Effect of participation in a daily reading log on the reading attitude and achievement in low to high achievers

Jody M. Strauss
Rowan University

Follow this and additional works at: http://rdw.rowan.edu/etd
Part of the Special Education and Teaching Commons

Recommended Citation
http://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/2001

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 LibraryTheses@rowan.edu.
EFFECT OF PARTICIPATION IN A DAILY READING LOG ON THE READING ATTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT IN LOW TO HIGH ACHIEVERS

by

Jody M. Strauss

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts Degree in the Graduate Division of Rowan University 1998

Approved by

Professor

Date Approved 6/7/98
ABSTRACT

Jody M. Strauss
EFFECT OF PARTICIPATION IN A DAILY READING LOG ON THE READING ATTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT IN LOW TO HIGH ACHIEVERS
1998
Dr. Jay Kuder
Special Education

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of a daily reading log on the attitude and comprehension of sixth grade low to high achieving students. The study consisted of forty-eight students divided among two classes. Half of the students used the daily reading log and were compared with the other half who did not use daily reading logs for a sixteen week period. The spring 1997 standardized testing placed students in the low to high ranges in reading.

The students were tested in September and again in March after participating in the daily reading log program. Student's reading attitude was measured with a questionnaire and comprehension was assessed using the Woodcock Johnson Passage Comprehension Test. The data gathered showed that attitude and comprehension toward reading improved in the average to high achievers. Lower achievers did not make any significant improvements in attitude or comprehension. These findings suggest that, in addition to incorporating a balanced reading program, the use of a daily reading log is beneficial to average to high readers.
The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of a daily reading log on the reading attitude and comprehension of sixth grade low to high achieving students. The data gathered showed that attitude and comprehension toward reading improved in the average to high achievers. Lower achievers did not make any significant improvements in reading attitude or comprehension.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Significance of the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypotheses</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review of the Literature</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Design of the Study</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruments</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Research Findings</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Results</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Results</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Summary</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Opportunities for students to read self-selected books is an indispensable part of a balanced reading program. In independent reading students are in charge of their own reading by choosing their own books, by doing their own reading, and by taking responsibility to work through the challenges of the text. The teacher's role changes from one of initiating, modeling, and guiding to one of providing and then observing, acknowledging, and responding" (Mooney, 1990, pp. 72-73).

The importance of voluntary reading can not be overstated. In a study of fifth grader's activities outside of school, it was found that "time spent reading books was the best predictor of a child's growth as a reader" (Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding, 1988).

Reading achievement is positively influenced by the amount of time spent reading books. We must provide time in school even at the secondary level for students to read books of their own choosing. According to the research study just cited, even ten minutes a day of independent reading can increase reading proficiency.

Providing a wide selection of all types of fiction and nonfiction books through school and classroom libraries is essential. Books are changed and added to as needed to promote high interest and meet the demands of the curriculum. Guiding students to select books and gain familiarity with authors is necessary, especially at the start. When books are brought into the classroom library, teachers should take time to do brief "book talks". Telling the students just enough to whet their appetites and give them some guidance in self selection.

Setting aside time for reading during school with teachers as reading models, must be a priority in all classrooms. This allows for the possibility of positive reading habits to develop. Quiet reading time of self-selected books is also a desirable and appropriate alternative to workbooks and skillsheets. We no longer need to feel guilty that students
are "just reading". Reading is probably the most worthwhile activity students can be doing. As part of independent work time, many teachers now encourage and expect students to read (Routman, 1992).

In addition to daily time set aside for in-class reading, home-school independent reading programs are part of the balanced reading program (Routman, 1992). Students are expected to read voluntarily outside of school. Most of my students seem to get "hooked" on reading through daily independent reading. My goal is for books to become a relevant and pleasurable part of every child's life. It is important not to stress the number of books read because books vary in length and difficulty. However, when beginning independent reading logs for the first time, it is helpful to record the time students spend reading. When a student completes reading each night an incentive is provided as a motivation to continue reading. Eventually, the reward for reading should simply be enjoyment of the book itself.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

What is the effect of participation in a daily reading log on the reading attitude and comprehension of high and low sixth grade students?

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

1. It is hypothesized that participation in a daily reading log will have a positive effect on low achieving sixth grade student's reading attitude.

2. It is hypothesized that participation in a daily reading log will have a positive effect on high achieving sixth grade student's reading attitude.
3. It is hypothesized that participation in a daily reading log will have a positive effect on sixth grade low achieving student's reading comprehension.

4. It is hypothesized that participation in a daily reading log will have a positive effect on high achieving sixth grade student's reading comprehension.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Reading Log- A folder that contains a recording sheet for students to log the amount of time spent reading each day.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The 1997-1998 school year marks the third consecutive year that reading logs will be used in my classroom. This research is to verify the effectiveness of the reading logs. I am hopeful to find positive results from my students participation with the logs. My ultimate goal is to find an increase in reading motivation and comprehension from my low achieving students as well as my high achieving students.

This study will provide useful and effective data for middle school teachers involved with the challenge of enhancing reading in the middle school. Content area teachers will be aided with research to assist their teaching also.

OVERVIEW

In chapter two I will be reviewing current literature surrounding the topic of reading logs and independent reading's effect on student motivation and comprehension.
In chapter three I will detail the methodology I plan on implementing to carry out this study. Chapter four the data will be analyzed and chapter five will contain a summary of the study.
CHAPTER TWO  
LITERATURE REVIEW

John Sanacore the executive director of the National Center for Improving the Culture of Schools says, "that promoting the lifetime love of reading should be one of our most important goals." Through pleasurable reading, children and adolescents have the opportunity to apply skills to meaningful contexts, to build general-world and content-specific knowledge, to experience fluency with connected text, and, of course, to develop the lifetime reading habits. Students therefore, need opportunities in school and at home to enjoy "real" reading as a valued and worthwhile activity.

The importance of personal reading in the reading curriculum is reinforced in the recommendations of *Becoming a Nation of Readers* prepared by the Commission on Reading. Five of the seventeen recommendations given in the report relate to the importance of personal reading. They include:

1. Parents should read to preschool children and informally teach them about reading and writing.
2. Parents should support school-aged childrens' continued growth as readers.
3. Children should spend more time in independent reading.
4. Schools should cultivate an ethos that supports reading.
5. Schools should maintain well-stocked and managed libraries.

Collins and Cheek (1980) discuss motivating students to read in their text and conclude that motivating students to read is often a greater challenge to teachers than teaching the cognitive skills in reading. Motivation to learn involves two basic components: interests and attitudes. The importance of motivation, interests, and attitudes becomes readily apparent when one realizes the relationship between motivation (including interests and attitudes) and reading achievement. Den Heyer (1980) not only
found this relationship to be significant but also learned that the relationship between motivational measures and reading achievement increases consistently with age, with the relationship being well established in the higher primary grades. Walberg and Tsai (1980) suggest that the strongest correlates of reading achievement are attitude towards reading, kindergarten attendance, use of English in the home, and stimulating materials in the home environment. Further research has indicated a strong relation between liking/not liking reading/not liking school (Chiu, 1980). With our increased concern about school-dropouts and the war on illiteracy, the teachers and administrators in the school reading programs must acknowledge the importance of motivation.

There is no simple way to motivate students, but much can be done to interest them in reading. Attitudes can be improved by providing appropriate instruction in an exciting manner, rewarding the student with words of praise, using appropriate techniques, and providing materials that are interesting and written at the appropriate level (Collins, Cheek 1980).

According to Hedelin and Sjoberg (as cited in Berliner, 1985) achievement is influenced by attitude as well as ability. "It is a well-known psychological principle that attitude influences a person's choice of activities as well as effort and persistence at tasks" (p. 126). Henk and Melnick (1985) state that children who feel successful in school have high self-esteem and achievement as well as a positive attitude toward school and reading generally experience lower achievement in school and avoid reading for pleasure.

Teachers have long recognized that motivation is at the heart of many of the pervasive problems we face in teaching young children to read. In a study conducted by Veenman (1984), teachers ranked motivating students as one of their primary and overriding concerns. A more recent national survey of teachers also revealed that "creating interest in reading" was rated as the most important area for future research (O'Flahavan, Gambrell, Guthrie, Stahl, & Alvermann, 1992). The value teachers place on motivation is supported by a robust amount of research literature that documents the link
between motivation and achievement. The results of these studies clearly indicates the need to increase our understanding of how children acquire the motivation to develop into active, engaged readers.

A study conducted by Marlow Ediger on the middle school student and interest in reading found that interest is a powerful psychological factor in learning. Middle school students individually need to be involved in seeking, selecting, and pursuing reading materials that insure the attention of the learner. Books selected by the middle school student should harmonize with his or her present level of achievement in reading. Enjoyment, appreciation, and interest are three concepts which a quality middle school reading curriculum should emphasize.

Alexander and Filler (1980) identified several variables that seem to be associated with attitudes toward reading. These are achievement, self-concept, parents and the home environment, the teacher and classroom environment, instructional practices and special programs, gender, test intelligence, socioeconomic status, and interests. As teachers attempt to improve students' attitudes toward reading, keep these ideas in mind: In order to have a positive feeling toward themselves, students need to be commended for their efforts. The teacher's awareness of student's attitudes toward reading is essential a student's attitude toward reading material affects comprehension of the material. Teachers should be cognoscente that student's attitudes towards reading are formed by parents and their home environment.

Chisom (1989) reports a study on the effectiveness of an independent reading program designed to increase literature appreciation and recreational reading of intermediate grade level students. The subjects were four hundred sixty African American students in a Midwestern city. The subjects recorded the amount of time they spent reading at home. The students were observed by their teachers during reading periods to evaluate on-task behavior. Subjects were required to read three additional literary genres, and were encouraged to increase their recreational reading to one hundred minutes per
week. Results indicated that: 1) 74% of the students engaged in at least 15 minutes of reading at home per day. 2) 86% of the assignments given during reading periods were completed. 3) 84% of the students read in at least three additional genres. 4) 90% of the students developed voluntary reading behavior and increased the number of minutes read per week to one hundred.

Allan Wigfield in 1996 presented a study that assessed dimensions of children's reading motivations by giving them a revised version of the Motivations for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ). The MRQ is designed to assess eleven possible dimensions of reading motivations, including reading efficiency, several intrinsic and several extrinsic reading motivations, social aspects of reading, and the desire to avoid reading. Approximately six hundred fifth and sixth grade children completed the MRQ as part of a larger intervention study designed to increase children's reading comprehension and enjoyment of reading. Analyses of children's responses to the MRQ showed that many of these dimensions can be identified, and measured reliably. Scales based on different dimensions related positively to one another, and negatively to the desire to avoid reading. Several of the scales related to children's reports of their reading frequency, and to their performance on four measures of reading achievement.

The following studies note reading motivation techniques that lead to increases in reading achievement. Joan Coley in 1983 presented a paper highlighting the Project Read program at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association. She shared that in 1981 Project READ had distributed more than one-half million books to five hundred American schools or alternative institutions. Read has established workshops to train teachers in reading motivation techniques and the use of sustained silent reading. To evaluate the project, pre and post-testing of reading gains, student evaluations, and individual interviews were introduced in two experimental (Project READ) and two control schools in Washington D.C. The achievement data indicated gains of eight months or more in grades seven and eight, and somewhat lower but still significant gains for grade
nine over a six month period. On the student evaluations, control subjects depended more on word attack skills, while the experimental subjects relied more on student-directed, independent learning. The experimental subjects also often used book content as a criterion for selection, while the control group relied on category and title. More experimental subjects were reading books at the time of the questionnaire and had read more books during the year than control subjects. The project staff learned that with proper motivation, the right materials, and sufficient practice time, students could significantly improve their reading achievement.

DiSibio and Savitz (1983), researched the domino effect of illiteracy concluding it could be halted if students are given opportunity early in life to develop a positive attitude toward reading. Research supports the notion that reading interests lead to knowledge, which leads, in turn, to increased comprehension. Several successful reading programs in schools across the country provide interesting reading materials and facilitate discussion groups and other reading activities. Reading attitudes prevalent in the home environment have great influence on the children's attitudes, but the major responsibility still rests with teachers, who must represent models of positive reading habits.

Routman (1988) writes that a Balanced Reading Program includes the following components: reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, and language opportunities to respond critically and thoughtfully. Each of these components or approaches is part of the on going reading program through the grades. Shared reading, guided reading, and or independent reading are sometimes missing from local reading programs. One of the most important parts of the literature program is the wide reading students are encouraged to do. Observations together with a wide body of research evidence, clearly affirm that the amount of reading children do greatly affects their growth in reading. (Clark, 1976, Fader, 1982, Koeller, 1981). The number of books read positively affects reading comprehension and attitude. Therefore, the classroom as
Melton's study evaluated the practice of sustained silent reading on the reading comprehension and word recognition skills of twelve third and fourth grade students with learning disabilities. The intervention involved ten minutes daily of silent sustained reading over a six month period in the context of thirty minutes daily of reading instruction from a learning support teacher. Students also recorded on a log their response to their reading and, once a week, talked about and shared their books. Six control subjects received the same amount of reading instruction without silent sustained reading. A significant level of change was noted for the experimental group in reading words in context and comprehending reading material at both the implicit and explicit levels. No significant change was noted in word recognition.

Calkins (1977) describes two teachers who use independent reading time to help students build literate lives. The teachers feel talk is important in classrooms, but so is time for sustained silent reading known as SSR. The article focuses on observing the student as readers, watching for challenges they encounter as they compose lives as readers, and go on to encourage habits that work for them.

A study by Siskind in 1992 investigated the relationship between the amount students read and reading achievement. Subjects, two thousand one hundred eighty five first through eighth grade students enrolled in a Chapter One program during 1990-1991 school year in a large southeastern school district, kept reading logs. Teachers informally assessed comprehension of each text read, and they recorded on the log whether or not the child demonstrated comprehension. Scores on a norm-referenced, standardized achievement test were compared with the end-of-year totals for number of texts read, number pages read, and number of texts comprehended, while controlling for previous test performance. Results indicated that there was no meaningful relationship between the
amount read and reading achievement when previous reading achievement was controlled, with the exception of grade two.

Dully (1989) conducted a study that investigated whether nineteen at-risk fifth grade students would benefit from using Silent Sustained Reading (SSR). Ten students were exposed to fifteen minutes of SSR at least four times a week over the course of a school year, while nine students were not. All students were administered a pre and post self-concept inventory and a comprehension test. Results showed no significant difference between the mean reading achievements of the two samples of at-risk students, but indicated a significant difference in self-concept in favor of the experimental group.

Everett (1987) conducted a preliminary study which investigated whether regular periods of sustained silent reading would positively affect verified silent reading comprehension scores for eighth grade students. The hypothesis tested was that students allowed fifteen minutes of recreational reading (reading self-selected material for enjoyment) five times a week for three weeks would show improved silent reading comprehension scores as tested by the Burns/Roe Informal Reading Inventory. Subject, eighteen randomly selected black eighth graders from an inner-city school in Newark, New Jersey were divided into a control and an experimental group. Both groups were given daily developmental reading instruction, after which the control group spent fifteen minutes copying a mathematics assignment while the control group was allowed to choose recreational reading material. Results of the pretest and posttest indicated that some of the experimental group gained in reading comprehension and none regressed. Therefore the hypothesis was provisionally supported. Findings showed that both boys and girls appeared to be equally enthusiastic about the program and wished to continue the reading periods beyond the original three week limit.

The following research examines the effects of home reading programs, recreational reading programs, and independent student selection of reading materials on reading motivation. Collins and Cheek's (1980) says, "Until students have the opportunity
to use reading skills in a reading situation and choose to read, the reading program has not fulfilled all of its objectives. Recreational reading, reading for enjoyment, and application of reading skills are terms sometimes used when referring to personal reading. Regardless of what this crucial area is called, the idea is the same. In personal reading, students apply all their knowledge to decode words and interpret printed symbols in order to increase their enjoyment and knowledge.

Moray presented a summary of the research in the area of reading interests. She concludes that: Gender is a more important factor than intelligence, race, grade, or economic level in determining reading preferences at each age and grade level. Also at the age of nine or ten, girls will read books that interest boys, but boys will not read books that interest girls. Moray also concluded that teachers must be aware of individual student interests, rather than relying on broad generalizations. Last she shared that materials other than textbooks must be included in the reading program, as basals do not contain the variety of stories necessary to meet the identified interests of students.

Melody (1987) discusses a practicum that addressed the problem of eight second and third grade nonindependent readers, (students at a small private school), who were not choosing to read library books. The literature review disclosed using sustained silent reading, sharing responses to their reading and planning for more available time to read in the classroom as well as at home as viable ways of increasing library reading. Sustained silent reading periods were used to increase reading time in school. A motivational technique called Eleven Minute Club was established to increase reading time at home. Peer partner reading sessions were used to give increased opportunity for sharing responses to reading. Results of the practicum were positive. The selected students increased the number of books checked out of the library. Students also appeared to increase their responses to reading.

Another study addressing student reading motivation was conducted by Jean Voorhees in 1993. The practicum reported integrated activities designed to improve
student attitudes toward reading into a middle school reading program. A target group of seventy-five students in sixth and seventh grades grouped homogeneously in remedial, average, or enrichment classes participated in the study. The program focused on four key activities for increasing recreational reading in school: sustained silent reading, journal writing, computer activities, and reading incentives. The classroom library was a focal point for students in self-selection of books during leisure time reading. Records of books read were logged in student journals as well as in the computer database. An after-school reading club was initiated and various other incentive programs were implemented. Outcomes were measured by comparison of student pre and post attitude surveys, teacher observation of books read and recorded, and participation in the reading club. Results indicated that students view reading as less important than other activities like watching television, listening to music, or participating in sports and hobbies. Nonetheless, students today are reading when able to choose what they read rather than what adults feel they should be reading.

Research conducted by Jody Brown Podl (1995) found students benefit in numerous ways from having classroom time for reading. First, they get to assert their independence by making choices about what they want to read. She found her students didn't consider reading as school work. They saw it as a break in the routine. This study demonstrated that independent classroom reading renewed student's confidence in their ability to read and increased their enjoyment as well. Guided independent reading speaks to the growing diversity in all of our classes by providing a way to engage all students in reading.

Barbara Maraca in 1990 designed a computer program to increase sixth grade students' leisure time reading. This practice study investigated the effectiveness of a computerized independent reading contest. An existing word processing program was modified to encourage the sixth grade students to read. A list of twenty-five books was developed. Students used the computer program to respond to questions based on each
book. The student with the greatest number of correct answers was declared the winner. A leisure time reading inventory and the Clark County School District Reading Diagnostic pre and post tests were administered to the students. The practicum's goals were that 75% of the students would associate leisure time reading with academic achievement and that 50% of the students would increase their reading comprehension level, vocabulary, inferencing skills, and context clue skills each by 10%. None of these goals were met; however, some improvement in scores was noted, and the students who entered the contest appeared to enjoy the books they read and the challenge of the contest.

Teachers and administrators who make personal reading the major goal of the school reading program demonstrate to students that reading is more than skill development. This point cannot be overemphasized, as the authors noted in working with approximately sixty second and third grade students. The students were asked to draw a picture of what reading meant to them, two drew a picture of the teacher reading to a class, five drew themselves reading books on their own, and the remainder showed skill development activities ranging from the basal reader groups to doing worksheets! Thus, good prescriptive reading instruction includes reading experiences that are meaningful and that help students want to read.

Burgess (1985) designed a program to increase the frequency of recreational reading done at home. The program began with an explanatory letter to parents. Each child was to read for at least ten minutes at home. The parents recorded reading frequency on an independent reading calendar. Children were rewarded with tokens, with those children who accumulated at least twenty-four tokens at the end of the month, being given rewards. Burgess reported that as a result of her home reading program, the frequency of recreational reading increased and children began selecting books by certain authors because of their writing styles.

Fielding (1988) stated that of all the different ways that children spend their leisure time, reading books was the best way to predict and increase in reading achievement. On
most days children spend little time reading for pleasure. In one study conducted by Anderson (1985) fifth grade students were surveyed on how they spent their free time outside of school. This survey revealed:

50% of the children read books for an average of four minutes per day or less; 30% read two minutes per day or less; and fully 10% never reported reading any book on any day. For the majority of the children, reading from books occupied 1% of their free time, or less. In contrast, the children averaged one hundred thirty minutes a day watching TV, or about one third of the time between the end of school and going to sleep (pg.53).

Hong (1995) developed another home reading program that has five components: a contract, the trade books the student has selected, color coded reading level tags, a guide that explains the role of these tags, and a reading log. A set of these items goes home each night with the student. Hong says, "The home reading program has increased everyone's involvement in the reading process: kids, their families, and me."

The preceding research has noted studies that have resulted in gains in reading achievement and attitude. However, several of the studies have demonstrated that there was not a significant difference in reading comprehension after participation in a Silent Sustained Reading program. The above research found mild gains in reading comprehension growth but did find student attitudes towards reading to be more positive. The following study will maintain that sixth grade above and below average students will show an improvement in attitude toward reading after participation in a daily reading log program. It is also maintained that the reading motivation of sixth grade below average readers will show more positive gains in attitude after participation in a daily reading log. The following study will also maintain that the participation in a daily reading log will have a positive effect on sixth grade students' reading comprehension.
Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to determine the effectiveness of reading logs on the attitudes of low to high achievers in reading. It will also determine if reading logs have a positive effect on reading comprehension.

SETTING

The Howard M. Phifer Middle School is the school being used for this study. This school is located in Pennsauken, New Jersey which is in Camden County. The school consists of three grade levels; sixth grade, seventh grade and eighth grade. It is the only public middle school in the town of Pennsauken. The town consists of lower to middle working class families.

POPULATION

The total population of students in the school is currently fourteen hundred. The sixth grade contains four hundred-seventy-one students, the seventh grade contains five hundred one students, and the eighth grade contains four hundred twenty-eight students. The ethnic makeup of the student population is 48% white, 34.5% black, 13.3% Hispanic, 3.6% Asian, and .6% American Indian.
This study consisted of forty-eight students, divided among two sixth grade reading classes. The experimental classes will be referred to as “Class A”, and “Class B”. Students included in the results are described as follows:

1. Class A consisted of thirteen boys and eleven girls, ages eleven to twelve in a self-contained classroom. One student receives basic skills math instruction and three students receive resource room assistance. Class A used the daily reading logs.

2. Class B consisted of thirteen boys and eleven girls, ages eleven to twelve in a self-contained classroom. Two students receive basic skills math instruction and two students receive resource room instruction. Class B did not use the daily reading logs.

INSTRUMENTS

California Achievement Test (CAT) scores for the spring of 1997 were reviewed in order to determine levels of achievement in reading. The CATS are norm referenced objective-based tests for kindergarten through grade 12. They are designed to measure achievement in the basic skills commonly found in state and district curricula. Reliability measures are reported for each subtest at each level. For internal consistency, KR20 estimates are used. These values are highest for the mathematics sections, moderate for the reading sections, and lowest for the spelling and language parts. (Mitchell, p.245) It is also possible to compute “Anticipated Achievement Scores” for the California Achievement Test.

An informal survey consisting of ten questions to assess attitude toward reading. Questions included on the survey were devised by this researcher, along with three questions from the “Reading Attitude Inventory” by Molly Ransbury. See Appendix A.
The Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement was administered to subjects. The Passage Comprehension sub-test was the only part given from the battery to assess reading comprehension. The test was administered individually to the subjects.

METHOD

Each class was administered the survey’s on the third day of school in September of 1997. The students were told to demonstrate how they felt about each statement by placing a check under “Yes” or “No”. The students were reassured that this survey would have no bearing on their grades. They were also informed that the purpose of the survey was to evaluate the reading program at their school.

To assess reading comprehension the Woodcock Johnson Passage Comprehension test was administered the first week of school in September of 1997. Again students were informed that the test had no bearing on their grades. Posttesting was completed in one session for each class at the beginning of March 1998. The procedure was a direct replica of the pretesting situation.

INSTRUCTION

The children in the study were to select a novel for Silent Sustained Reading (SSR). Guidelines were provided by the researcher for choosing an appropriate level book. Books could be selected from the middle school library, the town library or the classroom library. Students were assigned nightly homework of reading for a minimum of twenty minutes a night. They were to record their total times in a “reading log”. The log is a folder that contains a recording sheet for students to log the amount of time spent reading each day. Title, author, beginning and ending times, and parent signature are required to be completed for each log entry. To aid the student’s motivation of completing the homework assignment of the reading log, individual SSR
reading goals and class goals were set by the subjects. Goals consisted of the number of hours each student wanted to read for one month. Additionally, the class composed a goal for it to achieve together. To assess the achievement of their goals individual times were calculated by the students and checked by the researcher at each month’s end. Students received written notification by the researcher as to if their goals had been achieved. Monthly reading times were combined and transferred into the class reading time and again assessed to see if the class goal had been achieved. These goals were posted on the inside of the subjects reading log folders and the class goal was posted also in the classroom.

Students were required for homework to read and record in their logs each evening. The following school day during reading class the log folder would be checked by the researcher. A raffle ticket would be distributed to each student who completed their home SSR reading and recorded the times in their log. A raffle drawing for various prizes would be held at the end of each week.
 CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study is designed to determine the effectiveness of reading logs on the attitudes of low to high achieving sixth grade reading students. It will also determine if reading logs have a positive effect on reading comprehension for these students.

The data was collected using an informal survey of ten questions to assess students attitudes toward reading. The Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement was also administered to subjects. The passage comprehension sub-test was the only part given from the battery to assess reading comprehension.

The student’s pre and posttest reading attitude inventory scores are based on the number of positive responses. The comprehension scores are based on correct responses on the Woodcock Johnson comprehension passage. The scores are presented in four groups: Low achievers who used daily reading logs (LL), low achievers who did not use daily reading logs (L-NL), average to high achievers who used daily reading logs (AH-L), average to high achievers who did not use daily reading logs (AH-NL). Groups were determined on the basis of the 1997 California achievement Test scores.

An analysis of variance was run in order to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between groups on the comprehension tests and reading attitude inventory and the following results were recorded:

Reading attitude results showed, low achieving readers who did use the log demonstrated no difference in reading attitude between the pre and posttest scores. The average mean score from the pre test was 5.5 with a standard deviation of 1.9. The posttest results had an average mean of 5.7 with standard deviation of 2.7. The reading attitude test is a scale based on positive responses which range from zero to eleven. Low readers who did not use the log had an average mean of 6.5 with standard deviation of 1.1
on the pre test. Posttest results had an average mean of 6.8 with standard deviation of 0.87.

The average to high achieving readers who did not use the daily reading logs had a decrease in post test scores. This group had an average mean score of 6.4 with a standard deviation of 2.3 on the pre test. An average mean of 5.2 with a standard deviation of 2.8 for the post test. The average to high readers who were using the logs showed a positive increase in scores between pre and posttests. The mean was 6.3 with a standard deviation of 1.9 for pre testing. The posttesting revealed a mean of 7.2 with a standard deviation of 1.8. The reading attitude posttest was statistically significant; F=4.6, P<.05. The reading attitude difference between pre and post tests also demonstrated a statistical significance; F=6.3, P=<.05

Reading comprehension results also showed few differences between students who used logs as compared to those who did not. Low achievers who used logs had a pre test average mean of 21.6 with a standard deviation of 3.1. Little change was demonstrated by the posttest results that had an average mean of 22.0 and a standard deviation of 3.6. Students who were low achievers and did not use the daily reading log had pre test scores of 21.0 with a standard deviation of 3.5. Posttest scores of 21.4 with standard deviation of 3.6 did not show any change. Average to high achievers who did participate in the daily reading log showed a significant difference in pre and posttest scores; F=29.5, P< .001. The pre test results were 26.7 with a standard deviation of 2.8. Posttest results were 29.8 with standard deviation of 2.9. The comprehension test difference had a mean of 3.1 with a standard deviation of 1.3. The average to high achievers who did not use the reading log also demonstrated a significant difference on the pre and post tests; F=29.3, P<.001 for the pre test and F=30, P<.001 for the post test. The pre test scores had an average mean of 28.1 with standard deviation of 2.6 and posttest scores of 28.4 with a standard deviation of 2.5.
SUMMARY OF RESULTS

It has been demonstrated that there was no statistically significant difference among three out of four subgroups when measuring reading attitude. Average to high achievers who did use the daily reading log were the only group who demonstrated an increase in positive reading attitudes. It has also been demonstrated that this group of average to high achievers who used the daily reading log increased their comprehension skills as well. The other three subgroups did not show any significant change in reading comprehension.
# TABLE OF RESULTS

READING ATTITUDES OF LOW ACHIEVING AND AVERAGE TO HIGH ACHIEVING SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT DAILY LOG USE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attitude Pretest (X)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Attitude Posttest (X)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Attitude Difference (X)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOG USERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-HL</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13 PARTICIPANTS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 PARTICIPANTS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-LOG USERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-HNL</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13 PARTICIPANTS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LNL</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 PARTICIPANTS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**

A-HL = Average to High Log Users  
LL = Low Log Users  
A-HNL = Average to High Non-Log Users  
LNL = Low Non-Log Users
# Table of Results

## Reading Comprehension of Low Achieving and Average to High Achieving Sixth Grade Students With and Without Daily Log Use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comprehension Pretest (X)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Comprehension Posttest (X)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Comprehension Difference (X)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Log Users</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-HL</strong></td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13 Participants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LL</strong></td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 Participants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Log Users</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-HNL</strong></td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13 Participants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LNL</strong></td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 Participants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key**

- A-HL = Average to High Log Users
- LL = Low Log Users
- A-HNL = Average to High Non Log Users
- LNL = Low Non Log Users
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of a daily reading log on the attitude and comprehension of sixth grade low to high achieving students.

Four specific hypotheses were formulated. The first hypothesis states: sixth grade average to high achieving readers will show an improvement in attitude toward reading after participation in a daily reading log. The second hypothesis states: sixth grade low achieving readers will show an improvement in attitude toward reading after participation in a daily reading log. The third hypothesis states: low achieving sixth grade reading students will show an increase in comprehension skills after participation in a daily reading log. The fourth and final hypothesis stated: average to high achieving sixth grade reading students will show an increase in comprehension skills after participation in a daily reading log.

Two of the four hypotheses were confirmed from the information contained in chapter four. Results found the average to high achievers who did use the daily reading log were the only group who demonstrated and increase on positive reading attitudes as well as increase in comprehension skills. The study examined forty-eight sixth grade regular education students divided among two classes. Students participated in a daily reading log program for a sixteen-week period. This study suggests that with this particular group daily reading log use improves reading attitudes and comprehension in average to high achievers.

CONCLUSIONS

The importance of self-selected reading is an indispensable part of a balanced reading program. In independent reading students are in charge of their own reading by
choosing their own books, doing their own reading, and taking responsibility to work through the text. This study was designed to examine the effects that independent reading had on students, it was appropriate to measure attitude and comprehension. Since lower achievers enter the learning situation with more negative feelings about school, this study examined whether lower achievers would show a positive gain in attitude when participating with a daily reading log. Subsequent research links time spent reading books as the best predictor of a child's growth as a reader, this study also examined the affects of the daily reading log on low to high achieving student's comprehension.

The trends in independent reading currently correlate with my study. Heyer (1980) found the relationship between attitudes and achievement positively related and also found the relationship between motivational measures and reading achievement to increase consistently with age. These results are similar to this study. My average to high achievers did have an increase in attitude with an increase of comprehension. Similar results were found in 1985 by Hedellin and Sjoberg. Their finding was attitude as well as ability influence achievement. Henk and Melnick (1985) found results that also support my study on lower achiever’s and comprehension skills. Their study stated that children who feel successful in school have higher self-esteem and achievement as well as a positive attitude toward school and reading. Those students who feel unsuccessful in school generally experience lower achievement in school and avoid reading for pleasure. Dully’s study in 1989 also reported results similar to my study. Dully’s study investigated nineteen at-risk fifth grade students who used Silent Sustained Reading (SSR). Ten students were exposed to fifteen minutes of SSR four times a week over a school year. Pre and posttest results showed no significant difference between the mean reading achievements of the tow samples of at-risk students. This correlated with the results found between the low achievers who did and did not use the logs.
IMPLICATIONS

An assessment of the data from this study suggests that with this particular group daily reading log use improves reading attitudes and comprehension in average to high achievers. This suggests that maintaining daily independent reading while using self recording methods has a positive impact on attitude and comprehension. Encouraging individual reading selections and self-monitoring of one's own reading increased ownership and meaning, which improved attitude and comprehension.

Lower achievers did not make any improvements in attitude or comprehension. Their lack of improvement derives from underlying challenges and deficiency's they experience with their own reading skills. Traditionally they have experienced difficulties and have developed solid dissatisfaction with the reading process therefore, their attitude and comprehension did not show any significant change. These findings suggest that, in addition to incorporating a balanced reading program, the use of a daily reading log is beneficial to average to high readers. Limitations of this study consisted of number of subjects and time constraints. The implementation of this study would benefit from a larger sample of sixth graders and posttesting at the end of the school year. This would allow for maximum academic growth.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Dully (1989). The Relationship Between Silent and Sustained Reading To Reading Achievement Attitude of the At-Risk Student. Master’s Thesis, Kean College of New Jersey.


<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like to tell my friends about the stories I have read.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My best friend would tell you that I like reading very much.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I enjoy reading in my free time.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I enjoy listening to someone read out loud.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Reading is a great way for me to learn new things.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. It's important to understand what I read.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reading is difficult.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I like to read about my favorite hobbies or interests.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I enjoy my reading class.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I enjoy SSR.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>