by improving the effectiveness of the READ 180 intervention program.

The findings may increase the percent of students who score proficient on state standardized testing. The research guiding question is: What were the perception of teachers of grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> about the process of implementation of the READ 180 program?

Subsequent questions are:

SQ1-What are Middle School teacher perceptions of the difficulties in implementing the READ 180 program?

SQ2-What are Middle School teacher suggestions to better prepare to use the READ 180?

The information for this review was collected through various relevant peer-reviewed articles, online databases, research books, and articles which will be obtained using Google Scholar, Sage Premier, Education Research Complete, and Bibliographies. The literature provided a framework for this basic qualitative study and will include information relating to the READ 180 intervention program. Section 2 of this study outlines the methodology, including the research design, participants, data collection, and data analysis.

## Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. This project study was not intended to be a summative evaluation study of the program. This section of the paper focuses on the research design, approach, and characteristics of a qualitative study, selection of participants, sampling method and size, and setting, data collection, data analysis, and interview protocol. The principles for maintaining ethics, confidentiality, accuracy, and credibility of the project study are also discussed.

### **Research Design and Approach**

The methodology and approach, aligned with the purpose of this study, are to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they have, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. The guiding research question that contributed to this basic qualitative research was “What were the perception of teachers of Grades 6–8 about the process of implementation of the READ 180 program?” The sub-questions were designed to examine the concerns and capital needed to improve the implementation of the READ 180 program:

SQ 1: What were middle school teacher perceptions of the difficulties with the READ 180 program?

SQ 2: What were middle school teacher suggestions to better prepare to use the READ 180 program?

The answers to the subquestions may address the problem that despite teachers' implementation of research-based reading intervention, students at Wonderful Middle School for the past 3 years have underperformed on reading standardized tests.

A basic qualitative design was best for what I wanted to achieve. A basic qualitative design is also based on a social constructivism perspective, which was included in my conceptual framework. In this basic qualitative study, the aim was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they have, and what they might need to be better prepared to use READ 180. A research design involves the plans, justification for this methodology, procedures, and detailed methods for data collection and analysis (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). A quantitative design would not provide the data needed for this study, as it is focused on collecting, analyzing, and using data to identify the relationship between the population and treatment (Creswell, 2012). The qualitative research involved collecting and analyzing non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative research was the best method for this study because I explored the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180.

### **Justification of Research Design**

The basic qualitative design was adequate for this research because it was most beneficial to obtain data via direct interviews with participants (see Creswell, 2014). This basic qualitative research design enabled me to examine the experiences acquired to develop the participants' meaning and comprehension (see Lindolf & Taylor, 2017;

Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The basic qualitative study enables the researcher a chance to gain insight from participants, which is an important factor of the qualitative research design (Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

There were six primary types of qualitative research not aligned with this intended research: ethnography study, grounded theory, phenomenological study, case studies, and narrative study. Ethnography has its roots in cultural anthropology where researchers immerse themselves within a culture, often for years to gain information (Lodico et al., 2010). Ethnography may be beneficial when studying larger populations (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). But in this project study I did not study any norms or cultural conditions, so the ethnography study design did not align with the project study.

A grounded theory involves developing a theory based on field data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Grounded theory requires the researcher to construct a theory of action and interaction supported by the views of the participants (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Lodico et al., 2010). The grounded theory could not be applied to this research.

Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Phenomenological studies emphasize the likeliness of a group of individuals' lived experiences with an identified phenomenon (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). This basic qualitative project study did not include data about the lived experience of participants; thus, the phenomenological research design was not the most favorable design for the project study.

Narrative research designs are used to explore and conceptualization of human experience as it was represented in textual form. In other words, the narrative research design's goal is to explore the meaning people attach to their experiences (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Furthermore, the narrative approach creates a story of a participant's life in a particular set of existence (Lodico et al., 2010). The narrative research design was not appropriate for this study because my goal was not to retell the experiences of reading teachers, who teach the READ 180 program in a particular timeline. A narrative study would not provide enough different experiences about the teachers' perceptions of the READ 180 program.

Finally, a case study was not suitable for this study. A case study is an appropriate research design when the researcher wants to gain concrete, contextual, in-depth knowledge about a specific real-world subject (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A case study allows the researcher to explore the key characteristics, meanings, and implications of the case. The case study focuses on organizations, entities, individuals, or events. The researcher uses interviews, coding, documents, observation, and reports to collect data (Lodico et al., 2010). The case study design did not work for this research as a prospective view following over time and space. The basic qualitative research design was the best selection to explore the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program.



## **Participants**

A detailed explanation of the plan of selection, justification, ethical protections, and the relationship with the researcher will be outlined in this subsection. The planned alternatives, rejections, or withdrawal processes are also indicated in this section for explicit protocols and expectations throughout the research and interview processes.

### **Criteria for Selecting Participants**

The target population for this project study was based in an urban middle school in the upstate region. The Wonderful Middle School services an average of 758 students every school year for the past 5 years (South Carolina Board of Education, 2020). The eight participants were chosen from a pool of middle school teachers in one school district. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants based on the criteria that they were assigned to teach and utilize the READ 180 program and had at least 1 year of teaching experience. Purposive sampling is used to generate volunteer participants who are active examples of the research goal (Ravitch & Carl, 2020). The selection criteria helped to preserve a rich participant selection for the validity of the research (see Lodico et al., 2010).

### **Access to Participants**

Upon approval from the IRB, I made initial contact with the anticipated participants. The initial contact was in the form of an electronically mailed invitation along with the informed consent forms. The formal invitation detailed the study's confidential and voluntary nature and its anticipated roles as participants (see Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The anticipated participants were aware that their identities will be

hidden. The participants were also made aware that their data would not and could not be used as an evaluative or punitive tool in any way. The anticipated participants were informed that all data was stored on password-protected devices not owned or monitored by the district. A \$10.00 gift card was given to the participants.

### **Researcher–Participant Relationship**

The participants in this project study had no interactions with me through professional practices (see Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). I established an unbiased demeanor that created a welcoming atmosphere by having a positive attitude. I intended to remain objective by following protocol and precisely transcribing participants' interview responses as well as by member checking. Member checking was also used to ensure that participants' responses were not prejudiced by my biases (see Creswell, 2012).

### **Sample Size**

In this basic qualitative research, a small number of participants numbers were selected based on their professional experiences with teaching and facilitating reading over time. A sample may be small, but it allows for a new and rich understanding of the topic (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Merriam, 2009; Moser & Karstens, 2018). More than 20 participants were not feasible for this basic qualitative study. The anticipated selection of the eight–10 teachers included the grade-level reading teachers. In the event of rejections, invitations were extended to one reading teacher per grade level.

**Setting**

The setting was an Upstate region Wonderful Middle School that services approximately 758 students enrolled (South Carolina Department of Education, 2020). The demographic of this school was 93% African American with 7% mixed races/unknown (South Carolina Department of Education, 2020). This school has 30% of its population with disabilities and 100% receive free and reduced meals (South Carolina Department of Education, 2020). Wonderful Middle School had a full-time schedule, and its students participated in all major subject areas English language arts, mathematics, health, social studies, and science (South Carolina Department of Education, 2020). This school offered resource instruction in the subject areas of library, music, robotic engineering, business education, dance, digital literacy, physical education, and art (South Carolina Department of Education, 2020).

**Ethical Issues and Confidentiality Agreement**

Permission for selecting and conducting this basic qualitative work was granted by the district and the school principal (see Appendix D). Following ethical research protocols, all participants were made aware of their intended roles before each interview. Each participant's role and rights was reviewed and maintained as noted in the informed consent forms. All data or naming indicators were altered to remove any identifying information for improved confidentiality. The participants' identities were kept confidential by using pseudonyms names. The participants were reminded of the purpose of the study, confidentiality, and security measures for all data collection processes. The

interviews applied the practice of mutual respect from all participants and researchers with shared experiences and feedback (Creswell, 2014).

### **Data Collection**

Data collection set the boundary for improved quality of the security and privacy measures for this basic qualitative study. The data was collected from semi-structured, open-ended interviews with the applicable recording and research protocols (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). When the participants were identified, the interviews ensued. The participants and the researcher were confidentially engaged in the interview process utilizing Zoom, phone conference, or email. The participants established the scheduling for the interviews. All interviews were conducted using protocols outlined in the informed consent documents and reviewed before each interview. The interview protocols included an adherence to confidentiality followed by a concise review of the study's purpose and a synopsis of how the results were used. I recorded the interviews and took notes. Recordings were used to aid in acquiring precise information for analysis, coding, matrix development, and review processes.

### **Data Collection Instruments and Source**

Interviews served as the primary source of data collection. Semi-structured interviews are a mix of open-ended and structured questions (Merriam, 2014). Interview questions focused on the response to the perceptions of teachers about how they implement and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. The questions used to interview study participants were informed by the conceptual framework and are aligned with the research questions. The intention was to

obtain an understanding of the behaviors, perspectives, or perceptions of individual participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interview for this study consists of 25 questions.

Interviews started with me reviewing the consent form and reading the introduction to the study and answering questions that participants may have before starting the interview. The interview ended after all participant questions had been answered. Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. The interview was audio recorded, and I took written notes to record participants' responses. All interviews were conducted via Zoom. If participants had an issue meeting via Zoom, participants were given the option of participating via telephone.

### ***Interview Protocol***

The interview protocol for this research guided the study according to the ethical and confidentiality expectations of qualitative research guidelines. The interview protocol contained semi-structured and open-ended questions. The interview protocol was initiated with an overview of the study, along with a review of the consent form, confidentiality expectations, and the roles and responsibilities of the researcher and participants. The interview protocols included an adherence to confidentiality followed by a concise review of the study's purpose and a synopsis of how the results were used.

### ***Sufficiency of Data Collection***

Using the interview process allowed for more intercommunication and follow-ups while conducting this project study. Interviews were sufficient for data collection because they were infused with semi-structured and open-ended questions. Open-ended questions allowed the participants to respond response to their own words, and closed-ended

questions are questions that may be answered with a “yes” or “no” (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). The combination of the types of questions aided in retrieving vital information with the opportunity to include detailed examples. The questions included in the interviews were specific to the problem and purpose of this research. The questions asked were focused on the individual teachers’ experiences with the READ 180 program. The added details may serve as enriched experiences that contributed to the validity and quality of the said responses.

### ***Data Collection Tracking System***

To effectively track the data, I used an Excel spreadsheet and a journal for interviews (password protected). I used Excel spreadsheets and journals to log dates and corresponding notes from interviews and interactions with participants. I created categories to establish key ideas. The themes and coding trackers were logged in the same manner and secured on a password-protected non-district device. I consolidated some of the categories as I sorted and analyzed the information.

### **Role of the Researcher**

I am a middle school ELA teacher. I utilize a with a variety of reading intervention programs throughout the school year. During this study I established privacy and confidentiality with the participants. Qualitative researchers must maintain consistent contact and connections with the participants (Lodico et al., 2010). I was mindful to ensure an open and unbiased demeanor that aimed to create a welcoming atmosphere without personal bias. Finally, during this study I only represented the voice of the participant as noted in the findings. Member checks secured that the information was

accurate. I consistently provided renewed understandings of privacy, confidentiality, protocols of roles, and expectations for providing valid data for this research.

### **Data Analysis**

According to Merriam (2009), “Data analysis was the process of making sense out of the data” (p. 175). The data analysis for this study was conducted confidentially and according to ethical protocols for all participants. A computer program was not utilized to organize the data. However, the analyzed data was stored on a password-safe computer. Immediately following each interview, I started analyzing the data. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program.

I answered research questions by reviewing the interview transcripts and coding the data. Organized and purposeful data analysis provided answers to the research question (Merriam, 2009). This basic qualitative study included multiple steps for data analysis. I utilized Miles et al.'s (2014) process for analyzing data. I identified data by using open coding. Coding was a process of identifying a passage in the text. Open coding involves the conversion of raw, qualitative data into more useful quantitative data. The researchers argued that coding requires deep reflection, which requires interpretation. The final result is considered analysis (Miles et al., 2014). First, I became familiar with the data by reading the transcribed interview data several times. This allowed me to revisit the research questions. To establish the credibility of the findings I did the following: member checks, peer debriefing, and clarifying researcher bias. I identified

concepts and behaviors and assigned codes for them. It was important to identify patterns and connections. I started identifying themes. To establish the credibility of the findings I did the following: member checks, peer debriefing, and clarifying researcher bias.

Discrepant case analysis was a process for refining an analysis until it can explain or account for many cases. Analysis of discrepant data may revise, broaden, and confirm the patterns emerging from data analysis (Merriam, 2009).

### ***Data Analysis Process***

Merriam (2009) “Data analysis is the process of making sense out of data” (p. 175). The data analysis was beneficial to answering the research questions. The multiple steps to data analysis allowed me the opportunity to confidently analyze the data collected. I had to set aside my bias mindset. I had to set aside my experience with the READ 180 program. I utilize READ 180 for three years. Data analysis happened immediately after the interviews. The study was processed on a small scale. I did not use a program for coding. I used the six steps by Creswell (2012) for analyzing the data. First explore the data, code data with different ideas, find a theme for each idea, organize the themes, report the findings by writing a descriptive narrative, interpret the result, and validate the findings.

The data collected from the interviews were grouped in chunks to ensure proper analysis. The data was coded as the participants completed the interview. This method of analysis offered substantial and genuine data. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005) open coding requires predetermined definitions to provide consistency during the coding



process. The critical area of coding was participants delivery, dosage, a participant response to the interview questions.

I adhered to the approved IRB protocols and procedures while conducting the processes of data collection and analysis throughout this research. First, I listened to the audio-recorded interviews numerous times and compare the interviews with my notes. This allowed me to familiarize myself with the data. Eventually, the raw data was coded. I looked for relationships and similarities in the data. Axial coding was done to categorize and group the initial codes. As the coding was performed, themes emerged from the coded data. I looked for relationships and similarities in the data. Next, I started with a thematic content analysis. Thematic analysis was a qualitative data analysis method that involved reading through a data set and identifying patterns in meaning across the data to derive themes (Merriam, 2009). At this point, I needed to review the themes; I started to separate the bias and started to establish my overarching conception of the themes. I reviewed the notes taken during the open coding stage and began reflection and interpretation Now that I had a final list of themes, it is time to name and define each of them.

Defining themes involves articulating explicitly what was meant by each theme and assessing how it may help understand the data. Naming themes involves establishing a succinct and easily understandable name for each theme. Finally, once I had divided up the text and ordered my themes, I reported the analysis of the data. I discussed the meaning of each theme, and how they are interconnected. Lastly, I explained the results of my project study.

### ***Evidence of Quality***

To establish credibility, I captured what the participants believe, experience, and perceive through multiple approaches including member checking. To increase the potential for transferability, I included rich descriptions and specific details about the context of the participants' responses. Confirmability can be strengthened through the reflexivity of the researcher's thoughts during the coding process. Dependability refers to the consistency and stability of processes and data. Together these processes were the measure of trustworthiness used to establish the research findings. In addition, to increase the potential for transferability, researchers can include rich descriptions and specific details about the context of the participants' responses (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The data finding may be used to enhance other reading intervention programs. The accuracy, credibility, and findings of this data are supported by the ethical protocols and procedures implemented by Walden's IRB. Member checking was used as an additional measure to determine the accuracy of the research findings (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

### ***Discrepant Cases***

Discrepant cases were those instances of data that do not fit in the determined themes. If discrepant cases were discovered, I identified them and address the discrepant cases in the data analysis with a detailed explanation. This detailed explanation either confirms or extends the thematic analysis. This explanation may also provide more depth to the analysis. Discrepant cases provided vital insight into life experiences, thoughts, feelings, and concerns influencing teachers to implement the READ 180 program. If data

from discrepant cases does not fit into the categories created for coding, I explored, and considered all the discrepant cases in detail. Analysis of discrepant data may revise, broaden, and confirm the patterns emerging from data analysis (Merriam, 2009).

Discrepant cases may be resolved with the combined efforts of member checking and peer debriefing. Discrepant cases may be avoided when the researcher conducts a critical reflection of methods to ensure sufficient depth and relevance of data collection and analysis. (Merriam, 2009).

### **Research Findings**

The problem was that despite teachers' implementation of the READ 180 program, students at Wonderful Middle School were not learning or developing as well as desired despite the intervention. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ180 program. The findings of this project study were collected from interview with the READ 180 participants. In addition, I used member checking to confirm accuracy of the findings. The findings are examined in this section.

#### **Research Question 1**

What are Middle School teacher perceptions of the difficulties with the READ 180 program? The findings related to this question revealed the following: seven out of eight participants identified their struggles to motivate the students to use the program. Eight out of eight participants stated there were challenges adhering to the script provided by the program. There were factors that averted the participants from adherence to the

script. For example, some factors were the student's computer literacy skills, behavior issues, safety drills, and classroom disruptions by faculty members and administration. Five out of eight participants shared during the interview that student absenteeism was a very big problem. It was noted that if a student is out for three or more days, it is difficult to analyze and set goals for students the following week.

Two out of eight participants said that needed reliable headsets. The headsets for the classroom were provided by READ 180. The program does not allow any other headset to be utilized. Due to the frequent use of the headsets among the classes, the headsets are often damaged or destroyed. Thus, at times there are not enough headset for all students. The participants desired replacement headsets to be provided throughout the year. In addition, participant 1 stated that at times the internet would "go out". Due to the technology instability, the internet would prevent the students from utilizing the READ 180 program. Thus, participant 1 shared that this is when here entire class fall apart. Furthermore, Participant 1 mentioned that when this happens, she tried to combine the computer stations with the small group stations. The combination was unsuccessful. Due to the change in routine within the classroom, this causes some students to become disruptive and off task.

All participants stated that supplementary materials are not allow. The materials used within the classroom are provide by the READ 180 program. Five out of eight participants stated that students' inadequate reading skills make it challenging at times. Some students are performing on a first or second grade level. The READ 180 program is designed for students' grade 4<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>. Students reading skills are not proficient enough to

use without utilizing supplementary materials. Eight out of eight participant openly admitted that supplementary materials and READ 180 materials were use within the classroom.

### **Research Question 2**

What are Middle School teacher suggestions to better prepare to use the READ 180 program? Eight out of eight participants shared that they needed time to collaborate and discuss the student data. Participants four and five shared that during their professional learning communities' meetings other topics take precedence over the READ 180 program. According to participants four and five, additional time within the school day should be allocated for teachers to discuss the READ 180 program. All participants interviewed attended a two day READ 180 workshops. However, two out of eight participants felt that they did not fully understand how to use the program's data to monitor student progress. In addition, four participants mentioned that "having assistance setting up the classroom", before the start of the start of the school year, would reduce the students time off task.

The participants stated that having a READ 180 program professional development would be beneficial. Seven out of eight participants wanted the professional development to have a recurrence of every three months. The justification for the recurring professional development session was to demonstrate to the participants how to analyze and synthesis student data. The professional development session would allow participants to ask questions and share success and failures. Thus, leading to collaboration that may increase student reading skills.

### **Pattern-Themes in Findings**

During the data analysis and coding process, four themes were identified. The research questions guided me to finding the theme. Research Question 1. Why do Middle School teachers have difficulties with the READ 180 program? Research Questions 2. What do Middle School teachers need to better prepare to use the READ 180 program? The themes that derived from this method were: challenges, benefits, coping strategies, and analyzing data.

### **Salient Data and Discrepant Cases**

Salient data is the data that stands out from the qualitative data. There is a need for professional development session once or twice a year. The lack of knowledge on how to analyze the student data was evident. Eight out eight participants shared that there was a need for additional training on how to effectively monitor student progress and respond to meet the students' needs. The participants shared the desire for additional training.

Discrepant cases were those instances of data that do not fit in the determined themes. If discrepant cases were discovered, I identified them and address the discrepant cases in the data analysis with a detailed explanation. This detailed explanation either confirm or extend the thematic analysis. This explanation may also provide more depth to the analysis. Discrepant cases provided vital insight on life experiences, thoughts, feelings, and concerns influencing teachers to implement the READ 180 program. If data from discrepant cases does not fit into the categories created for coding, I explored, and

considered all the discrepant cases in detail. Analysis of discrepant data may revise, broaden, and confirm the patterns emerging from data analysis (Merriam, 2009).

### **Summary of Outcomes**

Eight teachers were interviewed. Seven out of eight participants identified there was a struggle to motivate the students to use the program. Eight out of eight participants stated there were challenges adhering to the script provided by the program. Five out of eight participants shared during the interview that student absenteeism was a very big problem. Two out of eight participants said that needed reliable headsets. The headsets for the classroom were provided by READ 180. Five out of eight participants stated that students' inadequate reading skills make it challenging at times. Eight out of eight participant openly admitted that supplementary materials and READ 180 materials were use within the classroom. Eight out of eight participants shared that they needed time to collaborate and discuss the student data. Five out of eight participants wanted the professional development to have a recurrence of every six months.

### **Project Deliverable and Findings**

Teachers are expected to meet the grown increasing reading requirements from state mandates. To better prepare the needs of the teachers utilizing the READ 180 program, I developed a three-day online professional development training. The purpose of professional development is to improve knowledge and skills to facilitate individual, school-wide, and district-wide improvements for the purpose of increasing student achievement. (see Appendix A)

### Section 3: The Project

Reading is a fundamental subject that impacts life across the United States and the world. The basic qualitative research I conducted provided insight into the implementation of the READ 180 program in an urban school. The study was designed to understand the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. The district has provided teachers with a 3-day training; however, the findings revealed that ongoing support may improve the teachers' ability to effectively implement the READ 180 program. Professional development offers an opportunity for teachers to collaborate and participate in engaging opportunities. The purpose of the designed professional development session was to equip the teachers with the skills needed to effectively implement the READ 180 program (see Appendix A). This professional development may lead to additional opportunities for me to present future professional development sessions throughout the school district.

In this section, I provide a description of the professional development session. I discuss the purpose, goals, rationale, literature review, implementation, and program evaluation. This section comprises the timeline, training, activities, and format of the professional development. The implementation and the professional development's success and challenges are also included.

#### **Rationale**

The rationale for the study is derived from the need to improve the reading skills of students who are two or more grade levels behind in reading. As a result of the



difficulties with teachers implementing the READ 180 program at Wonderful Middle School, students are not learning or developing as well as desired. The study addressed the gap in practice by bringing awareness of how the READ 180 program should be implemented within the class. After analyzing the findings, it is imperative that an ongoing professional development session be established to support the READ 180 teachers. It is important for teachers to continuously learn (Phillips, 2008). Professional Development is essential to ensure that high quality learning experiences are available for teachers. In addition, improving teacher quality may improve learning outcomes for students. Thus, the professional development session is needed to provide interactive and engaging activities to better equip the teachers with an effective means to implement the READ 180 program. I selected this project genre because I feel comfortable facilitating a professional development session. The professional development may be a solution to the problem experienced at Wonderful Middle School. Research-based instruction is necessary to support student reading development, and professional development is a critical avenue to ensure high-quality instruction practices are being supported (Diddion et al., 2022). Teacher professional growth is a continuous, recursive, and adaptive process (Taylor, 2019).

The data indicated a large percentage of students are unable to read proficiently on grade level. The inability to demonstrate sufficient reading skills was problematic (Leader A, personal communication, September 14, 2020). The principal, teacher, and parents are concerned about the declining reading scores (Principal A, personal communication, January 21, 2020). The READ 180 program was implemented by the

district office in 2017 (South Carolina Department of Education, 2021); however, percentages of students scoring below proficiency increased following the implementation of the program. Wonderful Middle School's report card details those students enrolled in the READ 180 programs continued to perform below their peers in reading (South Carolina Department of Education, 2019). For example, Grade 6 students in 2016 participating in the READ 180 program scored 20.4% below reading proficiency on the South Carolina READY exam. In 2019, this student group scored 41.0. % below reading proficiency on the SC READY exam. In 2018 Grade 7 students participating in the READ 180 program scored 28.9% below reading proficiency on the South Carolina READY exam. In 2019, this group of students scored 40.14% below reading proficiency on the South Carolina READY exam.

Implementing the READ 180 program was encountered with great difficulty (Teacher, personal communication, October 4, 2020). Teachers were not allowed to add words or delete words from the READ 180 program's script. This lack of flexibility impacted the teachers' ability to engage students which may point to a problem implementing the program (Teacher, personal communication, October 16, 2020).

Further, the READ 180 program representative provided engaging professional learning experiences focused on essential, high impact reading and writing practices and strategies (Teacher, personal communication, October 4, 2021). The representative made learning visible with classroom-focused courses and student-centered coaching to enhance teachers' practice. It was a tremendous amount of information to process, as one teacher indicated, "After the training, I needed additional support" (Teacher, personal

communication, May 5, 2020). Thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program.

### **Review of the Literature**

The review of literature for this project study included an assortment of sources to reach a level of saturation on the topic reading. Search terms such as *continued growth* and *professional development* aided in finding peer-reviewed journals, websites, and dissertations. Peer-reviewed articles were chosen from ERIC, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, Google Scholar, and Works Clearing House. In addition, I conducted an online search on Walden University Library. I searched terms such as *professional growth*, *teacher learning*, *teacher development*, *teacher motivation*, and *complexity thinking*. When using the Walden Library, only a few peer-reviewed articles appeared. This prompted me to use Google Scholar as a mean to locate additional information. It appeared that little to no research was conducted on effective implementation of the READ 180 program with professional development.

I researched several articles on how professional development may be beneficial to the teacher and the student. Research has supported that professional development is critical to student outcome (Sancar et al., 2021). When a teacher participates in professional development, it improves critical thinking skills (Gaines et al., 2019; Liao et al., 2022). Developing critical thinking skills is a component of a teachers' overall professional growth. Complexity thinking developed through professional development will enable the teacher to instruct to the highest proficiency (Taylor, 2020), improving

professional performance and student outcomes (Tantwy, 2020). When a teacher is well prepared and knowledgeable about what they are teaching, it improves the teaching quality (Islami et al., 2022). Therefore, attending a professional development would benefit the teacher as well as the students (Pahantharakphone & Liyanage, 2022).

Despite the benefits of READ 180, the participants in the study mentioned an issue with implementation of the READ 180. However, professional development may be used to fortify teacher understanding of effective implementation of a program and teacher practices (Kim et al., 2019). Attention must be given to understanding and supporting successful implementation of any program by providing professional development (Patifield et al., 2021). Seven out of eight participants identified that there was a struggle to motivate students to complete the READ 180 assignments, which can be addressed by using technology to make learning fascinating (Zhang, 2022). All participants also stated there were challenges adhering to the script. If a teacher feels that the approach does not have potential to help their students, they are less likely to implement any program with fidelity (Gains et al., 2019). Further, many educators are unprepared to meet the need of the students with the most intensive reading needs (McMaster et al., 2021). All participants admitted to using supplemental materials not assigned to the READ 180 program. The READ 180 program begins on a third grade reading level, but the participants reported that several of the students were reading on a first or second grade level.

The study also revealed that without provided time to collaborate, teachers were becoming overwhelmed with ways to effectively implement the READ 180 program. All

participants shared there was no time allotted for collaboration. Research shows collaboration of teachers during professional development improves critical thinking skills (De Simone, 2020). In addition, professional development improves teacher collaboration (Bodil, 2020). But teachers may be reluctant to dedicate time to collaborate with other teachers. Teachers who are not used to collaboration hold onto traditional orientations of learning and think collaboration is not an effective means to improve student growth (VanOostveen et al., 2019). Allotting time for collaboration may be also a challenge because of priorities, resources, and class scheduling (Liang et al., 2020). Even though all participants desired a time for collaboration, the participants are not representative of the entire school.

It was stated by the participants that an ongoing READ 180 professional development would enhance the implementation of the READ 180 program. Professional development should be individualized to meet the need of each participating teacher (Desimore, 2021). The professional development utilized for this project study incorporates means to engage the auditory learner, visual learner, and tactile learner. For example, for the auditory learner I offered group discussions. For the visual learner, the professional development offers visual such as a PowerPoint and handout. Finally, for the tactile learner, there are opportunities for the teachers to participate in role playing different scenarios.

It is the leadership responsibility to train, guide and facilitate the team of teachers through professional development (Nooruddin & Khan, 2019). Leadership designing professional development should honor teachers and ask what professional development

topics need to be discussed (Tasdemir & Karamen, 2022), establishing a professional development that is relevant and beneficial to the teachers (Fairman et al., 2020). It is important that professional development activities are perceived to have benefits (Padillo et. al, 2021). There is a correlation between perception of usefulness of professional development and a productive change in classroom delivery methods (Palermo et al., 2019). Studies show that when teachers are allowed to voice their concerns, that they are more apt to buy-in to whatever strategies are being implemented. When teachers have the opportunity to share what professional development training is needed, professional development is more effective (Palmer & Noltemeyer, 2019).

The conceptual framework guiding the professional development is based on the FRI, which is a research-based, school-wide reform effort committed to providing the professional development and follow-up support necessary for schools to achieve 100% literacy. FRI provides constant professional development opportunities for teachers to improve reading strategies. Thus, the goal is to improve instructional delivery and students reading gains. This framework is appropriate to the problem of this study because the FRI focuses on improving how the teacher implements reading strategies. FRI was used to guide professional development opportunities incorporating time for teachers to collaborate and discuss successful strategies utilized within the classroom.

### **Project Description and Goal**

#### **Web-Based Training**

Web-based Training is a form of online training that allows teachers to learn anytime, and from the comfort of anywhere. The professional development session is a

three-day event. Each session will last 60 minutes. During the session the teachers will be asked to self-reflect. Teachers will have an opportunity to collaborate and glean ideas that may be beneficial when implementing the READ 180 program. The three-day session will incorporate the following themes: developing strategies to implement the READ 180 program, evaluate, and analyze the three key components of the program, and school overall data usage.

On the first day of professional development, session the teachers will work in groups to review and discuss the overview of the READ 180 program. Each group will be assigned a section of the overview, and the group's speaker will identify importance aspects located within the section. Collectively the group will share successful and ineffective strategies used while utilizing the READ 180 program. The teachers will view a video clip of a teacher who is successfully implementing the READ 180 program. The teachers to identify what the teacher on the video clip successfully implemented. The learning outcome for day 1 is to develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program.

Next, on day two of the professional development session, the learning goal is to evaluate teachers' delivery, discuss the school's learning needs through a thorough review of the data related to the READ 180 program, and to define a clear set of teacher learning goals based on analysis of the data. After reviewing the data, the teachers will work in groups and discuss how the 3 components of the READ 180 program should be implemented. I will present to the group a research-based article. The teachers will identify the important information within the article using annotations. After discussion

of the article, the teachers will view a short video clip. The teachers will be asked what the teacher on the video clip should execute to help enhance implementation of the READ 180 program. The purpose for this activity is to allow the teachers an opportunity to apply what they learned from the previous professional development session and time to self-reflect.

Finally, on the third day of the professional development session, I will revisit the data findings. We will discuss the importance of the teacher scripted book and why it must be always utilized. In addition, the teachers will share opinions and benefits about wither or not adding supplemental materials to improve reading acquisition. The professional development session will conclude with questions and concerns. Each teacher will be asked to complete a survey before leaving the session. The learning outcome for this professional development is to supply the teachers at Wonderful Middle School with additional training on how to effectively implement the READ 180 program. With ongoing professional development teachers may be more productive. Thus, professional development allows the teacher to become more efficient and effective when implementing the READ 180 program. Professional development provides an opportunity for teachers to reflect on experiences, highlight areas of concern, and collaborate with others.

The goal of this project study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ180 program. The first goal of this project is to increase awareness about the teachers' perception of the implementation of the READ 180



program at Wonderful Middle School. The finding of the study explains that there is an ongoing issue with adequate training of how to effectively utilize the program. The teachers recognized the research-based information supporting the use of the READ 180 program. However, the participants expressed a need for an ongoing professional development. There is a need for training on how to effectively analyze the students report data. Also mention, was a need for more time to collaborate.

### **Projection Description**

I will present my findings to the teachers, administrator, and stackholders within District B by conducting a three day professional development session. The professional developemnt session will be conducted after school. The online session will last from 8:00am- 3:30 pm. Day 1 focuses on the learning outcome. The focus is to develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180. The teachers will be given a professional development agenda to use as a guide. The first hour of the training will focus on revisiting the program description. Teachers will work in a group (breakout rooms) to review an overview of the READ 180 program. Each group will be assigned a different section of the READ 180 teacher guide to read and discuss. The teachers will return to the main room to share findings with everyone. The teachers will share some success and failure while utilizing the program. Next, I will discuss the research-based information that explains how student growth may be obtain. I will show a brief video of a teacher implementing the READ 180 program. We will have a 15-minute discussion, reflecting on what the teacher did correctly versus what the teachers execute in class.

Day 2 will consist of focusing on the learning goals of the students. To develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program. The goal is to evaluate teacher, and school learning needs through a thorough review of data related to the READ 180 program. There will be a group discussion will define a clear set of teacher learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of the data. Day 3 is dedicated to reviewing the study findings. We will discuss the perception of the teacher script booklet. The teachers will share personal experiences with the group. We will discuss the perception about implementation and share personal experiences for 5 more minutes. During the professional development, the teachers will be asked how confident they are with the program? Also, the teachers will be asked to rate their level of confidence. The rating numbers 1 through 5. The number 5 will represent being the most confident. The teachers will be asked to explain each response on a sticky note. The teacher response will provide feedback to me as the facilitator of the professional development session. Then, I will be presented the findings from the study. Presenting the finding and answering questions will take 25 minutes to complete. The professional development will end with the teachers completing an evaluation of the professional development sessions. The evaluation will take the last 5 minutes of the professional development session.

### **Potential Barriers and Solutions**

The potential barrier is that the district leadership may not distribute the research findings to all stakeholders. Wonderful Middle School may not accept the finding of this study. Thus, this may lead to a resistance in participation in the professional development session. If shared, there may be some teachers and administrators that feel focused to

implement the READ 180 program and attend professional development session. Finally, the finding may represent of some teachers but not all. Everyone may not be committed to effectively implement the READ 180 programs. To address the three key findings in this study, the district leaders will need to invest more funds into the READ 180 program. The investment may include additional professional development session throughout the year to better equip the teachers with the proper implementation for the READ 150 program. It is imperative that the district utilize existing resources to support the teachers. For example, if additional headphones are needed, the district should make them assessable and ready for use. Therefore, existing support and improvements may enhance teacher delivery of the READ 180 program, and overall student academic reading growths.

### **Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

The professional development session will be offered after school to support teachers who having difficulties implementing the READ 180 program. The session is I will request to meet with administers and stake holders to discuss my findings. Once I have permission, I will distribute the information to learning coaches and offer the professional development session to all who are interested.

On the first day of professional development, session the teachers will work in groups to review and discuss the overview of the READ 180 program (see Appendix A). Each group will be assigned a section of the overview, and the group's speaker will identify importance aspects located within the section. Collectively the group will share successful and ineffective strategies used while utilizing the READ 180 program. The

teachers will view a video clip of a teacher who is successfully implementing the READ 180 program. The teachers to identify what the teacher on the video clip successfully implemented. The learning outcome for day 1 is to develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program.

Next, on day two of the professional development session, the learning goal is to develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program. Substantial time will be allotted for discussion of the following: station rotation, whole group instruction, small group instruction, independent reading, and the computer station.

Finally, on the third day of the professional development session, I will evaluate teachers' delivery, discuss the school's learning needs through a thorough review of the data related to the READ 180 program, and define a clear set of teacher learning goals based on analysis of the data. After reviewing the data, the teachers will work in groups and discuss how the 3 components of the READ 180 program should be implemented. I will present to the group a research-based article. The teachers will identify the important information within the article using annotations. After the discussion of the article, the teachers will view a short video clip. The teachers will be asked what the teacher on the video clip should execute to help enhance the implementation of the READ 180 program. The purpose of this activity is to allow the teachers an opportunity to apply what they learned from the previous professional development session and time to self-reflect. We will discuss the importance of the teacher-scripted book and why it must be always utilized. In addition, the teachers will share opinions and benefits about whether or not to add supplemental materials to improve reading acquisition. The professional

development session will conclude with questions and concerns. Each teacher will be asked to complete a survey before leaving the session. The learning outcome of this professional development is to supply the teachers at Wonderful Middle School with additional training on how to effectively implement the READ 180 program. With ongoing professional development, teachers may be more productive. Thus, professional development allows the teacher to become more efficient and effective when implementing the READ 180 program. Professional development provides an opportunity for teachers to reflect on experiences, highlight areas of concern, and collaborate with others.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Students and Others**

The final part of the project description is to analyze and note the roles and responsibilities of students and others. I will ask the schools' literacy coaches to allow me to utilize a classroom, for the purpose of conducting the professional development sessions. Furthermore, I will ask for the assistance of the literacy coaches, teachers, parents, and administrators who will be associated with the implementation of the recommendations. The software purchase will remain in the hands of District B.

### **Project Implications**

Professional Development is a great genre for this study. The professional development offered may enhance how the READ 180 program is implemented within the classroom. Teachers may gain the insight and confidence needed to provide effective delivery of the program. The result may be greatly impacting student academic growth.

The professional development may lead to future professional development opportunities as well.

### **Implications Including Social Change**

The local community will benefit from this study by bringing awareness to the difficulties teachers face while trying to implement the READ 180 program. The additional awareness may offer support to the teachers from the district leaders, administrators, and the community. Teachers who are equipped with ongoing professional development opportunities are better equipped to implement the READ 180 program. As a result, students' reading skills may improve. With improved reading skills, students may make better choices and enhance their problem-solving skills. Thus, leading to better citizens within the community.

### **Project Importance to Local Stakeholders in a Larger Context**

The local community will benefit from this study by bringing awareness to the difficulties teachers face while trying to implement the READ 180 program. The additional awareness may offer support to the teachers from the district leaders, administrators, and the community. Teachers who are equipped with ongoing professional development opportunities are better equipped to implement the READ 180 program. As a result, students' reading skills may improve. With improved reading skills, students may make better choices and enhance their problem-solving skills. Thus, leading to better citizens within the community.

The finding will affect the stakeholders as it pertains to the effective implementation of the READ 180 program. Teachers' concerns may bring attention to

the issue. Therefore, the stakeholders and district leaders may review and analyze the effectiveness of the READ 180 program within the district schools. The findings may bring developers to be more flexible with the implementation of the program. The new awareness may lead to a review of the READ 180 program entirely, which may lead to significant change within the overall READ 180 program.

#### Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they had, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the READ 180 program. Research has shown that Read 180 is an effective reading intervention program for helping students who are more than 2 years behind achieve reading proficiency (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). All participants interviewed expressed a desire to continue using the READ 180 program, but ongoing professional development is needed to effectively use the program with fidelity. The benefits of this study include additional professional development that will support the teachers utilizing the program. The professional development may strengthen the implementation of the READ 180 program. The professional development session will be offered to the teachers, administrators, and stakeholders to review and discuss the project study findings. Section 4 includes my reflection on the process of completing this study and suggestions for further research.

#### **Project Strengths and Limitations**

The project's strength is the awareness of the teachers' perspective of the READ 180 program, giving the teachers an active voice. The teachers' thoughts and concerns are addressed in this study. Based on these perspectives, ongoing professional development may be provided throughout the school year to better equip the teachers when implementing the READ 180 program. As a result, teachers may be allotted time to collaborate and discuss strategies that may increase reading skills. The professional development may address needs and potential concerns while utilizing the program.



The potential limitations include the amount of money needed to provide constant professional development for the teachers. However, using teachers to facilitate professional development may alleviate the cost. The next limitation is the lack of time available to conduct the professional development training. This issue can be resolved by allowing additional early release days within the academic school calendar. When the students are released for dismissal, the teachers will have a chance to attend professional development training. Finally, to address technology usage, District B should purchase extra equipment throughout the year. For example, District B should purchase enough headphones to replace the first set of headphones when needed. These headphones should be available to the teachers upon request.

### **Recommendations for Alternative Approaches**

The goal of this project study was to implement recommendations from the research findings. The READ 180 program is widely used within the classrooms throughout the district. For example, READ 180 is utilized to improve middle school student's reading skills. Research data supports the correlation between effective implementation of the READ 180 program and student reading growth. However, the research findings contribute to a needed for additional professional development session that supports effective implementation of the READ 180 program.

District and school administrators are responsible for providing instructional leadership and developing, implementing, and evaluating policies. Teachers must feel they are supported. Thus, professional development would be an ideal solution to many implementation issues. A timeline for the implementation should be established as well.

In addition, there should be professional development provided in the summer. The summer training should be for all new READ 180 teachers.

### **Scholarship, Project, and Leadership Change**

I have obtained a deeper understanding of the READ 180 program. I learned that the READ 180 program is geared toward Grades 4–12. Thus, students who read below Grade 4 will need supplemental work to better meet their needs. During the interview participants were also able to share their challenges and areas of growth with me, which enabled me to glean how the READ 180 program is being implemented in District B. Based on their responses, there was a need for professional development to better prepare the teachers for full and successful implementation of the READ 180 program.

### **Project Development and Evaluation**

The project development was established based on the needs identified in the project study. It was determined that a 3-day professional development session may be beneficial. The professional development session will be synchronous, meaning that individuals will virtually attend a professional development session at the same time as the instructor. The 3-day professional development session, which is 60 minutes, will occur after school. At the end of the professional development, teachers will be able to provide feedback.

### **Leadership and Change**

Teachers are under pressure to improve the reading skills of the students. The data analysis process empowered me to examine issues from different perspectives. I developed the ability to influence a change in how the READ 180 program is being

implemented. By completing this study, I was able to grow as a teacher. Thus, I have a greater appreciation for the research process. My improved researching skills have shown me that there are several ways to address an issue. For example, I have the skills needed to find research-based articles to defend my ideas.

Through my experience at Walden University, I have learned how to analyze and synthesize data. I am equipped to identify themes and understand and appreciate the research method and procedures. I can confidently defend my stance on a particular educational topic. The experience has changed my perspective. I am an agent of social change, and I realize the impact I can have in my field.

I also realize that learning is a lifelong journey. I understand I have to enlighten others about issues in the educational field. I am excited to share my ideas and research-based practices with others. I have the skills needed to help new teachers grow and develop into agents of social change. Developing the project has given me the confidence to facilitate additional professional development in the future. I can research problems and present solutions to a large group of people.

I realize that being a project developer I must be intentional in every way. I learned that it takes a tremendous amount of time to create a program. Certain time restraints caused me to work extended hours to reach my goal. There were times I wanted to cry because I could not balance my life, work, and my studies. I found strength from within that I never knew I had. I also learned how to think outside the box when working with others. For example, I had to learn the virtue of patience. I wanted to do things my

way. However, this is not beneficial when working with others, it is difficult to manage technology issues and keep the pace of the classroom consistent.

### **Reflections on the Importance of Work**

Studies have shown that reading is essential and serves as a basic building block for learning (Yasmine, 2019). Reading things such as street signs or reading the dosage of a prescription show that reading is critical to function in everyday life. Studies have also shown that reading improves memory and overall decision-making skills (Yang et. al, 2019).

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

According to research, improved reading skills can impact society. In addition, research has shown individuals who read books are more equipped to make better decisions than individuals who do not read books. Having the ability to read may allow individuals to gain a deeper understanding of the world around them. The individual may gain exposure to new ideas and beliefs. As a result, having the ability to read may allow the readers to be more tolerant and appreciative of other people and cultures.

The empirical implication is that Wonderful Middle School may see improvement in the students' reading skills. Teachers may use the READ 180 program to identify a student who needs additional reading support. The additional professional development sessions may allow the teachers to create a strategic plan that may ensure greater overall reading skills. The findings may improve the overall implementation of the READ 180 program. The findings of the study may provide support for current and future teachers at

Wonderful Middle School. Ultimately, the findings may support other teachers within the district.

### **Conclusion**

The READ 180 is a research-based reading intervention program. Research supports that READ 180 if implemented correctly, will increase reading skills (cite). The participants expressed a need for ongoing professional development. The professional development emphasizes the need for district leaders and stake holder to provide resources for all teachers utilizing the READ 180. The project will be shared with district leaders, stakeholders, and teachers.

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## Appendix A: The Project

### Middle School Teachers' Perceptions About the Implementation of the READ 180 Intervention Program

The goal for professional development is to (a) provide research-based strategies to effectively implement the READ 180 program, (b) address areas of concern regarding successful implementation, (c) and to accurately analysis the student data report. According to Bowman et. al (2022), professional development is one of the most effective ways to help teachers use technology more effectively. Professional development sessions are used to enhance teachers' teaching strategies and knowledge (Barrett et. al, 2012). The professional development is geared to equip teachers with the necessary information needed to meet the needs of the students. The professional development session is a three-day web-based or face-to-face session. Due to the limitations of some schools, I felt it appropriate to give the teachers who could not attend in person, an opportunity to receive the same training. The sessions start at 8:00 am and will end at 3:30 pm. For the first 5 minutes, all teachers participated in a brief introduction/meet and greet. After the introductions, teachers worked in groups to analyze and discuss an overview of the READ 180 program. Fifteen minutes were allotted for this activity. The learning target for day one was to develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program. Next, I will review the program's description. Teachers attending the professional development session should bring the READ 180 guidebook. If the teachers do not have a copy of the READ 180 guidebook, there will be a digital copy available and accessible through a QR Code. The session will progress towards the following topics: effectiveness of the program, program information and details, and breakout sessions.

#### **Purpose and Goals for the Project**

The professional development sessions are created to provide refreshed content to teachers experiencing difficulties implementing the READ 180 program. This project provides an outline of the goals, outcomes, and activities presented for the three days. The professional development is created to include collaboration activities and scenarios to enhance the training of the READ 180 teachers. In each session, the teachers will have an opportunity to self-reflect, collaborate with others, and ask questions regarding certain aspects of the READ 180 program.

#### **Target Audience and Learning Outcomes**

The learning outcome for this READ 180 professional development is to supply the teachers at Wonderful Middle School with ideas and strategies for utilizing the READ 180 program and sharing implementation practices. Professional development is necessary to ensure that teacher learning is an ongoing process (Zaky et. al, 2022). Collaboration methods, such as break sessions, encourage and enables teachers to create strategies to better me the needs of students while utilizing the READ 180 program.

When teachers are better prepared to implement the READ 180 program, they may positively impact their students.

### **Project Design and Timeline**

The proposed timeline is offered during the summer months. The summer months provide flexibility when it comes to scheduling professional development. The summer months' time frame allows leaders and stakeholders to take a closer look at the program and decide if the district wants to continue utilizing the program for the upcoming school year. This timeframe allows teachers to self-reflect and determine what needs to be "done differently". This timeframe helps administrators and teachers determine the READ 180 focus for the next professional development session.

### **Project Materials and Supplies**

PowerPoint presentation

Internet

Lab top

Handouts

Pencils/pens

## Day 1: Professional Development Session

**Teacher Notes:** The teacher facilitator will welcome the teachers and discuss an icebreaker activity. Based on the data, there is a need to read and discuss the READ 10 overview of the program. According to the study, there is a great need to discuss the research and effective implementation of the READ 180 program.

## Day 1 Session Agenda

**Learning objective:** To develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program.

8:00 AM - 8:15 AM – Meet/greet/Icebreaker activity

8:15AM - 9:15AM- Program description

9:15AM -10:15AM -Research

10:15AM -11:15AM -Effectiveness

11:15AM -11:25AM Break

Session II Program Information

11:25AM -11:27AM Program information

11:27 AM -12:27PM-Program Details

12:30 PM -1:30 PM- Lunch

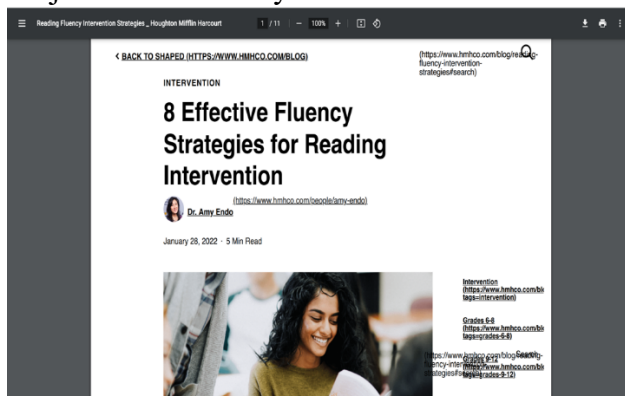
1:30 PM -2:30 PM- Read/ Annotate/ Discuss Article (Breakout session)

2:30 PM -3:30 PM – Recap of the day-Questions and Answers (large group)

## Day 1 Project PowerPoint Slides



## Project Handouts Day 1



**Day 2: Professional Development -Best Practices**

Day 2 of the professional development session will consist of an analysis of the instructional routine and procedures. The READ 180 program has three major components: rotation stations, whole group instruction, small group instruction, independent reading stations, and computer stations. After a successful analysis of each component, the teachers will be asked to read and discuss a READ 180 article. Upon completion of the article, the teachers will view a video clip of a teacher who is using the READ 180 program. The teachers attending the professional development session must identify what the teacher is performing correctly and what she is performing incorrectly in the video clip. This activity requests the teachers to apply what they have learned from day two's session. Before the end of the session, the teachers will be asked to self-reflect.

**Day 2- Daily Session Agenda**

**Learning objective:** To develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program.

8:00AM -8:15AM – Station Rotation

8:15 AM - 9:15 AM- Whole Group Instruction

9:15 AM -10:15 AM -Small Group Instruction

10:15AM -10:25AM Break

10:26 AM -11:26 AM – Independent Reading Station

11:27 AM -12:27 PM- Computer Station

12:30 PM -1:30 PM- Lunch

1:30 PM -2:30 PM- Read/ Annotate/ Discuss Article (Breakout session)

2:30 PM -3:30 PM– Recap of the day-Questions and Answers (large group)

## Day 2 Project PowerPoint Slides

**Learning objective:** To develop strategies to assist the teachers when implementing the READ 180 Program.

**READ180** Blended Learning Model  
Challenge yourself in each area of your READ 180 class.

STUDENT APPLICATION  
ROTATIONS  
WHOLE-GROUP INSTRUCTION  
TECHNOLOGY STATION  
INDEPENDENT READING  
SMALL-GROUP INSTRUCTION  
WHOLE-GROUP LEARNING  
SMALL-GROUP LEARNING

### Whole Group Instruction



Small Group Instruction  
10-minute Break  
Independent Reading Stations  
Computer Station  
Lunch  
Breakout Sessions

Day 2 Handouts

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## 7 Middle School and High School Reading Intervention Strategies

 Shelley Branine

June 03, 2021 · 4 Min Read



Literacy  
Intervention  
Grades 6-8  
Grades 9-12



Reading Intervention



**Day 3: Professional Development- Study Results and Recommendations**

On the last day of professional development, I will recap what was discussed in the previous sessions. I will present information about the following: data brain, foundations of reading, language development, background knowledge, data findings, and recommendations. After reviewing the data, the teachers will work in groups and discuss how the 3 components of the READ 180 program should be implemented. I will present to the group a research-based article. The teachers will identify the important information within the article using annotations. After the discussion of the article, the teachers will view a short video clip. The teachers will be asked what the teacher on the video clip should execute to help enhance the implementation of the READ 180 program. The purpose of this activity is to allow the teachers an opportunity to apply what they learned from the previous professional development session and time to self-reflect. In conclusion, before ending the session, the teachers were asked to complete an evaluation of the sessions. The feedback from the evaluation will allow me to refine some areas and set new goals. The feedback from the evaluation will provide documentation, which may be used by the district and stakeholders to continue offering professional development sessions in the future.

**Day 3 Session Agenda**

**Learning Objective:** To evaluate teacher, and school learning needs through a review of data related to the READ 180 program; defines a clear set of educators learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of the data.

8:00-8:15 – recap/ scenarios

8:15- 9:15- Data Brain/Foundations of Reading

9:15-10:15 -Language Development/ Background Knowledge

10:15-10:25 Break

10:26-11:26 – Data Findings

11:27-12:27- Recommendations

12:30-1:30- Lunch

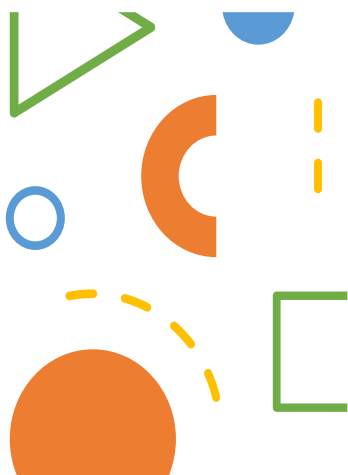
1:30-2:30- Video Clip/Scenarios/Application

2:30-3:30 – Differentiate instruction for struggling students.

### Day 3 PowerPoint Slides

#### Learning Outcome

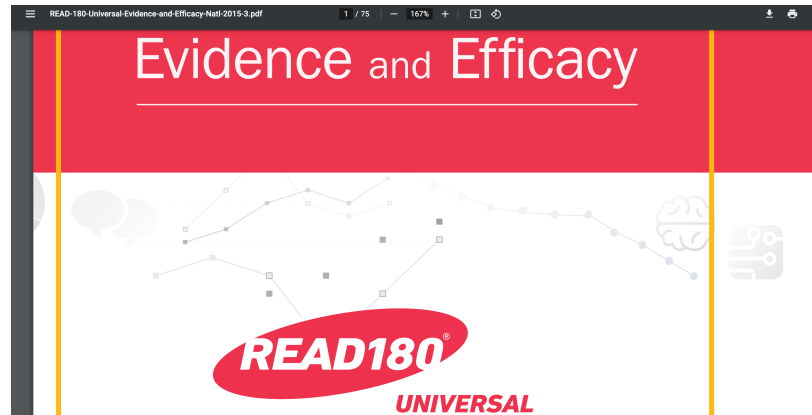
- To evaluate teacher, and school learning needs through a review of data related to the READ 180 program; defines a clear set of educators learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of the data.



PLEASE DOWNLOAD THE EVIDENCE AND EFFICACY USER GUIDE BY READ 180 😊

<b>The Language and Literacy Imperative</b>	
The Reading Brain.....	16
Foundations for Reading.....	18
Language Development.....	20
Background and Content Knowledge.....	22
Text Complexity.....	24
Independent Reading and Read Alouds.....	26
Writing for Understanding.....	28
<b>Teaching as Emotional Work</b>	
Mindset and Self-Efficacy.....	30
Social-Emotional Learning.....	32
Multi-tiered System of Supports.....	34
Differentiated Instruction for Struggling Students.....	36
Differentiated Instruction for Students With Disabilities.....	38
Differentiated Instruction for English Language Learners.....	40
Family Engagement.....	42
Professional Learning Communities.....	44
<b>Technology in the Service of Teaching and Learning</b>	
Personalized Instruction With Adaptive Technology.....	46
Blended Learning Solutions.....	48
Assessment Of and For Learning.....	50

We will discuss pages 16-26



## What is language development?

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- Language development starts with sounds and gestures, then words and sentences.



## Data Findings

Eight teachers were interviewed. Seven out of eight participants identified there was a struggle to motivate the students to use the program.

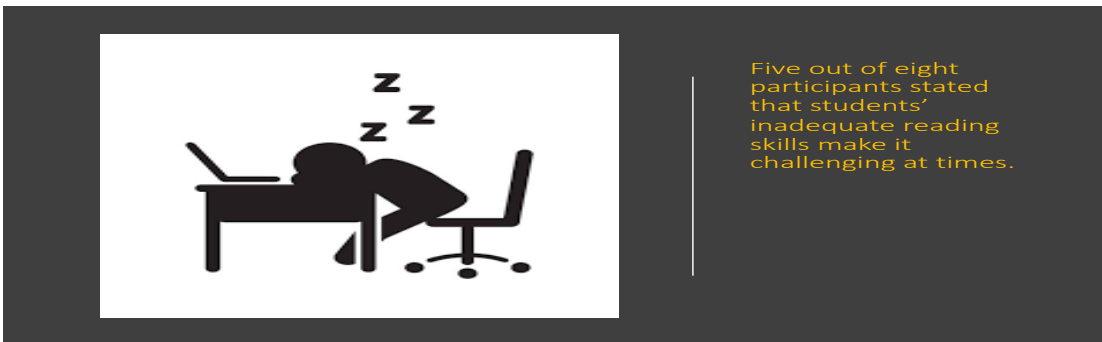


. Five out of eight participants shared during the interview that student absenteeism was a very big problem.



Two out of eight participants said that needed reliable headsets. The headsets for the classroom were provided by READ 180.

- Due to the constant use of these headsets between all class, the headset became damage within 3 months of use.



Five out of eight participants stated that students' inadequate reading skills make it challenging at times.



Eight out of eight participant openly admitted that supplementary materials and READ 180 materials were use within the classroom. Eight out of eight participants shared that they needed time to collaborate and discuss the student data.



Five out of eight participants wanted the professional development to have a recurrence of every six months.

Please turn to page 36- Differentiated Instruction for Struggling Students

READ 180 Universal Evidence and Efficacy Natl 2019-3.pdf 3 / 75 23%

- Independent Reading and Read Alouds ..... 26
- Writing for Understanding ..... 28
- **Teaching as Emotional Work**
  - Mindset and Self-Efficacy ..... 30
  - Social-Emotional Learning ..... 32
  - Multi-tiered System of Supports ..... 34
  - Differentiated Instruction for Struggling Students ..... 36
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  - Family Engagement ..... 42
  - Professional Learning Communities ..... 44
- **Technology in the Service of Teaching and Learning**
  - Personalized Instruction With Adaptive Technology ..... 46
  - Blended Learning Solutions ..... 48
  - Assessment Of and For Learning ..... 50

Day 3 Handouts  
Evidence and Efficacy READ 180

Professional Development Exit Survey

Professional development outcomes and goals are clearly stated.	1 2 3 4
Professional development was well organized.	1 2 3 4
Professional development was well-paced.	1 2 3 4
Professional development enhanced my implementation of the READ 180 program.	1 2 3 4
Facilitator’s overall knowledge was effective	1 2 3 4

## Appendix B: Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was initiated with an overview of the study, along with a review of the consent form, confidentiality expectations, and the roles and responsibilities of the researcher and participants. All participants were given a pseudo-name to maintain confidentiality and remove any identifiers throughout the process. All interview responses were recorded on a non-district, password-secured device. The notes from the interviews were taken and transcribed onto a secured laptop to ensure the security, accuracy, and validity of the data.

### **SQ1-What are Middle School teachers' perceptions of the difficulties they have with the READ 180 program?**

1. What are your thoughts and concerns about the READ 180 program?
2. Where do you provide training before being asked to implement the program?
3. How long was the professional development training? Explain
4. How is the implementation going for you and your students?
5. Is your classroom equipped with the materials needed for the proper implementation of the READ 180? Please explain.
6. Explain how you implement supplementary materials.
7. Describe the challenges you faced while utilizing the READ 180 program.  
Explain
8. Describe some of the benefits of utilizing the READ 180 program. Explain
9. How did you measure the effectiveness of the READ 180 program? Explain
10. How often do you monitor student growth? Explain

**SQ2-What are Middle School teacher suggestions to better prepare to use the READ 180 program?**

11. What additional resources are needed for proper implementation that is not included with the READ 180 program?
12. What professional development did you receive? Explain
13. Was there a follow-up session offered after the professional development?  
Explain
14. Do you feel that you have adequate time at school to review the data? Explain
15. How often do you collaborate with your colleagues about the READ 180 program?
16. Describe a specific student's case in reading and how you achieved success with the student.
17. Are there times when the reading script limits your ability as a teacher?  
Explain
18. What is the effectiveness of the reading script provided by the READ 180 program? Explain
19. How do you address students who are reading on a second-grade level and explain what strategies are used to better meet the needs of the students?
20. Do you have any suggestions that would make the READ 180 program more effective?
21. How is the rotation between the stations limiting the students reading gains?  
Explain



22. What changes are needed when you are conducting small group instruction?

Explain

23. How do you conduct the rotation between each station? Are there any improvements needed?

24. How do you address the issue if a student takes some of the reading books home? Explain

25. Do you feel that more professional development is needed to ensure that the READ 180 program is implemented with fidelity?

## Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Electronic Mail

Subject: Project Study

Dear Middle School Teachers:

Reflecting upon all the changes in education we have endured over the past year, many students' reading skills have been severely impacted. We must address the inadequate reading skills of our students. Our goal as reading teachers is to better equip the students to meet the academic needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

My name is XXXXXXXXXXXX, currently a doctoral student at Walden University. I am simply trying to capture your thoughts and perspectives regarding your experiences with the READ 180 program. Your responses to the questions will be kept confidential. Each interview will be assigned a number code to help ensure that personal identifiers are not revealed during the analysis and findings.

There is a \$10.00 gift card given as compensation for participating in this study. However, your participation will be a valuable addition to my research and your findings could lead to a greater understanding of the READ 180 program. If you are willing to participate, please suggest a day and time that suits you and I'll do my best to be available. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. All information gathered for this research will be held with the utmost confidence and will not be communicated with any other participant or school leaders.

I would appreciate your acceptance of this invitation to interview you regarding your experiences with the READ 180 program. The interview process will not exceed 60 minutes for any scheduled interview. Your participation in this study is entirely confidential and voluntary. If or when you decide to participate, your participation in this study can be withdrawn at any time.

Should you require additional information or clarification regarding this study, feel free to email me at XXXXXXXXXXXX with your comments or questions. Finally, thank you for your dedication to the field and your extraordinary teaching abilities.

XXXXXXXXXXXX  
Doctoral Student, Walden University

## Appendix D: Permission to Conduct Study Letter

Superintendent  
School District  
Address  
Request for Permission to Conduct Research in Schools

Dear Superintendent

My name is XXXXXXXXXXXX, I am a student working towards my doctoral degree at Walden University. The research I wish to conduct for my dissertation is exploring the implementation of the READ 180 intervention program within the classroom. This project will be conducted under the supervision of my chair Dr. Antoinette Myers of Walden University; her email is XXXXXXXXXXXX.

I am requesting permission to send a recruitment letter to middle school reading teachers.

I am providing a copy of my proposal with copies of the recruitment letter, and my Institutional Review Board (IRB) number.

Any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at

Email: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Thank you,

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

## Appendix E: Participant Letter to Schedule Interview

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for taking part in the study. The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of teachers about how they implement, what difficulties they have, and what they might need to be better prepared to use the Read 180 program.

I would like to schedule a date and time that meets your availability to participate in the 60-minute interview. Please respond to this email no later than \_\_\_\_\_.

All communications for this study will be conducted via the email address you provided. The details for interview confirmations and reminders, if necessary, will be communicated in the same manner. Your commitment to education and participation in this research is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX