

Rowan University

Rowan Digital Works

---

Theses and Dissertations

---

5-8-2003

## The effects of collaboration between the elementary teacher and educational media specialist on non-required student library usage

Kimberly A. McCauley  
*Rowan University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

McCauley, Kimberly A., "The effects of collaboration between the elementary teacher and educational media specialist on non-required student library usage" (2003). *Theses and Dissertations*. 1343.  
<https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/1343>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact [graduateresearch@rowan.edu](mailto:graduateresearch@rowan.edu).

THE EFFECTS OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ELEMENTARY TEACHER  
AND EDUCATIONAL MEDIA SPECIALIST ON NON-REQUIRED STUDENT  
LIBRARY USAGE

By  
Kimberly A. McCauley

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
At  
Rowan University  
May 1, 2003

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved 5/8/03

## ABSTRACT

Kimberly A. McCauley

THE EFFECTS OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CLASSROOM TEACHER  
AND EDUCATIONAL MEDIA SPECIALIST ON NON-REQUIRED STUDENT

LIBRARY USAGE

2002/2003

Dr. Marilyn Shontz

Master of Arts in School and Public Librarianship

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not there was a difference in third grade students' non-required school library uses if collaboration on a weekly basis between the educational media specialist and classroom teacher was present. The study contained one experimental group, consisting of one class of third grade students who received collaborative instruction and one comparison group who did not. A comparison of these two groups' non-required library use and their circulation habits, as well as the types of activities they participated in when they were in the library led to the following results: Increased exposure to the educational media specialist did not affect third grade students' number of non-required visits to the library or the number of items third grade students circulated. Students from the experimental group did participate in more of a variety of types of activities than students from the comparison group. A discussion on considerations and recommendations is provided.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	iv
Chapter I: Statement of the Problem.....	1
Chapter II: Review of Literature.....	6
Chapter III: Methodology.....	19
Chapter IV: Analysis of Data.....	24
Chapter V: Discussion and Recommendations.....	32
Bibliography.....	36
Appendix A: Letter of Intent.....	38
Appendix B: Parent Permission Letter.....	39
Appendix C: Collaboration Log.....	40
Appendix D: Student Sign-In Sheet.....	41

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Non-Required Library Visits..... 26

Figure 2: Circulation..... 28

Figure 3: Activities Participated In During Non-Required Library Visits..... 30

## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

#### Significance of the Topic

The educational media specialist is expected to create a positive library environment that students use for a variety of instructional and recreational purposes. One way this can be facilitated is through collaborating with the classroom teacher on a weekly basis. Collaboration occurs when the media specialist works in partnership with the classroom teacher to develop and teach lessons in both the classroom and the library. Collaborating provides the school library media specialist with a better awareness of the curriculum being taught and its standards, allowing for a more effective and efficient library, as well as enabling the students to become more familiar with the media specialist. Therefore, the question arises, "Does student non-required library usage increase when the media specialist collaborates weekly with the classroom teacher on lessons?" An answer to this question is important because it will allow the media specialist to determine whether collaboration in order to increase non-required student library usage should be given a higher priority than other tasks.

The results from this study were important because the media specialist and school principal used those results to determine the best activities and scheduling for the H. Russell Swift School Library. The results may also be used at a future time to justify additional library media center staffing.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not there was a difference in third grade students' non-required school library uses if collaboration on a weekly basis between the educational media specialist and classroom teacher was present. One third grade class in which teacher/educational media specialist collaboration occurred was called Group A. Two other third grade classes in which teacher/educational media specialist collaboration activity did not exist was called Group B. This study's specific purpose was to determine whether or not there was a difference in the number of items circulated, the number of visits, and the types of activities students from these two groups participated in when they were in the library during non-required visits.

## *Research Questions*

This study answered the following three questions. 1) Does increased exposure to the media specialist affect third grade students' number of non-required visits to the library? 2) Does increased exposure to the educational media specialist affect the number of items third grade students circulate? 3) Do the third grade students from Group A have a preference for certain activities from students in Group B?

## Definition of Terms

**Classroom teacher:** The teacher who is ultimately responsible for a group of students throughout the school day. In the role of collaboration, the classroom teacher has knowledge of curriculum, classroom program, student needs, and abilities (Doiron and Davies, 1998, p. 6).

**Collaboration:** The process that involves teachers and school library media specialists as partners in the development of lessons that integrate resources, information skills, and

shared program objectives. The partners plan, teach, and evaluate together (Doiron and Davies, 1998, p. 22).

Educational media center: An area in a school that contains varied formats of materials and equipment with programs and services provided by an educational media specialist and additional staff as needed and as funds are available. It functions as a learning laboratory for students. This is the more current term for school library. Also called library media center (McCain, 2001, p.113 ).

Library usage: For the purpose of this study, library usage includes any activity done in the library, whether it includes academic or recreational uses.

Media specialist: A person with appropriate certification under state requirements and broad professional preparation, both in education and media, with competencies to carry out a media program. The media specialist is the basic media professional in the school media program. Synonymous with learning resources specialist, educational media specialist, library media specialist, school library media specialist, teacher-librarian, and school librarian (Young, 1983, p.143).

Non-required use: For the purpose of this study, any voluntary visit by a third grade student during free time, lunch, or recess; any visit that is not a mandatory library class or class visit.

Third grade students: For the purpose of this study, students who are in their third year of full-day public school. Students are between the ages of eight and nine years old.

### Assumptions and Limitations

The results of the study were valid for third grade students at the H. Russell Swift Elementary School in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey. One assumption was that

student use of the library for non-required purposes was desirable. One limitation of this study was that it only examined three out of six classes in one school. More studies need to be done in order to validate whether or not this practice can be effective in other grade levels or geographic areas.

## References

Doiron, R., & Davies, J. (1998). *Partners in learning*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

McCain, M.M. (2001). *Dictionary for school library media specialists: A practical and comprehensive guide*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Young, H. (Ed.). (1983). *ALA glossary of library and information science*. Chicago: American Library Association.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Benefits of Collaboration

A review of current and relevant literature explained many aspects of collaborative teaching between the classroom teacher and the educational media specialist. Almost all the research determined collaborative teaching maximizes the educational experience for everyone involved. Cheryl LaGuardia (1993) explained, “The benefits include a sense of departmental teamwork, improved student library literacy, and faculty and student goodwill” (p. 62). Collaborative planning helped students in many ways. The Nebraska Educational Media Association (2002) provided the following list of those ways:

- Skills for independent use of information are effectively learned
- Excitement for learning is inherent
- Learning and reading is relevant
- Varied learning styles are met
- Life-long learning skills are mastered
- Information literacy skills are learned, applied and relevant
- Work of small groups of independent study is facilitated
- Optimum use of variety of resources is made possible
- Independent use of libraries is practiced and established.

(Nebraska Educational Media Association, ¶1)

Besides these results, by teachers and educational media specialists developing an integrated curriculum, independent learning was fostered by promoting literacy, empowering children, providing learning opportunities, reinforcing transferable skills, and enhancing social interaction (Carletti, Girard, & Willing, 1993, p.11). Furthermore, the classroom teacher and educational media specialist also benefited. These benefits included a more effective use of resources and teaching time, integration of educational technology, shared efforts at promoting literacy, and developing the goal of lifelong learning (Doiron and Davies, 1998, p. 10). Educational media specialists also “get new and different perspectives on every class—that’s invaluable for assessing our instructional needs” (LaGuardia, et al., 1993, p. 60).

#### The Educational Media Specialist’s Role in Making the Educational Media Center the Hub of the School

A consensus in the literature indicated that the educational media center can certainly become the hub of learning once students and teachers become familiar with the educational media specialist and what services and materials the educational media specialist and educational media center have to offer. *Information Power*, (1998) explained, “As the catalyst for collaboration, the library media specialist initiates collaborative efforts that are focused on meeting the learning needs of students, both within and beyond the library media center” (p. 51). Moreover, “effective collaboration with teachers helps to create a vibrant and engaged community of learners, strengthens the whole school program as well as the library media program, and develops support for the school library media program throughout the whole school” (*Information Power*, 1998, p. 51). When the educational media specialist planned activities to meet the

shared objectives of the classroom teacher, “students are reminded that the facility, the program, and the teacher-librarian are truly a part of their classroom curriculum” (Doiron and Davies, 1998, p. 69). The library media center became a natural place for students to come to have their needs met because they saw the media center differently. All ten principles for a library program involved the importance of the educational media specialist’s collaboration with various members of the school community including students, teachers, and reading specialists (*Information Power*, 1998, p. 51). Toni Buzzeo (2002) explained the effect the library media specialist has on students and teachers when classroom teachers and teacher-librarians collaborate. “It’s surprising how your image changes with both your students and your teachers! You get to know your teachers and your teachers get to know you! Teachers now view you as a vital element to planning and implementing their lessons while your students view you as a teacher rather than...well... whatever they think we do all day!” (¶2).

One main service the educational media specialist provided when he/she collaborated with the classroom teacher was to provide students with an entrance to the world of lifelong learning, whether it is educational or recreational. ALA’s *Information Power* (1998) emphasized this point with this statement: “As the catalyst for collaboration, the library media specialist initiates collaborative efforts that are focused on meeting the learning needs of students, both within and beyond the library media center” (p. 51).

In a pilot study, Susan Dowling’s (1996) school library made significant changes that created a Library Power School.

Library Power is a project of the Fund for New York City Public Education. Its focus is to provide each child with the opportunity to use the library to pursue his or her own interests. It stresses collaboration between the librarian and the classroom teacher to provide a wide variety of activities, which enable children to learn how to find and use information. It envisions... the library as a catalyst for all school reform and takes the school librarian beyond the traditional role of library administrator and guardian of books to also function effectively as teacher, curriculum consultant, mentor, technology expert, publicist and lobbyist for enlightened change. Along with this vision comes a renovated library space, a doubling of the school's budget for library materials by matching state and city allotments, incentive funding that can match up to \$1000 more, expert on site staff development by a library consultant on a regular basis, and monthly group meetings and workshops at a variety of locations for ongoing support and training (§11).

She further explained the importance of the educational media center for learning, which she found out first hand when P.S.3 became a "non-traditional" school. "Without collaboration on the part of the staff, the library is an isolated entity and can't truly function... We have been able to drop many barriers. We are not afraid to discuss our needs and to assess and evaluate what's going on in our school. Thus, a climate has developed in which people are comfortable about working together" (Dowling, 1996, §12). Teachers were not the only ones who experienced the positive atmosphere of collaboration. The pilot study reported students of P.S.3 saw and personally experienced

collaboration as well. "Our children see us meet, discuss, and work things out. This has inevitably filtered down to the students who also have learned to work cooperatively... This is the joy of being a Library Power school---the ability to collaborate with teachers and to develop projects which will not only support curriculum, but will also be an enjoyable addition to learning" (Dowling, 1996, ¶13). Through examining the results of the pilot study, one can see how collaboration affected the perceptions of both the educational media center and the educational media specialist. The results of this pilot study directly related to the study at H. Russell Swift Elementary School since it was hypothesized that the visibility of the educational media specialist through teacher collaboration might make the third grade students more aware of the educational media center.

Another study, Part III of The AASL/Highsmith Research Award, found the educational media specialists' participation in collaboratively planned units offered a way for them to accomplish the teaching role in a meaningful way in which students had an experience integrated into their learning--not an add-on (Tallman & van Deusen, 1994, p. 34). This study began through a nationwide random sample of 1500 elementary educational media specialists who had at least three grades in their school, of which at least one of those grades was either third or fourth grade. Thirty-eight educational media specialists actually participated by listing each unit in which they participated as a consultant or teacher, identified which were collaboratively planned with the classroom teacher, and specified what planning activities took place over a six-week period from October 4<sup>th</sup> through November 12, 1993. Results indicated identifying and gathering resources took place in 83 percent of the reported collaborative units. This is the most

common form of collaboration since the educational media specialist was the manager of materials for the school. Planning activities were reported in 80 percent of the collaborative units. For 63 percent of the units, educational media specialists and teachers met only once for planning. The study's results showed the greater the number of planning sessions involved in the development of the unit, the more opportunity there was for collaboration beyond the gathering of resources. When educational media specialists had one planning session, they participated in the identification of objectives for 64 percent of them; for units in which educational media specialists participated in two sessions, 77 percent involved the identification of objectives. Overall, in 68 percent of the collaborative units, the library media specialist and teacher reported sharing the determination of instructional objectives for the unit. The results also strongly suggested that team planning was more effective than planning with one teacher when fostering a range of consultative and teaching activities. Team planning seemed to expect more from the educational media specialist than just providing resources. Sharing teaching responsibilities took place in 58 percent of the collaborative units. As one can see, the hands-on of collaboration started to decrease once educational media specialists get to the actual teaching part of collaboration. Fifty-six percent of the educational media specialists evaluated the unit with the classroom teacher to decide whether or not the unit was effective. Only 37 percent of the units involved the educational media specialists' participation in the assessment of student work.

Study conclusions offered generalizations for consideration, including "Principals must expect teacher/library media specialists collaboration if they want media programs to be more than ancillary and probably, as long as library media specialists provide

planning time for teachers by taking their classes, there will be little integration of the library media program and teaching and learning activities” (Tallman, & van Deusen, 1994, p. 37). In view of this study at H. Russell Swift Elementary School, these results were important because they show the levels in which collaboration can exist, as well as some reasons why collaboration may be difficult to perform.

#### Impact of Collaboration on Student Achievement

A study by Keith Curry Lance, (1994) Director of the Library Service Center of the Colorado State Library, found instructional participation by educational media specialists helped to predict test performance. Lance examined existing data on 221 public elementary and secondary schools in Colorado during the 1988-89 school year. Through the use of the 1980 Census, Colorado Department of Education files, a survey, and test scores, he concluded “Use of library media center materials, particularly audiovisual materials, appears likely to increase as teachers begin to involve library media center staff in their instructional planning” (Lance, 1994, ¶19). An article that discussed his research reinforced this conclusion and further pointed out, “In three states, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Alaska, students in schools with appropriate and sufficient library collections and qualified library personnel tend to perform better on standardized tests, especially in reading. Making the school library an integral learning center and encouraging teachers and librarians to collaborate on lesson plans and classroom assignments could help raise student achievement” (Manzo, 2000, ¶2). “Students whose library media specialists played such a role tended to achieve higher average test scores” (Lance, 1994, ¶2). Lance explained this was because “the instructional role of the library media specialist shapes the collection and, in turn, academic achievement” (¶37). It can

be determined that if an educational media specialist is working with the classroom teacher on lessons, he/she will know exactly what is required in the curriculum; therefore, the educational media specialist will know what materials are needed in the educational media center for the students to succeed.

### Breaking Barriers for Collaboration

While the majority of research studies and articles highlighted the positive aspects of the educational media specialist, the image of educational media specialists was not always viewed as favorable. An article by Shayne Russell (2000) explained collaboration and its factors and made the following point:

Research shows that most students, teachers, and administrators don't perceive library media specialists and media centers as integral to their own success. Library media specialists are often viewed as storytellers and providers of resources rather than co-teachers who share common goals. It is up to the library media specialist to take steps to change this by serving on curriculum committees, attending planning meetings, and sharing ideas for integrating the media center into the curriculum (¶6).

Through collaboration, the educational media specialist's role was different; thus, the understanding that the educational media specialist and the media center were both valuable resources was more evident because of the educational media specialist's visibility.

Cybil M. Farwell (1998, p. 2-4) addressed causes for decreased collaboration in her dissertation. Through a qualitative study, Farwell interviewed 61 principals, classroom teachers, and library media specialists on a range of topics including the

principal's role, school climate, the value of team planning, the importance of information literacy instruction, and the ideal learning environment. She also used observations, videotapes of planning sessions, and documents from a three-year project, funded by the Library Power Project. The purpose of the project was to improve library programs, to encourage collaborative planning, and to increase curricular integration of information literacy skills instruction (vi). Farwell found the causes for decreased collaboration included fixed scheduling, lack of administrative support, planning and the relationship between classroom teachers and educational media specialists, lack of planning time, the nature of instructional planning is not understood, and the school culture. It was evident the educational media specialist must find ways to overcome these obstacles. Obtaining administrative support started the process. "Principals are key players in influencing instructional practices in schools. If principals do not make a strong statement about expecting collaboration in a school, it may not occur" (Farwell, 1998, p. 2). Once the principal announced the need for collaboration, the educational media specialist could seek out the classroom teachers who were willing to help begin the process and overcome other obstacles, such as deciding on an instructional plan the classroom teacher and educational media specialist will use. Through their collaborative efforts, the school culture changed once teachers and students see the benefits of collaboration.

Ruth Small (2002) also addressed the lack of collaboration opportunities and unsuccessful attempts at collaboration when she provided some solutions. First, teachers needed to be trained in collaboration during their teacher training. Second, educational media specialists needed to find ways to collaborate with their staff. "We must find ways

to collaborate with our Education faculty colleagues to help all of our students develop the spirit of collaboration during their professional preparation programs that carries them into their professional careers and becomes a natural part of their daily activities as professional educators” (Small, 2002, ¶22). Once teachers understood the educational media specialist’s role was not simply to check out books or teach library skills in isolation, teaching became more effective and learning became more meaningful and enjoyable for the students.

### Summary

There certainly seems to be plenty of support in the literature for collaboration between the classroom teacher and the educational media specialist. There is also support for the benefits students receive when they are taught by the collaboration team. Finally, there is evidence that the library media center plays an important role in the learning process and does so even more when collaboration occurs. Based on the published literature, it seems through collaboration, students and teachers become more aware of the educational media center and the educational media specialist and what they had to offer. However, studies are limited when investigating whether or not students use the library more when they have been exposed to collaborative teaching between the classroom teacher and educational media specialist. Studies also have not addressed whether the types of activities students choose to participate in when collaboration exists is different than if collaboration does not exist. Therefore, in order to determine whether or not elementary students use the educational media center more when collaboration takes place, and whether or not there is a preference over certain types of activities when

collaboration occurs, this study was conducted at the H. Russell Swift Elementary School.

## References

- American Association of School Librarians & Association for Education Communication and Technology. (1998). *Information power: Building partnerships for learning*, Chicago: American Library Association.
- Buzzeo, T. (2002, July 9). Collaborative planning [In-reply to [200207090427.g694RpE15595@epona.host4u.net](mailto:200207090427.g694RpE15595@epona.host4u.net)]. Message posted to LM\_NET Listserv, archived at [http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual/Listserv\\_Archives/LM\\_NET/2002/jul\\_2002/msg00130.html](http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual/Listserv_Archives/LM_NET/2002/jul_2002/msg00130.html)
- Carletti, S., Girard, S., & Willing, K. (1991). *The Library/classroom connection*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. *Collaborative Planning*. (n.d.) Retrieved November 1, 2002 from Nebraska Educational Media Association Web site: <http://nema.k12.ne.us/CheckIt/coplan.html>
- Doiron, R., & Davies, J. (1998). *Partners in learning: Students, teachers, and the school library*, Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Dowling, S. (1996, July 8). Collaboration: The key to the process. Paper presented at The National Conference of the American Library Association, The President's Council, Chicago. Retrieved October 7, 2002 from <http://www.panix.com/~goldfarb/libpow/collabor.htm>
- Farwell, S.M. (1998). Profile of planning: A study of a three year project on the implementation of collaborative library media programs. *UMI*, (May 1999) 4042. (UMI No. 9913911)
- LaGuardia, C., et al. (1993). Learning to instruct on the job: Team-teaching library skills. *Reference Librarian* 40, 53-62.
- Lance, K.C. (1994). The impact of school library media centers on academic achievement [Electronic version]. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 22 (3), 167-170, 172. Retrieved November 2, 2002 from [http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr\\_resources/select\\_lance.html](http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr_resources/select_lance.html)
- Manzo, K.K. (2000, March 22). Study shows rise in test scores tied to school library resources. Education Week [Electronic version]. *Education Week*, 19(28), 27. Retrieved from [http://www.edweek.org/ew/ew\\_printstory.cfm?slug=28libe.h19](http://www.edweek.org/ew/ew_printstory.cfm?slug=28libe.h19)
- Russell, S. (2002). *Teachers and librarians: Collaborative relationships*. ERIC Digest. Syracuse, NY: ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology. (EDO-IR-2000-06).

Small, R. (2002). Collaboration: Where does it begin? [Electronic version]. *Teacher Librarian*, 29(5), 8-11. Retrieved October 7, 2002, from [http://www.teacherlibrarian.com/pages29\\_5\\_feature.html](http://www.teacherlibrarian.com/pages29_5_feature.html)

Tallman, J., & van Deusen, J.D. (1994). Collaborative unit planning-schedule, time, and participants: Part three the 1993-94 AASL/Highsmith Research Award Study. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 23 (1), 33 – 37.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Overall Research Design and Justification

The study was conducted through a posttest only experimental research model. This method was chosen because this study contained one experimental group, Group A, and one comparison group, Group B. Group A contained one class of students who received instruction through collaboration between the educational media specialist and the classroom teacher. Group B originally contained two classes of students as the control group who did not receive collaborative instruction between the educational media specialist and the classroom teacher, but rather traditional instruction by the library media specialist only. Comparing these two groups and their non-required library use and their circulation habits as well as the types of activities they participated in when they were in the library was accomplished through both direct and indirect data collection techniques.

#### Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not there was a difference in third grade students' non-required school library use if collaboration on a weekly basis between the educational media specialist and classroom teacher was present. One third grade class in which teacher/educational media specialist collaboration occurs was called Group A. Two other third grade classes in which teacher/educational media specialist collaboration activity did not exist were called Group B. This study's specific purpose was to decide whether or not there was a difference in the number of items circulated, the

number of visits, and the types of activities students from these two groups participated in when they were in the library during non-required visits.

This study answered the following three questions. 1) Does increased exposure to the educational media specialist affect third grade students' number of non-required visits to the library? 2) Does increased exposure to the educational media specialist affect the number of items third grade students circulate? 3) Do the third grade students from Group A have a preference for certain types of activities from students in Group B?

#### Population and Sample

The sample for this study was nonrandom and purposeful. It consisted of three classes of third grade students from the H. Russell Swift Elementary School. The H. Russell Swift Elementary School is located in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey and educates 608 students, grades preschool through third. The study group consisted of 58 students with combined academic abilities. The experimental group, Group A, consisted of 19 students in one class in which collaboration occurred between the educational media specialist and the classroom teacher. The remaining 39 students, Group B, were in two other classes that did not receive any collaborative instruction. Third grade students were chosen for this study because they were allowed to come to the library for non-required visits.

#### Variables

The dependent variable was the participation by the students in the teacher/educational media specialist collaboration project. Independent variables consisted of the number of non-required visits students made to the library, circulation statistics, and types of library activities students participated in when they came to the

library during a non-required visit. Activities included researching, completing classwork and homework, reading, puppet theatre, listening to books on tape, doing arts and crafts, and game playing.

### Data Collection

The process began by finding a third-grade teacher who was willing to collaborate on class lessons with the educational media specialist. Next, a letter of intent (see Appendix A) was sent home to the parents of the students who were in Group A. From September of 2002 through January of 2003, collaboration on various levels took place with the experimental class. After the fifth month, a permission slip was sent home to the parents of the students who were in Group A and Group B asking permission for the student's data to be used in this study, although all information was anonymous and confidential (see Appendix B). Data collection began January 27<sup>th</sup> and continued for six weeks until March 14, 2003. The week of February 17<sup>th</sup> was not included because the school was closed due to snow.

The instruments used to collect data were a log, sign-in sheet, and circulation records. The log was a record of the classroom teacher and educational media specialist's activities, including the date, time, and activity performed, whether it was planning, teaching, or evaluating (see Appendix C). The sign-in sheet was used to determine whether students from Group A made more non-required library visits than students in Group B. The sign-in sheet was kept at the circulation desk (see Appendix D). The sign-in sheet also helped determine whether there was a difference between the two groups in the types of activities students chose to participate in during non-required library visits. When third grade students came into the library for a non-required visit,

they signed their name, their teacher's name, and checked off what activities they were doing during their visit at the library. Activities included puppets, listening to books on tape, reading, doing arts and crafts, playing games, researching, completing class work, or doing homework. The educational media specialist also observed the activities of the students to verify the sign-in sheet was accurate. The circulation records were gathered through using the Follett online computer circulation system. Records of the students in Group A and Group B were compared to see if collaboration between the classroom teacher and educational media specialist affected the circulation of books. Through the Follett program, it was determined whether circulation increased, decreased, or stayed the same in Group A, as compared to Group B.

#### Reliability and Validity

Validity was ensured because the research techniques measured the amount of non-required student library use between both the experimental and the control groups. This is because of "the quasi-experimental design, which can rule out many of the threats to internal validity" (Powell, 1997, p. 138). Validity was also increased through using multiple data collection techniques. Furthermore, the categories used for the sign-in sheet were pre-tested by Dr. Marilyn Shontz, course instructor. Finally, reliability was ensured because this study can be replicated another year at H. Russell Swift Elementary School. It could also be replicated at any other elementary school with third grade.

## References

Powell, R. (1997). *Basic research methods for librarians*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Greenwich, CT: Ablex Publishing.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The study was conducted through a posttest only experimental research model using one experimental group and one comparison group. The experimental group originally consisted of one third grade class of 20 students. Collaboration between the educational media specialist and the classroom teacher took place over a period of a little more than four months, from September 2002 to January 2003 (see Appendix C). Collaboration included planning, teaching, and evaluating on various units of study. The comparison group, Group B, originally consisted of 39 students who did not receive collaborative instruction from the educational media specialist. Students' library habits were studied six weeks during the time period of January 27, 2003 to March 14, 2003. The week of February 17, 2003 through February 21, 2003 was not included because the school was closed due to the effects of a snowstorm. Two changes needed to be made to the sample for data analysis purposes. First, only one class from Group B was able to be used because of scheduling conflicts resulting from the inclement weather. Therefore, the sample for Group B analysis was comprised of 19 students. Also, one student from Group A was not part of the analysis due to excessive absences during data collection. Therefore, Group A was also comprised of 19 students for data analysis.

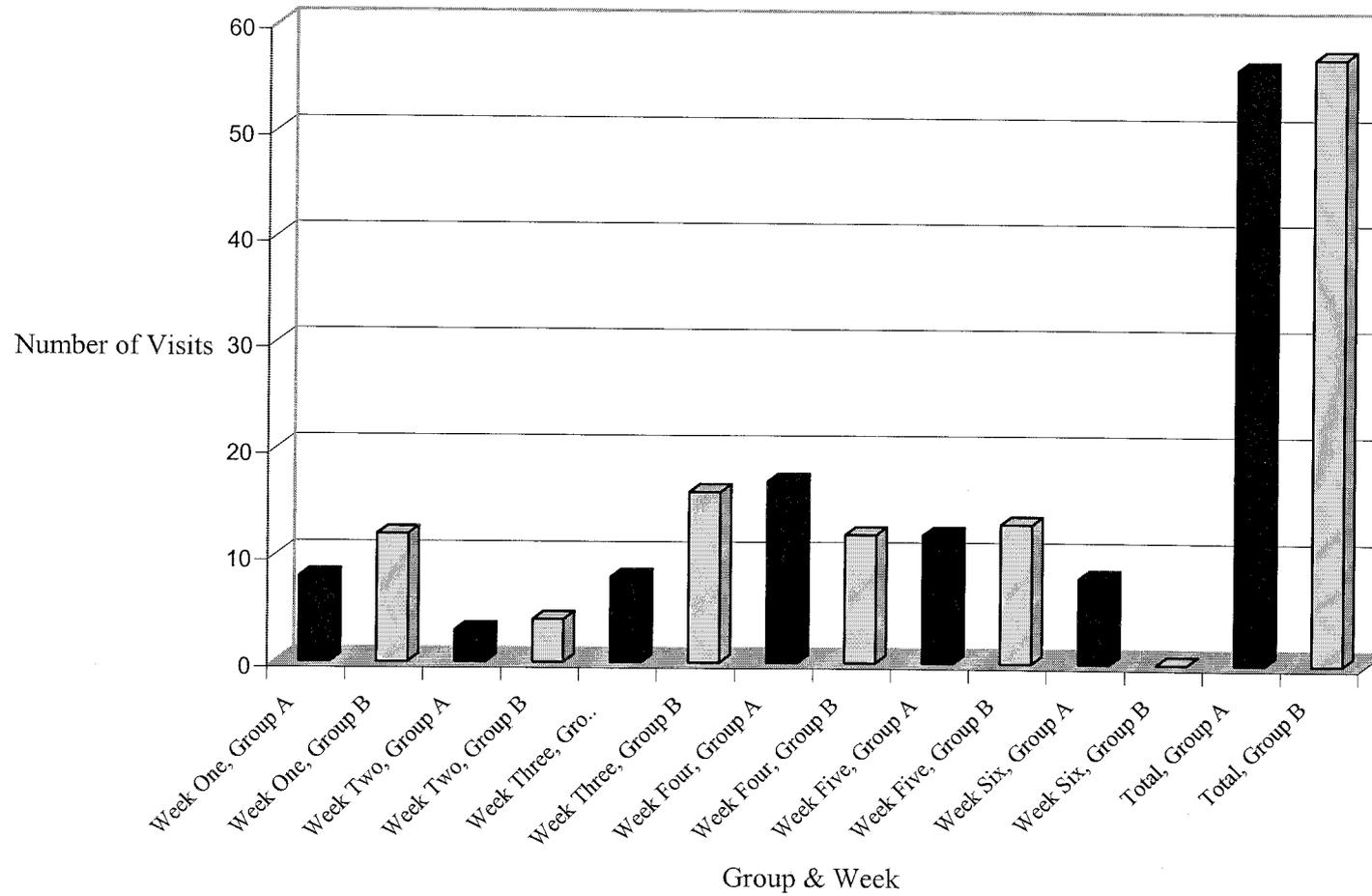
The study answered the following three questions. 1) Does increased exposure to the educational media specialist affect third grade students' number of non-required visits to the library? 2) Does increased exposure to the educational media specialist affect the

number of items third grade students circulate? 3) Do the third grade students from Groups A and B have preferences for certain activities?

Does Increased Exposure to the Educational Media Specialist Affect Third Grade Students' Number of Non-required Visits to the Library?

The students' number of non-required visits to the library was measured through a sign-in sheet that was kept at the circulation desk (see Appendix D). Whenever students came for a non-required visit, they would have to sign in with the educational media specialist. At the end of the data collection, all the student visits for Group A and Group B were tallied and entered into an Excel spreadsheet, which created a chart as represented in Figure 1. Over a six-week period, 56 students from Group A went to the library for a non-required visit; while 57 students from Group B went to the library for a non-required visit. When broken down weekly, eight students from Group A and twelve students from Group B visited the library January 27 to January 31, 2003. During week two, three students from Group A and four students from Group B visited the library February 3 to February 7, 2003. The week three visits consisted of 8 students from Group A and 16 students from Group B from February 10 to February 14, 2003. For the week of February 24 to February 28, 2003, 17 students from Group A visited the library and 12 students from Group B visited the library. During week five, March 3 to March 7, 2003, 12 students from Group A made non-required visits and 13 students from Group B made non-required visits. Finally, for week six, March 10 to March 14, 2003, eight students from Group A and no students from Group B visited the library.

Figure 1  
Non-Required Library Visits



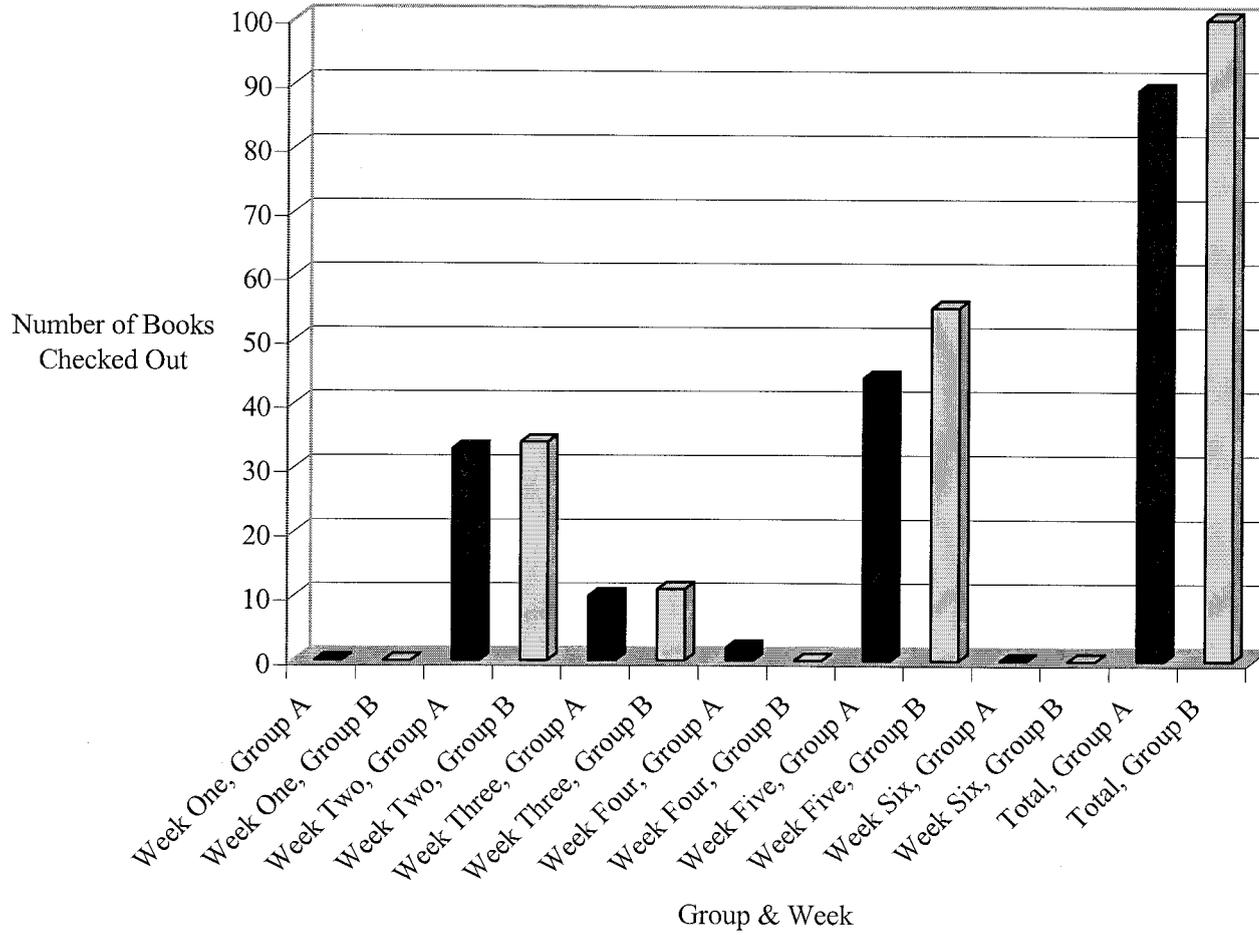
Does Increased Exposure to the Educational Media Specialist Affect the Number of Items  
Third Grade Students Circulate?

To determine whether or not there was a difference in number of items circulated between Group A and Group B, patron reports were run in the Follett automation system. For each student, a history of circulation for January 27, 2003 through March 14, 2003 was performed. This enabled the researcher to examine each week for each student, and then tally the results for each group. Results were tallied, entered into Excel, and a circulation chart was created and presented in Figure 2. During the six weeks examined, students in Group A checked out a total of 89 books; and, students in Group B checked out 100 items. During week one, neither group checked out any books. For week two, Group A checked out 33 items; while Group B checked out 34 items. Group A checked out ten items during week three, February 10, 2003 through February 14, 2003. Meanwhile, Group B students checked out eleven items. Week four showed Group A students checking out two books, while Group B students checked out none. Students in Group A checked out 44 items during week five and students in Group B checked out 55 items. Finally, in week six, no students from either group checked out any books.

Do the Third Grade Students From Group A Have a Preference for Certain Activities  
From Group B?

The activities students participated in during non-required library visits were measured through the same sign-in sheet used for tracking the number of non-required visits (see Appendix D). When students checked in, they also provided what activities they planned on participating in while they visited the library. The activity or activities was checked off. Through observation, the educational media specialist verified they

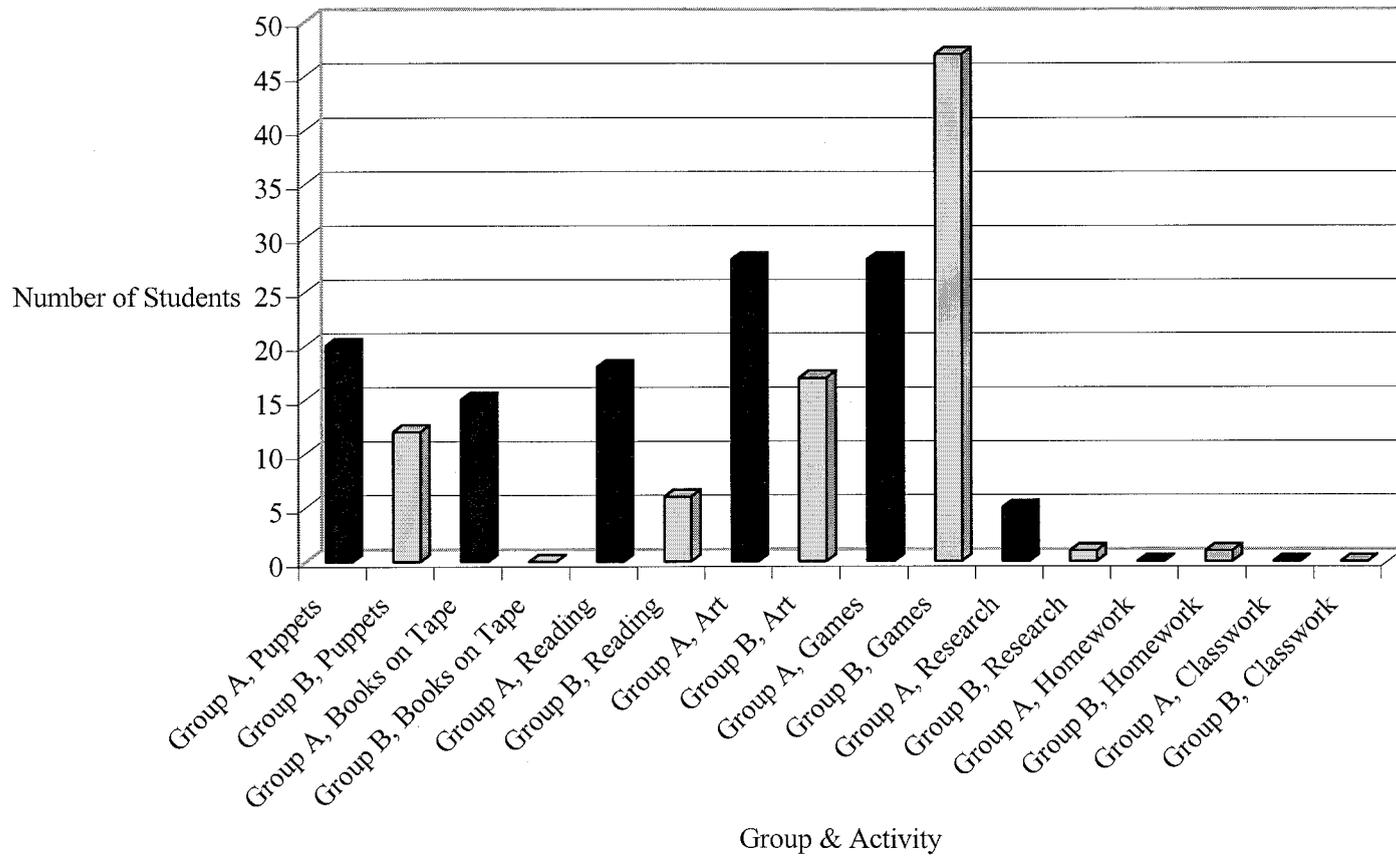
Figure 2  
Circulation



were completing the activities they chose. At the end of the six weeks, the results were tallied, entered into an Excel program, and a chart was created for Figure 3. Over the six-week period, the number of students who chose puppets as their activity from Group A was 20, while the number of students from Group B was 12. Fifteen students from Group A chose to listen to a book on tape and no students from Group B chose this activity. Eighteen students from Group A chose to read during their visit to the library. Six students from Group B chose to read. Twenty-eight students from Group A chose Art as their activity. The number of Group B students was 17. Twenty-eight students from Group A decided to partake in playing games and 47 students from Group B. Research was another activity students could choose while visiting the library. Five students from Group A did so, and 1 student from Group B performed research. As far as completing homework, no students from Group A did this and one student from Group B worked on homework in the library. Finally, no students from either Group A or Group B completed class work during their non-required library visits.

Figure 3

Activities Participated in During Non-Required Library Visits: Totals for Six Weeks



## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to determine whether or not there was a difference in third grade students' non-required school library uses if collaboration on a weekly basis between the educational media specialist and classroom teacher was present. Based on the data, the researcher concluded the following: First, increased exposure to the educational media specialist did not affect third grade students' number of non-required visits to the library. Second, increased exposure to the educational media specialist did not affect the number of items third grade students circulate. Third, students from Group A participated in a greater variety of activities over students from Group B who primarily played games and puppet theater. While these are very simplified statements, there were many items to consider when examining these results.

The benefits of collaboration for the educational media specialist, as far as established research goes, were certainly found to be true in this study. The educational media specialist became more aware of the third grade curriculum and was able to have "...shared efforts at promoting literacy, and developing the goal of lifelong learning" (Doiron and Davies, 1998, p. 10). This in turn did provide the educational media specialist with the knowledge of what was plentiful and what was lacking in the library collection, as explained by K.C. Lance (1994, ¶19). However, the results of the study did not find that the visibility of the educational media specialist through teacher collaboration made the third grade students more aware of the educational media center, as hypothesized. When one looks at the overall non-required visits, with Group A having

56 total non-required visits and Group B having 57 non-required visits, it appears the collaboration with the classroom teacher did not make a difference. However, these results could depend on the specific teacher and his/her view of the library. The results may vary when examining other classes. Therefore, it is necessary for the H. Russell Swift School study to be expanded to include more classes in order to come up with a definitive answer as to whether or not collaboration increased students' non-required library visits.

The question of whether collaboration between the classroom teacher and the educational media specialist affected the number of items circulated was also answered through this study. It was evident that Group A, with 89 books, did not take out more books than Group B, with 100 books. Therefore, by simply looking at the data, the answer was no. However, once again, the teacher's influence on the students must be considered. Book reports and research was assigned during this time of data collection; therefore, one must question whether or not students would have taken out as many books, in both groups, if class assignments were not given. Another possible study could be done to examine not just how many but what types of materials students take out of the library when collaboration between the classroom teacher and educational media specialist occurs. Another area to be studied is whether or not the library as a special or teacher planning period affected the circulation of books. The students in the H. Russell Swift School study all saw the librarian twice for library instruction. This amount would have been three times, had the school not be closed due to inclement weather. Therefore, the students would have had another class period in which they would have been able to exchange their library books.

The question of whether students in Group A had a preference for certain types of activities from Group B was also answered. Students chose as many activities as they wished and as time allowed during their non-required visits. While it may seem this study has created many more questions, it did find a difference in the types of activities students from Groups A and B chose when they came to the library. Group A chose more of a variety of activities overall when they came to the library for a non-required visit. For example, fifteen students from Group A chose to listen to a book on tape, while no students from Group B chose this activity. Eighteen students in Group A chose to read; while only six students from Group B wanted to do this. Five students from Group A researched items on the computer; only one from Group B did. Forty-seven students from Group B chose to play a game and 28 from Group A chose to participate in board games. However, this does change when it comes to Art; Group A students chose to color and draw 28 times, Group B, 17 times. Therefore, one does have to wonder why there was a difference between the two groups and the activities in which they participated. Could the collaboration between the classroom teacher and the educational media specialist have influenced this difference? This answer could only be found through another study, perhaps of a qualitative nature where interviews with students are conducted.

There were some other items that need to be addressed when considering the way this study was carried out and the time it was completed. First, construction was being completed at the H. Russell Swift School and the library was still being completed during the time of the study. In fact, the library did not have permanent bookshelves during the

study. This may have influenced the students' desire to visit the library and take out books, since not all of the books were unpacked.

While the construction may appear to be a negative factor, it actually allowed the educational media specialist more time to visit Group A's classroom from September 2002 through January 2003, since the library was not fully functioning until the end of January. The first week of the data collection was when the Follett computer system was up and running and students were able to borrow books. The question arises whether or not the results of this study would be different if the library were in order from the beginning of the school year. However, based on the data collected, it was evident students were willing to visit the library for non-required visits for a variety of purposes once it was ready. Therefore, these results were valid for the 2002-2003 school year, but a follow-up study should be done to verify the results of this research.

The data gathered through this study fulfilled the purpose of the study, to determine whether or not there was a difference in H. Russell Swift School third grade students' non-required school library uses if collaboration on a weekly basis between the educational media specialist and classroom teacher was present. Furthermore, the study answered the three research questions posed. However, since this research was one that examined a new angle on collaboration, it is evident there are still more questions to be asked and more research to be done, opening the door to another aspect of library studies to be examined. Therefore, while the results of this thesis were valid for H. Russell Swift Elementary School for the school year of 2002-2003, it is important to examine the topic in more detail at both H. Russell Swift Elementary School and other schools around the United States of America.

## References

- Doiron, R., & Davies, J. (1998). *Partners in learning*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Lance, K.C. (1994). The impact of school library media centers on academic achievement [Electronic version]. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 22 (3), 167-170, 172. Retrieved November 2, 2002 from [http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr\\_resources/select\\_lance.html](http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr_resources/select_lance.html)
- McCain, M.M. (2001). *Dictionary for school library media specialists: A practical and comprehensive guide*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Young, H. (Ed.). (1983). *ALA glossary of library and information science*. Chicago: American Library Association.

## Bibliography

- American Association of School Librarians & Association for Education Communication and Technology. (1998). *Information power: Building partnerships for learning*, Chicago: American Library Association.
- Buzzeo, T. (2002, July 9). Collaborative planning [In-reply to [200207090427.g694RpE15595@epona.host4u.net](mailto:200207090427.g694RpE15595@epona.host4u.net)]. Message posted to LM\_NET Listserv, archived at [http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual/Listserv\\_Archives/LM\\_NET/2002/jul\\_2002/msg00130.html](http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual/Listserv_Archives/LM_NET/2002/jul_2002/msg00130.html)
- Carletti, S., Girard, S., & Willing, K. (1991). *The Library/classroom connection*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. *Collaborative Planning*. (n.d.) Retrieved November 1, 2002 from Nebraska Educational Media Association Web site: <http://nema.k12.ne.us/CheckIt/coplan.html>
- Doiron, R., & Davies, J. (1998). *Partners in learning: Students, teachers, and the school library*, Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Dowling, S. (1996, July 8). Collaboration: The key to the process. Paper presented at The National Conference of the American Library Association, The President's Council, Chicago. Retrieved October 7, 2002 from <http://www.panix.com/~goldfarb/libpow/collabor.htm>
- Farwell, S.M. (1998). Profile of planning: A study of a three year project on the implementation of collaborative library media programs. *UMI*, (May 1999) 4042. (UMI No. 9913911)
- LaGuardia, C., et al. (1993). Learning to instruct on the job: Team-teaching library skills. *Reference Librarian* 40, 53-62.
- Lance, K.C. (1994). The impact of school library media centers on academic achievement [Electronic version]. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 22 (3), 167-170, 172. Retrieved November 2, 2002 from [http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr\\_resources/select\\_lance.html](http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr_resources/select_lance.html)
- Manzo, K.K. (2000, March 22). Study shows rise in test scores tied to school library resources. Education Week [Electronic version]. *Education Week*, 19(28), 27. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/printstory.cfm?slug=28libe.h19>
- Powell, R. (1997). *Basic research methods for librarians*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Greenwich, CT: Ablex Publishing.

Russell, S. (2002). *Teachers and librarians: Collaborative relationships*. ERIC Digest. Syracuse, NY: ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology. (EDO-IR-2000-06).

Small, R. (2002). Collaboration: Where does it begin? [Electronic version]. *Teacher Librarian*, 29(5), 8-11. Retrieved October 7, 2002, from [http://www.teacherlibrarian.com/pages29\\_5\\_feature.html](http://www.teacherlibrarian.com/pages29_5_feature.html)

Tallman, J., & van Deusen, J.D. (1994). Collaborative unit planning-schedule, time, and participants: Part three the 1993-94 AASL/Highsmith Research Award Study. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 23 (1), 33 – 37.

APPENDIX A  
LETTER OF INTENT

H. Russell Swift School Library  
5 Swift Drive  
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234  
(609) 927-4141, extension 1190



Ms. Kimberly A. McCauley  
Educational Media Specialist

September 30, 2002

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you that your child's class has been chosen to be part of a collaboration project. As part of my thesis, I will be working with Ms. Kadubec's class on a weekly basis on various assignments. Your child will not have any more work; In fact, he/she will be receiving the benefit of having two professional teachers in their classroom for some lessons. The purpose of this project is to develop a positive working relationship between the librarian, teacher, and the students. Therefore, your child will see me a little more than usual. If you have any questions, please contact me at the above telephone number.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kimberly McCauley

APPENDIX B  
PARENT PERMISSION LETTER

H. Russell Swift School Library



Ms. Kimberly A. McCauley, Educational Media Specialist  
(609) 927-4141, extension 1190

January 13, 2003

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you that your child's class has been chosen to participate in a collaboration study. As part of my Master's thesis, I will be collecting data on the library usage of third grade students when collaborative teaching between the classroom teacher and educational media specialist occurs. Your child's participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect his/her grades. All data collected will be anonymous and confidential. Your child's name will not be published anywhere in the thesis paper.

Therefore, I am requesting that you give permission for your child to participate in this study by signing below and returning this letter to your child's teacher by Friday, January 17th. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation, please contact me at the above telephone number or my professor, Dr. Marilyn Shontz at Rowan University, (856) 256-4500, extension 3858.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kimberly A. McCauley  
Educational Media Specialist

---

I give permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in  
the collaboration study.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C  
COLLABORATION LOG

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LESSON</u>
September 25, 2002	12:40-1:40	Science Experiment: Water Displacement
September 26, 2002	10:15-11:00	Math Mid-Chapter Worksheets
September 27, 2002	2:15-3:15	Science-Mold Me Again, A Weighty Matter
September 30, 2002	1:30-2:00	Science Detective
October 1, 2002	12:00-1:30	Math Addends & Science Detective
October 2, 2002	2:00-3:30	Terranova Poetry, Art Project, Math Strips
October 3, 2002	12:00-1:00	Science Experiment-Matter
October 4, 2002	1:00-2:30	Problem Solving
October 10, 2002	11:00-11:30	Math & Cursive Writing
October 17, 2002	2:00-3:00	Subjects & Predicates
October 18, 2002	12:30-1:30	Work Folder & Journal Share
October 22, 2002	12:00-1:00	Math Addition
October 24, 2002	2:00-2:30	TerraNova, Teddy Bear Day Intro.
October 25, 2002	1:00-2:30	Teddy Bear Day-Poetry, Story
October 30, 2002	2:15-3:15	Social Studies-Government Levels
November 4, 2002	12:45-1:15	Social Studies-Government Levels
November 6, 2002	1:50-2:20	Social Studies-Creation of America, video
November 11, 2002	1:00-1:40	Social Studies-State, National Chart
November 11, 2002	8:00-8:30	Conferencing with teacher on math lesson
November 12, 2002	10:15-11:30	Math-School Store & Practice
November 15, 2002	1:00-3:30	Math practice, Social Studies-Flag Math Strips
November 21, 2002	1:30-2:00	Social Studies-Monuments
November 24, 2002	1:30-2:30	Grade Grammar Tests, Turkey Art Project, Preview Atlas for Students
November 25, 2002	1:45-2:30	Turkey Art Project & Grade Grammar Tests
November 26, 2002	10:25-11:00	Bingo Review for Social Studies Test
November 27, 2002	2:00-4:00	Collaborative Planning for Communities & Maps Units, Grade Social Studies Tests
December 10, 2002	1:00-1:40	Math Test, Grade Math Homework
December 12, 2002	12:15-2:00	Prepare lessons, copy lesson 2 of Map Unit
December 12, 2002	2:00-2:40	Science Detective
December 12, 2002	3:10-3:30	Math Strips, Read Ch. of Charlie & Choc. Factory
December 16, 2002	11:45-1:00 & 1:30-2:30	Prepare lessons 3-6 of Map Unit
December 17, 2002	12:45-1:15	Circuit System Experiment
December 19, 2002	12:30-1:00	Science Review
December 23, 2002	12:00-1:00	Holiday Storytime
January 8, 2003	9:30-10:15	Map Lesson 2
January 13, 2003	1:45-2:30	Map Lesson 3
January 15, 2003	1:45-2:30	Map Lesson 4
January 22, 2003	9:30-10:15	Map Lesson 5
January 27, 2003	1:45-2:30	Map Lesson 6

