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## **Guided reading: Providing reading instruction for struggling readers to build their comprehension strategies during independent reading**

Debra Gregory Peters

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GUIDED READING: PROVIDING READING INSTRUCTION FOR  
STRUGGLING READERS TO BUILD THEIR COMPREHENSION  
STRATEGIES DURING INDEPENDENT READING

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A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Education:  
Reading/Language Arts

---

by  
Debra Gregory-Peters  
December 2008

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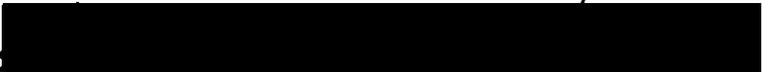
by  
Debra Gregory-Peters

December 2008

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Kimberly Mastnett-Edwards, Second Reader

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine the benefits and drawbacks of the Guided Reading approach to the teaching of reading for struggling elementary school-aged students. The goal of Guided Reading is to provide small group instruction to allow students to explore reading strategies and gain access to reading comprehension.

A single subject case study approach was utilized as a means of collecting and reporting the data. The benefits and drawbacks were measured by the student's ability to read specific leveled texts during independent reading as well as through the use of a running records assessment conducted by the classroom teacher. The study began by indentifying the reading level of a struggling student and then providing instruction at that grade level. During Guided Reading, the student was engaged in literacy workstations with the focus on the student's ability to transfer learned reading strategies to the independent reading environment. At each workstation the subject was involved in word recognition activities, listening skills activities, the reading of familiar texts, and teacher-directed Guided Reading instruction to

promote fluent reading.

The design of this study stemmed from Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell's Guided Reading model (1996). The results of the study were promising due to the fact that the student demonstrated improvement in his reading and comprehension levels. At the end of the study, the student was capable of independently choosing a variety of leveled texts to demonstrate his independent reading level. It appears that Guided Reading provides reading strategies to students at their initial point of reading difficulty. It seems to enhance the students' abilities to recognize words and obtain meaning from print during independent reading which is essential for the development and maintenance of fluent reading.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge an array of professors who assisted me in my academic achievements. However, the College of Education is where my goals and focus currently lies, especially toward Dr. Diane Brantley who goes over and beyond for her students. She has shown an unwavering dedication to enhance the thinking of others with the continuous modeling of a moral and professional stance for her students. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr. Kimberly Harnett-Edwards for graciously stepping in at the last minute to cover for a much dedicated colleague, Dr. Randall Wright. The College of Education assiduously constructs their students' thinking one class at a time. Thank you all for your ongoing commitment in the educational landscape of cognitive development!

## DEDICATION

To my gentle and loving Creator, who has directed individuals to my path to greatly assist me in my academic endeavors.

To my magnanimous patient and caring husband, who never impeded upon the completion of this task.

To my tenaciously competent daughters who were my motivation for this task.

To my devoted parents (all three of you) who have never ceased to tell me how proud they are of me.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

It is my belief that students who have reading difficulties lack the necessary tools to advance cognitively in the reading process. Whatever prior knowledge they possess, they may lack the guidance of how to apply their knowledge. At times students do not perform at the level that others deem necessary, not because they lack the knowledge to perform. On the other hand, they may not have been taught how to apply their knowledge in an effective manner.

A prophet once said, "Write the vision, and make it plain upon the tables, that he may run who reads it" (Hab. 2.2 KJV). In order to teach the student how to run with what they have ownership over, the vision for that student must be clear. The more information a teacher gathers about a student through informal assessments, the clearer the teacher's vision is for the student, and knowledge becomes clearer for the student. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) refer to this as, "By understanding the student, the teacher dispenses a good design to engage students to explore big

ideas" (p.5). It is my hope after reading this study that the reading teacher will become better informed of the facts in regard to struggling students and run with the information to advance these competent minds. Guided reading is an environment where the student is given the needful guidance to assist them in applying what they know and what they are learning about print. Guided reading is a natural unfolding to a print rich environment.

#### Statement of the Problem

I believe that students struggle with the current reading program provided by school districts because most students lack the skills necessary to apply problem solving strategies during the reading process. Students are asked to read complicated text when they are devoid of comprehension strategies to aid them in comprehending a passage. Students need comprehension strategies that are necessary to access ownership of texts. Without these strategies reading will remain an unnatural activity for the student. Struggling students are given challenging texts to read while at the same time they struggle to read one sentence. There must be natural interventions by the classroom teacher to bridge the student and the text, if

the student is to interact with the text at an independent level. When struggling students are put through the arduous process of reading complex text, what are we saying to them? Better yet, what type of learning are we constructing for them? Smith (1996) adds to this body of knowledge by bringing to the fore front that "A teacher's responsibility is not to teach children to read but to make it possible for them to learn to read" (p. 5). All in all, kids are going to learn, the question is what will they learn about the information placed in front of them?

For too long teachers have been teaching isolated skills without the appropriate integration of those skills to mingling with experiences of texts. This is not to say that these praxes are the teacher's choice. Teachers are rarely given choices to construct effective learning experiences for their students. Hirsch (2006) is very clear on this issue, "It is not the school staff that is responsible for what is going wrong in the school but the incorrect ideas that have been imposed on the staff" (p. 13). A balanced literacy approach through guided reading provides students with consistent and ongoing reading experience with a variety of genres. Placing text in front of students who lack the skills to read for pleasure and

comprehending with ease is setting them up for failure. However, when we teach isolated skills and integrate them daily with meaningful reading experiences we motivate the student to make attempts toward reading more challenging texts.

It is also my belief that when a guided reading program becomes a fixed component in the classroom, struggling students look forward to making greater attempts in the reading process. During guided reading the student is supplied the support necessary for successful meaningful reading experiences. Isolated skills are given at various workstations and these skills culminate at the guided reading table. This is where literature for students begins to make sense and continues and a gradual acquisition of broad enabling knowledge throughout their entire reading experiences. "A big idea in literacy development is that the meaning of the text is not in the text but between the lines, in the interaction between the active reader and the text" (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005, p.9). The goal for the student should not be for the teacher to control the student's reading process, but for the student to obtain ownership of the reading process with the text they are involved with reading.

## Purpose of the Study

This purpose of this study is to observe, assess, evaluate, instruct, and assess again the benefits of guided reading for one struggling student through a case study venue. The guided reading component of reading instruction has more than one facet to the acquisition of language. These facets are designed to strengthen the student's reading abilities. The intent of a guided reading table is designed for the teacher to provide small group instruction to meet the needs of the students who are involved. The goal of the various literacy workstations during guided reading exist to encourage the student's reading skills at an independent level. Therefore, each workstation is designed to create transference of the knowledge that has been taught in a balanced literacy approach.

An additional intent of this study is to make observations in regard to the reading strategies provided during each guided reading session. For instance, is the student transferring reading comprehension strategies, while they are engaged in oral or silent independent reading? Fountas & Pinnell (1996), promotes the fact that, "Teachers develop the individual reader's processing systems, focus on what children can do and help them use

their knowledge to get to what they do not know" (160). The struggling student needs to be taught how to communicate with the text. Strategic reading is how good readers gain ownership of the text. As the struggling student progresses through the reading process, they should possess the ability to use their knowledge of reading strategies appropriately and in different ways. Literacy workstations are an added environment where the struggling student can develop their reading independence.

First, literacy workstations should allow students to become more familiar with recognizing words. This statement is confirmed by Fountas and Pinnell (1996) when stating "Children need word knowledge skills of how words work and letter-sound correspondences as cues" (p. 155). This should be the fountain of building strong support in recognizing unfamiliar words and reinforcing known words. When students are effective at word-solving skills they can manipulate sounds of unfamiliar words to predict words in the printed text.

Second, the listening workstation should not be presented as a passive area. "The listening capacity of a student is the highest level at which a student can understand material that is read to them with 75 percent

comprehension" (Gunning, 2003, p. 29). As the struggling student intakes information from a prerecorded tape, the expectation should be clearly given to the student with an accountability piece attached. For example, on the first day, the student will listen to a book on tape and follow along as the storyteller speaks. The second and third days, the student will listen and whisper read with the storyteller. On the fourth day, the student will pair-up with another student and take turns reading each page. Finally, on the fifth day, independent reading of the same book will occur. If the student simply listens to a prerecorded tape and moves on to the next station, the question must be asked: What has the student truly learned and where is the evidence of that knowledge?

Thirdly, a fluency workstation does not merely involve word accuracy, but reading comprehension also. Fluency involves the student's ability to articulate oral language with expression, pitch, and tone in addition to comprehension. When text makes sense to the reader they are comprehending and gathering meaning from the text. Thus this is evidence that the reader is progress toward reading independence. Therefore, they are learning to expand skills and strategies. Fluency is where the teacher would like to

see isolated literacy skills come together. Bertrand and Stice (2002) concur, "As the fluent phase is reached, readers realize that not only must the print sound like it looks, but it also must make sense" (p. 111). Granted, literacy workstations that incorporate fluency are the pathways toward increased oral and independent reading skills. When print is practiced in an oral environment students are hearing appropriate syntax, phrasing, and chunking. Not only should this process enhance oral fluency, it should also promote the student's ability to predict syntax. Once the reader starts making predictions with text, they comprehend that their predictions make sense with the text they are engaged in. Goodman (2003) adds, "Based on the frequency of print, kids chose words and phrases to increase their reading abilities" (76).

The final plan of my study is the culminating focus of what guided reading demonstrates. This is where my study differs from ongoing whole group lessons. Due to the fact that the highly skilled reading teacher is observing and assessing what the student is cognitively bringing to the table. They are observing and assessing what the student has learned from a guided reading session, what further reading support the student may need, or is the student

prepared to be challenged with more reading strategies. Wilhelm (2001) accentuates the fact that "It is important to note that you may have to ask several questions at one level before proceeding to the next. Students must deal with local and more limited meanings before putting the puzzle pieces together to explore the more abstract and global meanings" (p. 131). Change must come for all students. The fluent reader needs access to daily comprehension reading challenges and the struggling reader needs more time to master concepts at each reading level.

#### The Importance of Reform

When struggling students have been identified as needing more focused attention, how will this be achieved in ongoing whole group lessons? When the struggling student sits in whole group after whole group lesson, how do you accurately measure what the student has learned? How can the teacher provide the struggling student with specific strategies to meet the student where they are in order to move them forward effectively? In other words, where do teachers find the time to meet the needs of each student effectively if all that exists for the student is whole group lessons? Everyday teachers are challenged by these

questions. The passionately skilled teacher wants to thoroughly prepare their students for the next grade level. Yet, when the needs of struggling students are not successfully met, retention creeps into view. Bracey (2006) clearly warns, "As the retention-in-grade rate rises, the dropout rate also likely rises and the graduation rate falls" (p. 39). Guided reading allows struggling students to find themselves within the text. A guided reading program consistently strives to provide motivation for the struggling student to move on to the next page. Guided reading inspires the struggling student to read the book from cover to cover with confidence and induces the student to read the text again. Guided reading should be the attrition for retention and the carbohydrate for building confident literary students.

The confident student looks forward to being drawn into the text and making connections with the texts. Additionally, "Making meaning means making connections with experiences" (Johnston, 1997, p. 71). The struggling student finds his or her voice within the text and then reacts to visual cues within the text with greater word recognition and fluency. On the other hand, when a struggling student is frustrated in a whole group

environment and does not possess the reading comprehension strategies to progress, they are not only frustrated with the whole group routine, overtime, they quietly and gradually regress from the reading process entirely.

Johnston (1997) adds for the most part, "Another cause of these apparent regressions stem from the fact that the child's attention may be split among different demands, including some that are not yet automatic" (p. 142). Yet, they cannot be blamed for the regression, because this is what was taught to them.

#### Organization

As you read this case study it is my hope the trail leads to the importance and promotion of an effective balance literacy program through a comprehensive guided reading component. You will find that the literature review supports, validates, confirms, and encourages the approval of a guided reading program. Additionally, you will find that this conversation makes perfect sense as a piece of writing, because it promotes the intuitiveness based on scientific data for the relevant conception of guided reading to exist where it does not.

It is equally important that you view the methods chapter as a methodical process to ease the promotion of guided reading where deemed necessary. The question is, what do students need to enhance their learning? A balanced literacy program needs workstations that provide word recognition to ease the struggling student's frustrational level of indentifying words. The listening workstation should further expression, intonation, and pitch of the student. Moreover, fluency is revealed through the rereading of familiar text that the student independently chooses from their browser bag. The browser bag is where the student stores books that they have previously read. As a result, the guided reading table is where the teacher cultivates the student's experiences with text in order to promote the student's reading confidence.

#### Limitations of the Study

It has been my experience that there are unknown variables that impede upon ongoing prosody i.e. word recognition, fluency, and reading comprehension. A student will function at the level of experience he or she brings to the reading process. For example, prior to entering the classroom environment, were parents talking to their child

in the language that would be used in the classroom? Did parents expose their children to pictures books and discussed pictures? Were parents taking the time to read to their child and having the child read to them? Essentially, what level of concepts of print will the child possess and process prior to entering the classroom?

Also, the unknown variable of learning impediments or immature language development can be a factor in the acquisition of language. One way to identify a learning impediment would be during the student observation, is the student using strategies that were taught? If not, the teacher would want to ask the student why they are not using a specific strategy at the point of difficulty. Equally important, the teacher may use the information learned from the observation to re-teach a strategy or skill to provide clarity for the student. If language immaturity exists, this could be evidence of the limitations in reference to the student's concept of print and oral language development.

However, the study will focus solely on the student's ability to access and apply English reading strategies. For the student who I am studying, English is the first language used in the home and the student is not receiving

any special instruction as an English language learner. All of these unknown variables are considered when I assess and plan lessons for my case study. Furthermore, I will only address the student's ability to apply reading strategies that were taught during the case study.

The student involved in my case study attended kindergarten, first-grade, and is currently in the second-grade. Fortunately, my student remained in the study for the entire 10 weeks and school attendance for this student was good. The parents informed me that only one of them was fluent in Spanish and they have not taken the time to teach Spanish to their children. Three other siblings live in the home; however, none of them speak Spanish. My case study was conducted with the youngest child in the home.

Finally, this study was primarily seeking to measure the improvement of the student's reading prosody, based on the student's usage of guided reading instruction in a small group environment. The study was limited to the types of assessments I was able to use in regard to time constraints and family assistance that could have been provided at home. The data of the student's improvement was through teacher observation and informal assessments. An initial Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) (Beaver

1996) was administered by the classroom teacher to identify the student's strengths, needs, and reading level.

#### Definition of Terms

DRA - Developmental Reading Assessment

Omission - If a line or word in the text is omitted each word is counted as an error.

Prosody - Is the progressive mastery of the language cueing system (visual, structure, and meaning), addition to appropriate phrasing, expression, and pitch. The prosodic read is making connections between written and oral language.

RR - Running Records

Substitution - If a word or phrase is added the text.

Repeat - If a word, phrase, or line is repeated and mirrors the text it is not counted as an error.

CHAPTER TWO  
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Admittedly, educational professionals acknowledge the fact that the struggling student needs special programs and interventions to increase their reading level. The interventions are ongoing and occur early in order to ease academic difficulties at their current reading level and for the next grade level. If implemented properly, guided reading can make ongoing differences in the student's ability to read with confidence independently and continually. It is the consistency of a balanced literacy program that allows the struggling student to see print in a literary continuum and makes the difference in their proficiency of language acquisition.

It is the acquisition of language that the struggling student must engage in through the practice of word recognition strategies, repeated readings of previously read texts, and reading comprehension strategies. Informal reading assessments are administered to provide the reading teacher with information to guide reading instruction and to measure the effectiveness of a coherent balanced

literacy program. Assessments may consist of word recognition to identify the student's successful ability to decode words during the reading process. Also, the speed in which the student can identify a word will measure the student's prior knowledge of spelling patterns that have been taught. Word accuracy assessments should also be used for a precursor to evaluate the student's comprehension. Johnston (1997) proposed, "As children spend more and more time reading and writing, many routines and common patterns become automatic, picking up speed and actually going through a different part of the brain, no longer involving conscious effort" (p.145). Furthermore, reading passages are given to assess the student's comprehension to determine instructional and independent reading levels. The information from the assessed reading passage provides the teacher with the necessary insight to build upon the student's reading strengths and enhance the student's area of need during a guided reading session. The reading goals that the teacher constructs are implemented to guide quality reading comprehension strategies. Au, Carroll, and Scheu, (1998) reinforces the prior statement by declaring, "Reading comprehension involves the ability to construct meaning from printed information. Reading is viewed as the

dynamic interaction among the student, the text, and the situation or social context in which reading takes place" (p.166), which is the goal of reading.

For the reasons stated above, the teacher will first identify the abilities of the student through informal assessments as "this process decreases the likelihood that a teacher will misjudge a student's abilities" (Brantley, 2007, p. 140). At this point, the teacher is capable of honing in on the student's strengths and needs; for the purpose of increasing the student's reading abilities. Informal assessments will provide the teacher with valuable data to move the student forward in the reading process. The following questions will allow the teacher to assess specific reading behaviors that the student may possess or lack. For example: What information is the student bringing to the text? Does the student know how to use illustrations or photographs to gain meaning from print? Are they monitoring their reading? How well can the student retell a passage, paragraph, or story to assess their understanding of the text? These questions can also be termed as "establishing inquiry." By this I mean, "Systematic investigations that can push teachers to deliver improved results" (Pinnell, 2006, p. 80).

## Informal Assessments

A balanced literacy program will not be effective if it is void of informal assessments. The intent of informal assessments is to gather data, thereby identifying meaningful strengths and needs obtained from the data collected. Often, "A distinction is commonly made between the notion of assessment and that of evaluation—that assessment was a gathering of data and evaluation is the interpretation of that data" (Johnston, 1997, p. 2). Concurrently, the teacher is able to view the student's accomplishments through the assessment phase, followed by an evaluation phase of adjusting current academic goals or designing new goals to meet the student's needs and further cultivate their strengths. In the process of designing reading goals for instruction throughout the reading process, the first step would be the administration of one or more informal assessments. These assessments may consist of Running Records (RR) (Clay, 1991), Miscue Analysis (Goodman, 1965), or Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) (Beaver, 1996). The next section will detail each of these assessments.

## Running Records

Running Records (RR) which is an assessment created by Marie Clay, "Captures what young readers said and did while reading continuous text" (Clay, 2002, p. 50). The first step in a RR is to mark each word read correctly with a tick (check). Additionally, there are markings for errors which are often called miscues that may occur during the reading process. These errors may consist of deviations from the text. For example, the printed text shows /tree/ and the student read /brush/ or vice versa. An insertion is when a student says a sound or word that was not in the printed text and an omission is when the student has omitted a sound or word from the text. Self-corrections are made by the student. At this point the student has realized that the passage may not have made sense or what was read was not what the printed text shows. Therefore, the student may repeat words, phrases, or sentences to correct what is not in the printed text. When a student has independently made a self-correction, they are transitioning toward an independent stage of comprehension. At this stage, the student fosters the consistency of realizing what they were reading did not make sense or match the printed text. An example of a Running Record (RR) can be found in Figure 1.

"A bee!" said Baby Bear.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
"Where is he going?"	✓	✓	✓	✓					
The bee went into a tree.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	bush	R	SC	
						tree			
Baby Bear looked in the tree.	✓	✓	looks	SC	✓	a	R	SC	✓
			looked			the			
"Honey!" said Baby Bear.	✓	✓	✓	✓					
"Honey for me! Thank you, bee."	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				

Figure 1. Example of a Running Record.

The information gathered from the RR assessment will be evaluated in order to plan and plot-out literacy goals and reading instruction. First, the assessor will analyze the type of reading errors that occurred during the assessment phase. For example, were the errors produced because of a miscue in one of meaning, structural, or visual cues? If so, what did this error do to gain or impede upon the meaning (comprehension) from the text? Cognitively, the student was flagged that something did not make sense but did they pick up on this red flag? When an error is made in structure (syntax), the student may read print out of order. For instance, the text would read, "The dog is brown." The student may read, "Is the dog brown?"

This may or may not make sense to the student. This cognitive decision would depend on what the student brings to the text. In order for the teacher to determine what may have caused such a syntactic error, he or she may ask a series of clarifying questions. The follow-up questions might be, "Does that look right?" Or "Did that make sense?" This will bring the student's attention to how the printed text reads and help them to determine if what they read does indeed make sense.

Visual errors are usually made through the student's perception of what is written on the page. Due to the fact, "The eyes receive data from the external world: they mediate between the external world and the brain" (Weaver, 2002, p. 89). Many biological and psychological rationales exist from these occurrences and therefore it is unknown why these types of errors may occur. The best teachers can do to remedy this situation is to ask the student to revisit the sentence in which the error occurred and see if they correct it on a second read. If they do not, the teacher will want to point out the error to the reader as a means of focusing his or her attention on the printed text.

Once the RR has been completed, all information will be gathered and evaluated to determine the student's error

ratio and accuracy percentage for the purpose of designing reading instruction and creating achievable reading goals for the reader. An error that a student made usually would stem from what the student has brought to the reading process. This could also introduce another perspective of how well the student can transfer their current knowledge to the present information that was in front of them. Additionally, what information does the student know about the topic or subject they were reading? "Lesson plans flow from the consideration of the student and the content to be covered, the characteristics of the students to be served, and other information that is unique to the teacher's instructional setting" (Armstrong, 2003, p. 231). This information is crucial when the teacher begins to design goals and construct lessons for the student.

### Miscue Analysis

Miscue Analysis was created by Ken Goodman in 1965 and contains several components found in a RR. However, Goodman refers to the student's errors as miscues. A miscue is simply when a student deviates from the printed text. Miscue is a term more readily understood, because not all errors in a running record are scored as an error. In as much, there exist a variety of cognitive rationales why

reading miscues occur. Goodman (2003) has examined two assumptions that error analysts make when evaluating assessments. "First, it is assumed that oral reading should be accurate and therefore that errors represented undesirable events in reading. Secondly, it was assumed that errors grew from weaknesses or deficiencies in the reader" (p. 124). These assumptions place labels on students that can impede upon their academic achievements if they are placed and grouped in environments that they may not thrive in. Therefore, the distinction Goodman makes between errors and miscues is an important one.

A researcher or a teacher would administer a miscue analysis to gain insight in the student's reading processes. "Reading is an active search for meaning that requires studying the relationships between the readers' thought processes, language, and sociocultural settings in which both the reader and text are changed during the process (Goodman, Watts, and Burke, 2005, p. 4). It is important to observe the student's thought process, language, and sociocultural settings because the student will bring this covert information to the reading process.

There are three different miscue analysis procedures for analyzing the reading process. There is the Classroom,

Informal, and In-Depth Procedures. According to Goodman (1965). . .

The Classroom Procedure is less time-consuming and the knowledge obtained is somewhat general than that gained in the In-Depth Procedure. Classroom teachers and reading specialists find that this form gives them information to plan instructional programs with specific strategy lessons. In as much, The Informal Procedure was developed for individual reading conferences or as the teacher listens for a few minutes to individual students. The In-Depth Procedure can be more complex and time consuming than Classroom and Informal Procedures. The In-depth procedure is primarily designed for researchers to acquire the greatest amount of information about the reading process (p. 6).

In these writings you will focus on the Classroom Procedure. In general, the process begins with a script that the student will read and the teacher will make similar markings and coding as in a RR i.e. substitution (S), omission (O), repetitions (R)...that are made on the script.

Next, the teacher will ask the student to retell the passage as best as they can. This is a feature that is not required when administering a RR, but is recommended by Ken Goodman following a miscue analysis. "Retelling a story is an authentic and familiar presentational form in which the reader takes charge. Retelling scores are always considered along with comprehending patterns and other presentational responses" (Goodman, Watts, and Burke, 2005, p. 4). The comprehension pattern coding might be: YPN. This is how a teacher would interpret the comprehension pattern: Y = Yes, the sentence is syntactically acceptable. P = Partial, the miscue is syntactically acceptable within the sentence, but not within the entire text. N = No, the miscue results in a structure that is not syntactically acceptable. An example of a comprehension pattern change would look like the following in Figure 2.

0314	to the well for some water. <sup>36</sup> When he came	<sup>35</sup> <u>yyP</u>
0315	back, the baby was crying.	<sup>36</sup> <u>yyN</u>
0316	<sup>37</sup> "Poor baby, you must be hungry," said the	
0317	woodman. <sup>38</sup> "I'll make some porridge for you.	<sup>37</sup> <u>yyN</u>
0318	<sup>39</sup> <sup>R</sup> I'll <sup>n</sup> light a fire in the fireplace, <sup>C</sup> and <sup>n</sup> the	<sup>38</sup> <u>yyN</u>

Figure 2. Miscue Analysis Data

Further areas of assessment would involve calculating the student's graphic similarities. Every reading passage has a graphophonic system which includes graphic and sound cues. "Graphic and sound cues are evaluated separately in a miscue analysis to document how students systematically use orthographic cues as well as phonological cues" (Goodman, Watts, and Burke, 2005, p. 89). Au, Carroll, and Scheu adds (1998), "Readers will use the knowledge that they bring to the reading process to make predictions of unknown or unfamiliar words" (p. 99). The knowledge the student has about an unknown word will determine their success in the pronunciation of the word. The calculating for graphics will consist of an H = High Graphic Similarity (always and

away), S = Same Graphic Similarity (threw and thought), and N = No Graphic Similarity (the and your).

All of the forms related to this information is in Appendix A and B in order to provide a thorough overview of a student's processes, language, and sociocultural settings in which both the student and text are changed during the process. The student's change occurs when they notice that the printed text and their prior knowledge have not matched. Guided reading is where the student learns strategies to assist them in their ability to align thought with text. A miscue analysis allows the teacher to move from evaluation to carefully thought-out reading instruction.

#### Developmental Reading Assessment

The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is an informal and practical reading assessment to observe how struggling and emergent students attend to print. It has been field-tested in by Joetta M. Beaver in collaboration with classroom teachers in school districts in the United States and Canada. The DRA incorporates word analysis assessments, leveled reading passages to evaluate students reading performances and levels. These assessments can be as in-depth as the assessor chooses them to be.

The first procedure is a word analysis. This assessment will allow the teacher to choose which reading passage to use when assessing the student. The word analysis procedure consists of phonological awareness, high-frequency word recognition, phonics, and syllabication. Once word analysis has been evaluated, the reading passage level is chosen. The reading levels have benchmarks: Emerging (A-3), Early (4-12), Transitional (14-16) and (18-24), Extending (28-38), and Intermediate (40). Fountas & Pinnell (1996) describes these reading levels in the following manner. . .

The emergent reader is beginning to control early behavior such as directionality and word-by-word matching. The early reader is in full control of early reading strategies and can read appropriately selected texts independently once the teacher has introduced them to the reader. Transitional readers take on novel texts with more independence. The teacher is still responsible for introducing the text, but a rich, detailed introduction often may not be necessary (p. 177).

These reading levels do not correspond with the student's grade level. The emergent, early, and

transitional reading levels are designed to aid the reading teacher in the appropriate reading instruction for the student.

### Introduction of Instruction

When designing instructional goals for curriculum in the area of word recognition, reading fluency and comprehension, the teacher can have specific achievable goals in mind for struggling readers. "To be competent in curriculum planning and decision making, you must understand how society, stages of human development, theories of learning, and the nature of knowledge and cognition influence the curriculum" (Parkay and Hass, 2005, p. 2). Patterns of instruction, which are clearly designed goals for each student affects what a teacher does to administer quality instruction. The reading curriculum is arranged and plotted-out to enhance the student's reading achievement. All students bring information to the reading process this allows the teacher to observe the level of support the student will need when reading a text at his or her instructional level. To begin with, teachers can focus on word recognition strategies before moving into reading fluency and reading comprehension.

## Teaching Strategies

### Word Recognition

When implementing a balanced literacy approach for the struggling student, word recognition is a fundamental component of instruction. Word recognition strategies may involve one or more of the following areas: Phonological awareness, phonics, and word attack strategies. "The purpose of instruction in phonological awareness is to aid students in recognizing words independently, not to state rules" (Peregoy and Boyle, 2001, p. 187). The word recognition strategies provided can alleviate frustration while engaged in reading process. Not all students are capable of successfully attacking whole words. In order to transfer word recognition strategies, students will be cognitively engaged in the reading process. This means that the student can always ask themselves questions at the point of difficulty. For example, when a student comes to a word they may not be able to pronounce, a few questions to ask would be: Is there any part of this word that I can say? Does this word look like any other word I know? Does this word make sense in this sentence? When students ask themselves if they know any part of a word this can be a level of reading success for that student. Building the

student's confidence is important at all levels of reading. If the student is to be successful with the word recognition task, the teacher will teach the student what they need to know at the next level of difficulty in a balanced literacy approach.

"Readers learn to react to such visual cues without conscious thought. The seventeenth-century poets whose verses fall into the shape of a cross or a tree, and the present day "concrete poets," bring this visual aspect into the reader's consciousness and try to lead him to merge it with what is being derived from the verbal symbols" (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 82). Identifying visual cues is the basic level of word recognition strategies. In order for the student to read words, they will first read letters. The student quickly identifies shapes of letters. They are capable of visualizing words. The visual cues that are cognitively created from the printed text can also be demonstrated in the student's writings. The visual information presented to the student influences the student's consciousness in reading and writing. The student's written work is a realistic example of how they see print. The student's prior knowledge of visual cues is designed to stimulate the student's cognitive images and

symbols of print. These imagines and symbols are what the student brings to the text to influence their ability to recognize words.

The student needs more than one prompt to guide their word recognition success. One prompt does not work for all students. "This helps students to think about what strategies they might want to use" (Gunning, 2003, p. 182). Phonological awareness refers to the connection between phonemes and graphophonics. Phonological awareness can assist the student toward generating words, which is a consistent linguistic approach toward the student's word productivity. When the student is at the decoding stage, they are reading with constraints. Strategies are provided to remove the student's constraints. As the student's confidence grows, "The cues offered by the text excites their response to the text and will lead them to eliminate what is irrelevant from what is to be incorporated to make sense of print" (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 72).

To provide clarity of phonological awareness, an example of phonological awareness would be the three phonemes and letters in the word /kit/. At first glance, the student may not be able to pronounce the word /kit/. However, the student has been given instruction on blending

sounds. Therefore, the student will attack the word one phoneme at a time for the purpose of pronouncing the entire word. As the student progresses with their level of skills, the student is transferring their word knowledge into larger chunks. For example, they are moving from /k... k... i... i... t... t... kit/ to /kit... t... ten... kitten /. Further skill development will provide opportunities for the student to make appropriate chunking articulations with larger words and phrases. "The higher levels of word knowledge and analysis operate parallel with phonological awareness to assist the reader in identifying words" (Ashcraft, 2002, p. 369). Word recognition is the stage where the student is reacting to what is currently in their memory. As a result, when the student reacts to the recognition of words at an increased rate, reading fluency is developing.

### Reading Fluency

Reading fluency is the ability to decode words without frustration. The fluent student gives little attention to phonological awareness because they have mastered this skill. "Although most would concur that the definition of fluent reading should include expressiveness as well as quick and accurate reading. In addition, the expressiveness aspect of fluency is synonymous with prosody (a term that

incorporates to appropriate phrasing, pause structures, stress, and rise and fall of vocal patterns) and emphasized the syntactically linked nature of prosody" (Miller and Schwanenflugel, 2006, p. 839). As a result, the fluent student is focusing on what is structurally sound and is in the threshold of meaningfully thinking about text. Weaver states, "It is a large leap when teachers and others begin actually equating automaticity and fluency with reading comprehension and when they begin claiming that automaticity and fluency must precede reading for meaning" (Weaver, 2002, p. 214). However, the fact remains, that the impediment of word recognition decreases the level of fluency and reading comprehension. Thus, when the student's word recognition becomes more rapid, the sentence, paragraph, and story become more comprehensible.

The goal of word recognition is to promote reading fluency and the goal of reading fluency is to cultivate the student's reading comprehension during the reading process. This is not logical. Word recognition strategies are given to develop fluent readers with an instructional focus on reading for comprehension. For instance, when a student is using pictures to identify words, they may not understand the passage with in-depth detail. Yet, they are primarily

using pictures to aid them in the pronunciation of words and the meaning is embedded in the passage of the struggling student. In addition, the struggling student is making connections with letter patterns for the purpose of recognizing words. Moreover, the student is noticing that the printed word makes sense in the sentence or the passage they have read.

Proficient students are reading efficiently and effectively. The fluent student is reading efficiently, because their strength is word accuracy and appropriate phrasing with an emphasis in syntactical structures, not necessarily in-depth meaning. They are quickly reacting to visual cues without conscience thought. The fluent student's knowledge in words and phrases is their strength to appropriately recall what is in memory. This means the student is making connections with their prior knowledge of isolated words and phrases to integrate it with the information in the printed text. "Efficient [fluent] readers use just enough of the available cues, given what the reader brings to make sense of the text. An effective reader is not simply accurate with word recognition, they are gaining meaning" (Goodman, 1996, p. 8).

Fluent students have a higher level of oral speech than the student who simply decodes words. They are involved in the structure of sentences. "At this stage the child has mastered a limited range of simple syntactical language. The reader may deviate from the printed syntactical structure, then, reread the phrase or sentence in order to make sense of the text" (Clay, 2004, p. 71). Self-correcting what was read orally is the student's strategy of monitoring what they are reading. The student is developing reading strategies that independent students possess which allows for comprehension to occur. Fluency tests that measures the student's "Words Per Minute" do not acknowledge their reading comprehension. Consequently, it has been my experience that measuring Words Per Minute (WPM) does not always equate reading comprehension. The goal of my thesis is to raise struggling students reading comprehension. Currently, schools are stuck in the area of fluency. I have experienced second-grade students WPM of 120 and the student could not retell a passage and second-grade students with WPM of 80 can retell a passage with detailed information. I contribute the latter to a slower cognitive processing with greater reading retention.

## Comprehension

There are many stages of reading that should be mastered in a variety of settings to make sense of print. Hence, the ultimate goal for the student is to make sense of print. For instance, letters equate words, words equate phrases, and phrases equate sentences, which provide a field of meaning for the student. In sum, the student strives to make sense of print as a result they learn to read effectively, by comprehending not simply print, but the student is bringing meaningful thought to print. "Reading comprehension involves the ability to construct meaning from and to respond to text, using background knowledge as well as printed information" (Au, Carroll, and Scheu, 1998, p. 5). There is an interaction between the student and the text. In general, reading comprehension strategies are taught at various levels for the purpose of allowing the student to take ownership of the text. Comprehension is the highest level on the reading continuum and therefore the ultimate goal of all reading instruction.

The success of the struggling student is for them to master the goal of word recognition, for the purpose of promoting their progress toward reading fluency. Bertrand and Strice (2002) stated that, "Knowledgeable teachers do

not need to begin with a phonics program or make the children sit through arbitrary exercises and drills" (p. 159). However, in order to create a balanced literacy program for all students phonics is introduced as a strategy to assist students at the point of difficulty. Moreover, the student's success in comprehension will be achieved when they are not frustrated with decoding to accurately pronounce words. If the student is reading at an emergent level, word recognition is an important stage in order to enhance the student's reading fluency and therefore this will influence their reading comprehension.

The reading comprehension stage for the emergent student begins with pictures. For example, the printed text reads: /The pig has a tail/. The student reads: /The pig has a t...t...l.../. The point of difficulty for the student is with the word /tail/. The student will be instructed to look at the picture and is asked: What is this? (pointing to the picture of the tail). This is an example of using pictures to identify words and increase comprehension. If there were no picture for the word tail, the student would be asked: Is there any part of this word that you can say? Does this word look like any other word you know? What word would make sense here? The teacher is demonstrating an

emergent level of reading comprehension. At this point, the student understands the meaning of the passage, by identifying the word /tail/ in the text.

The reading comprehension stage for, "The fluent reader continues to need help with transition. Better descriptions of literacy processes are needed both to improve the readers interaction with the text and the author" (Clay, 1994, p. 23). This is also the stage that Fountas & Pinnell agrees to as the early reading level. At this level, the student has comprehended syntactical phrases, patterns, and incorporates expression with oral speech. The fluent student understands the passage in larger chunks, not letter-by-letter or word-by-word. The student has a concept of reading that covers different styles of syntactical situations, which encourages the student to ask questions about the text. The fluent student builds upon their reading confidence as they hear themselves making fewer errors and more self-corrections with text and independently incorporating strategies to take their reading to the next level.

The transitional reading level is where the student has entered the threshold of reading more independently for longer periods of time. The transitional student does not

rely on pictures. They possess concrete strategies in word recognition. The student breaks the text into meaningful phrases, therefore, pausing at appropriate points. The transitional student has developed considerable control of overt and covert reading. Rosenblatt (1978) refers to this student as, "The transactional phrasing of the reading process underlines the essential importance of both elements, reader and text, in any reading event" (p. 18). A person becomes a reader by virtue of his activity in relationship to a text, which he organizes as a set of verbal symbols. This level of reading comprehension evolves into reading more independently. The transitional student can be identified as the self-extending student and they are reading a variety of genres to extend their understanding of literature. Furthermore, the student is producing responses that the author has written and going beyond the printed text, by integrating their knowledge and experience of the subject at hand. As a result, the student is matching his thinking to the printed text and is searching for information in meaningful ways.

When the shift moves from word recognition to reading comprehension, however obvious to the teacher, the shift may not be obvious to the student and this is the area

where the acquisition of knowledge is taking place, in addition the transference of skills. This is a culminating area of reading comprehension. Fountas and Pinnell (1996) emphasizes the point that, "Fluency is a critical factor in reading control. A study of over one thousand fourth graders' oral reading fluency found that rate, fluency, and accuracy were all highly related to comprehension" (p. 150). They have recognized the fact that most good ideas fail because they are implemented in an unstable environment. Specifically, instruction may not be consistent in a particular area of the reading process. Providing students with a stable learning environment allows them to achieve a widespread of academic success. Pinnell encourages the classroom teacher to focus on a coherent theory of learning. Pinnell (2006) defines this to be, "A set of understandings that a teacher holds and believes about how children learn" (p.78). The researched based methods that Pinnell encourages teachers to use are leveled book assessments to guide instruction, a daily read aloud, word recognition strategies, and a systematic approach to comprehension.

Furthermore, it is important that the teacher focuses on the continuum of a balanced literacy approach. In the

reading process, the teacher should focus on the needs of the student. It is important for the teacher to choose concepts for the student that will aid the subject or topic at hand. For example, Weaver (2002) explains what miscues reveals about the student, encourages the teacher to analyze the miscues, and to look for patterns the student is revealing in a miscue analysis. More importantly, she provides the reading teacher with reading comprehension strategies that will strengthen the student's reading abilities that they can use during a guided reading sessions. For this reason, Weaver cautions against labels with students. For example, Weaver (2002) states, "I chose not to use that term [struggling reader], however, for several reasons...the phrase struggling reader seems to have an air of permanence about it, as if we were saying once a struggling reader always a struggling reader" (p.215). Needless to say, she does not offer an alternative term. Therefore, in my writings I have used the term "struggling student," because my goal is to advance the student preferably from struggling or proficient.

Sequentially, being an informed teacher about the effects of a balanced literacy approach is an ongoing process for teachers. The reading teacher would want to

look for information on the influences of the prior knowledge that students bring to text. As the student enters into the threshold of reading comprehension awareness, "This imposes the delicate task of sorting the relevant from the irrelevant in a continuing process of selection, revisiting, and expansion of the text. The reading symbols of the text are part of a linguistic system by virtue of potentiality for evoking in listeners or student referents commonly accepted by those sharing the language (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 53). Rosenblatt is speaking of the student's ability to enter the world of language in regard to text at hand. Consequently, the student is assimilating into the language. This reflects back to how the student is using his prior knowledge, constructing patterns from text, and distinguishing what is relevant and irrelevant within the linguistic system. As a result, when the student is engaged in independent reading they are reflecting on visual images and connecting him to his prior knowledge for the purpose of constructing relevant meaning for himself.

When the student begins to develop strengths in one area of the reading model (Visual, syntactical, or semantic) he begins to emerge into the next level of the

reading model and cultivate connections with the structures of the literature. Rosenblatt (1994) establishes that, "Perhaps our sense of identification with a character is due to a relatively complete merging of evocation and response" (p. 67). When the student elaborates on the character they are seeking to be a participant in the story. There is a stream of consciousness that invites the student to become engaged with the character's feelings, thoughts, and setting.

How often do students evoke the character of super heroes and legends in order to try to be a part of the event that was created in the text? A student can have various experiences with text from bored to happy, sad to exciting, and defeat to victory. He can act out the character from what is preconceived in his imagination. The student chooses to engage in the imagination of the character, if the character's attitude matches their view of the world in which they live. Simple illustrations will trigger a student's reaction to the text. Therefore, the student may create their aesthetic view of meaning in the text. It is imperative for the reading teacher to cultivate the student's reading strengths and enhance their reading

needs. Fostering the student's imagination and his concept of the structure of a story begins with guided reading.

### Guided Reading

Guided reading is a framework in which the teacher provides low to moderate levels of reading support. Fountas & Pinnell, (1996) state that, "Guided reading begins with the reading of little books of a few pages, with brief and relatively predictable text" (78). Au, Carroll, and Scheu, (1998) continues to add, "Guided reading books become longer, with less predictable text, as the reader progresses. After the teacher has introduced the book, the children attempts to read it independently" (p.77). Guided reading provides significant components of a balanced literacy approach and independent activities in the continuum of literacy instructions. The literacy support provided occurs in small groups in order to appropriately match text with students. Guided reading is usually introduced at the kindergarten level and can be administered through secondary grade levels, depending on the student's independent reading level. Guided reading can be the last stepping stone toward reading independence. In as much, the overall purpose is for students to read for meaning all the time.

Naturally, Schwartz (2005) has observed that, "Guided reading lessons are a powerful context for beginning reading instruction. It provides immediate responses to students' oral reading and requires teachers to make complex and highly skilled decisions about the students reading behaviors" (p. 436). The teaching decisions made for students are different from student to student and group to group. Also Schwartz (2005) states, "Guided reading procedures and natural language texts are leveled to provide a gradient of difficulty during reading instructions. This allows students to successfully read meaningful books as they build knowledge of letters, words, and how they are combined to form simple messages and texts" (p. 436). Hence, teachers are in the best position to evaluate their students' intellectual, socio-emotional, and behavioral accomplishments because they observe the interaction of students and text on a daily basis. Meisels, Bickwl, Nicholson, Xue, and Atkins-Burnett (2001) add, "Curriculum-embedded performance assessments rely heavily on teacher judgment" (p. 74) in order to place students in appropriate groups, thus, providing the student with the most relevant instruction during the guided reading lesson.

Guided reading is only one major component of a balanced literacy program and one activity in a continuum of literacy instruction. The teacher provides small group reading instruction at the student's instructional reading levels. The teacher's role is to guide students toward reading strategies that will enable them to successfully comprehend text during silent sustained reading. The reading strategies on which the teacher chooses to focus on will depend upon the text itself and the student's prior knowledge. Prior knowledge plays a major role in the ability to recall information and points made in the text to enables the student to become knowledgeable about text.

There are challenges that exist in the guided reading component. Most teachers ask, "What do I do with the rest of my class when I am with a reading group?" Providing focused literacy activities for students during guided reading sessions are important for promoting the student's independence. These activities can take place in the form of structured learning centers that reinforce skills and strategies that have been taught during whole group lesson or to improve upon a point from a guided reading session. Guided reading is a flexible approach that needs to be carefully adjusted to the reading competencies of students.

Implementing and establishing norms between teacher and students during guided reading sessions are important in order to achieve student and teacher goals. A variety of classroom management strategies are also a factor and will be addressed and discussed with the entire class if these sessions are to be successful.

#### Summary

Understanding the fact that word recognition, reading fluency and comprehension, and guided reading provides curriculum links to other areas of academics is another important aspect of the guided reading process. Teachers will be recognized the fact that, "Meeting with small groups to conduct guided reading instruction is paramount in the creation of independent, lifelong readers" (Cunningham, Hall, & Cunningham, 2000. p. 145). In general, lifelong students are able to use stored information from word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension to integrate into most written information at the student's level. Guided reading groups read an array of genres that are guided by a highly skilled professional to fully assist students through the threshold of the acquisition of language and knowledge.

Consequently, without a fixed and stable reading component, such as guided reading in the classroom, a balanced literacy approach functions in a deficit. The piece that makes a balance literacy approach so powerful is the guidance of a highly skilled teacher who recognizes their role to construct a coherent theory of learning. As politicians examine reading instruction, teachers can, "Focus on long-term development reading skills for the purpose of helping children comprehend texts... and de-emphasize practicing decontextualized skills" (Compton-Lilly, 1998. p. 30). Guided reading allows the teacher to focus on specific short-term and long-term goals to improve reading for students.

CHAPTER THREE  
METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Introduction

A guided reading program is designed to enable children to read for meaning all the time (Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, 1996, P. 4). Yet, for the purpose of this thesis I was focused on second-grade students who struggle with reading and those who need assistance with language acquisition. Guided Reading allows teachers and researchers to facilitate reading strategies (for a group of approximately five students) that the student can practice daily. Within a guided reading group, the teacher provides low to moderate levels of reading support. Also, the hope of the strategies taught during a guided reading session was to guide the student into successful silent independent reading.

Guided reading groups began with leveled books with few pages and text; however, the books increase in page numbers, text, and level of reading difficulty as the children progress. Each guided reading session was constructed to meet the needs of the students in each specific group. Therefore, in most cases, not all reading

groups were reading at the same level and they should not receive the same direct reading instruction. The reading instructions given were designed to meet the needs of each individual student and group. In addition, while the teacher facilitates a specific reading process for a group of students, the other students were engaged in literacy stations around the classroom to further enhance what has been taught in previous reading lessons, build upon students' literacy skills, and allow students to use acquired knowledge in different ways. It is my contention based on a review of the literature on reading instruction, that guided reading can be widely adopted in all schools if the acquisition of language is to be successful. The following chapter therefore outlines how to successfully implement a guided reading program and provides a researched framework for conducting research on guided reading through the use of a case study approach.

### Population

This study was conducted at an elementary school in Southern California. At this school class-size reduction was fully implemented in grades K through 3 allowing for a student population of no more than 20 students per classroom. The following demographic information was

retrieved from the school's Accountability Report for the year 2005 - 2006. During the school year of 2005 - 2006, the school's total enrollment was 822 students. Of the 822 students, 6% received special education services, 27% qualified for English Language Learner support, and 50.3% qualified for free or reduced-price lunches. The majority, 54.4% of the student population was identified as Hispanic or Latino, 32.8 were Caucasian and African-Americans made up 6.7% of the school's enrollment. The school has achieved a 2006 Academic Performance Index (API) score of 707 and met 2006 Adequate Yearly Progress criteria. A score of 707 puts the school into the thirteenth position out of fourteen elementary schools.

The classroom involved in the research was culturally, socially, and academically diverse. In regard to gender, it was evenly split with 10 girls and 10 boys. Prior to implementing guided reading in the classroom, scaffolding was occurring outside of the classroom amongst other second-grade teachers. For this purpose, students were sorted by their Star Reading scores. Their reading levels were determined by the Star Reading informal assessment program. The above to at-grade level (Star Reading scores 2.5 and above) and these student had a student population.

of approximately 25 - 30. The at-grade level to slightly below (2.0 to 2.5) had a population of approximately 20 - 25. The slightly below (1.5 to 2.0) had a population of approximately 15 - 20. The below (1.0 to 1.5) had a population of approximately 10 - 15. These numbers would leave the far below reading levels (1.0 and below) with a much lower student population per teacher. In as much, all students were grouped with different teachers in individual classrooms. By implementing guided reading in the classroom, I was able to scaffold students within the classroom and closely monitor my student's reading progress.

As a result of the implementation of guided reading, one of the reading groups were above grade level, the second group was at grade level, the third was slightly below grade level, and the final reading group was far below grade level. These reading groups were identified by way of informal reading assessments that were mentioned in this chapter and previous chapters. In the far below reading group, three of the students demonstrated a love for reading and had stated that they would like to read chapter books in the manner that some of the classmate do. Furthermore they were on task during whole group

instruction. The other student has behavior concerns and lacks motivation to improve upon his reading skills. Yet, when he was engaged in a guided reading session he was more focused than any other time. The last student, named Sam, has stated that he would like to learn more words in order to become a better reader. However, Sam was not focused during whole group instruction.

For the purpose previously mentioned, the student chosen for this study was Sam. He was a student from the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom. After the beginning of the year assessments were administered, and revealed that he was having reading difficulties to the point where he scored significantly below grade level, yet, he was highly motivated to acquire more reading strategies. After having a parent conference with his mother, the teacher found that he was the youngest of four siblings. There was little support at home to assist Samuel with reading miscues and no encouragement to read at home. After talking to his kindergarten and first-grade teachers, the consensus was that he needs intensive reading comprehension instruction in order to be given a head start in third-grade. It was then the teacher decided to provide Samuel with this extra instruction and record his progress.

## Design and Implementation of Curriculum

### Initial Assessment

It has been established through research that a guided reading framework should be incorporated in the classroom in order to provide students with rich and appropriate reading instruction. In order to determine the correct level in which to begin instruction, it was essential to determine the student's independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels. To determine these levels reading assessments are vital. The informal assessments used in this study consisted of a Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). The DRA was developed by Joetta M. Beaver for classroom teachers. More importantly, the DRA was administered to guide reading instruction and document reading goals. This program consists of Words Analysis Assessments and leveled reading books in which the student may choose to read from. The teacher liked to begin with the assessment portion first, because it will allow me to identify which group my students would be placed in and observe the skills they possess or lack. The teacher must preface this by saying the teacher am not following these assessments as prescribed by the author, due to classroom time constraints, however, the procedure was intact when

they were used. The exact procedures utilized have been described below.

First, the teacher will begin with an oral word recognition task. This list of words will reveal to me where the student's current word knowledge exit in phonological awareness. Such as, does the student have a firm grasp on short and long vowel words? Are they capable of manipulating consonant blend sounds? The question the teacher sought to answer in this phase was "How much assistance will the student need with word recognition, prosody, and/or comprehension? If the student was struggling to pronounce words, they will need word strategies to aid them in indentifying words within the text.

Secondly, the teacher will choose about three different leveled books, based on the information from the oral word recognition assessment. The student will have a choice of fiction or nonfiction reading material. This will tell me what type of genres the reader prefers. From there, the teacher will introduce the reading material to the student and ask them to read the story to me. Joetta Beaver (1988) recommends that the teacher read a page then have the child to read a page, much like what is done when

students are partner reading in class. However, at the onset of working with children the teacher liked to observe everything they are bringing to the reading process, i.e., will they need to be taught directionality? Do they know when a sentence begins and ends? Is their prosody in place? How much time does it take them to read an eight page book?

While the student was reading, the teacher would administer a running record of the student's reading behaviors. It is the coding of a running record that the teacher was most familiar with and prefer. The running record was developed by Marie Clay (1991) and was designed for first-graders. However, running records can be used to gather information for all levels of students. While the student reads, the teacher was observing what strategies the student was using to make word corrections and monitor their reading. For example, if the student cannot pronounce a word, the teacher noted what strategies they used at the point of difficulty. When they read a phrase or sentence that doesn't make sense, have they noticed it and are they self-correcting? If they had not, they are losing meaning in the text. Each of these questions helps me to determine how a student manages a given text.

When the student finishes reading the story, the teacher will ask the student to retell the story. At this point of assessing the student, the teacher was not interrupting the student, by asking questions. The teacher assessed the student's ability to structure a story based on what the student had previously read. Retelling is a component that is encouraged more in a Miscue Analysis than a running records, yet, each assessment should be designed to reveal to the teacher what needs to know about each student. Overall, the teacher assessed the student's word recognition, syntactical structure, and level of comprehension in order to identify student placement needs. These assessments were given in the initial phase of reading instruction and at the end of instruction in order to assess the student's reading progression. Once the initial assessments had been analyzed, it is now time to create guided reading groups and begin instruction at the appropriate instructional reading level. The next section details the format for implementing guided reading instruction within the second-grade classroom.

## Workstations

### Workstation 1: Guided Reading

Guided reading will be implemented Monday - Friday from 7:45 a.m. - 8:45 a.m., with 15 - 20 minute sessions. Assessments were the starting point that will guide my reading instruction to meet the needs of the students in each reading group. The data evaluated from the *word recognition and running record assessment* provides me with information on how to structure the reading groups and determines what type of instruction each group will receive. At best, there will be five students in each reading group and each group will have similar reading strengths and needs.

These reading groups will be homogeneously structured in order for the teacher to outline specific reading expectations for each individual in the group. Fountas & Pinnell (1996), resolve the dilemmas of grouping when they stated, "We propose combining grouping by similar reading processes and text level with a whole range of heterogeneous grouping for other purposes" (p. 98). This means that the long-term and overall goal was to incorporate heterogeneous reading groups for whole group and other small group activities. Therefore, when students

were not at the guided reading table, a more effective reader could assist the struggling readers with other literacy activities.

During guided reading, each reading group will be orally introduced to a story by the teacher and asked to find words (while they take a picture walk) that should be familiar to the student. The teacher will refer to these words as *known words*. This was done for the purpose of ongoing assessment of the student's *word recognition* strengths and determines what the teacher may need to review in the area of word recognition. In addition, the student will be asked to find unknown words. These are words that are slightly challenging or somewhat above the student's instructional level. At this point, the teacher was "Noticing the strategies children use to figure out a word and their appeals for verification" (Johnston, 2003. p.90). This takes us back to the point of what the student has brought to print that may not have been revealed in the assessment phase. In as much, the process should revealed specific insights on reading concepts the student may be challenged with.

Following the oral story introduction, yet, during picture walk, and word recognition section of the lesson,

the students and the teacher read a short passage together in order for the student to hear what a natural reading process of the passage should sound like and for the student to become familiar with words in the text. Furthermore, this procedure will allow the teacher to verify whether the reading choice for the student was reading level appropriate. In other words, is this an appropriate text for this group of students? This was what (Armstrong 2003), referred to as a perception check. The perception check is a method of gathering more information that can help a teacher to better understand students' interests and backgrounds. If the text is appropriate for the student, the teacher will listen to each student as they read a passage from the text. While the teacher listens to one student at a time, the other students are engaged in silent independent reading. Once they have finished the text they are instructed to read the text again to encourage reading prosody and ownership of the text.

Comprehension. The instruction and motivation for reading comprehension during guided reading begins with the book introduction. Frontloading is the process of activating prior knowledge. Therefore, the teacher

motivated the student to think about the information in the text in order for me to build upon the knowledge that the student has previously mastered. For example, when the student was asked to make predictions the process of understanding the text has been initiated. The student was asked, "What does the title tell you about the text? What do you think the story will be about?" These questions are designed to stimulate the student's prior knowledge. The feedback the students provided during the picture walk supplies me with greater access as to what the student has brought to the reading process. Also, students may be making comparisons with other texts they have previously read. According to Wiggins and McTighe (2005), "Appropriate prompts that are asked during the assessment period often provides the assessor with needed evidence to administer the proper instruction for the desired results of a given concept" (p.168).

Monitoring and clarifying was another reading comprehension strategy that was assessed during a guided reading session. Essentially, when the student miscues, are they making self-corrections that do not change the meaning of the passage? Are these self-corrections promoted by meaning, visual, or structural cues? Summarization was

another reading strategy that the teacher assessed and this should occur during the retelling phase of instruction.

While the student independently reads the text aloud, the teacher observed what *reading strategies* the student was accessing for word recognition and meaning. For example, was the student struggling with short or long vowel sounds? Are they using illustrations to recognize words to access meaning from text? During this time, the teacher will record the overt strategies the student had demonstrated and what strategies that would need to be taught the following day.

Ongoing Assessment. On the following day, the teacher performed a running record on the text the student read the previous day for the purpose of assessing the student's word recognition, prosody, and comprehension. First, the teacher would choose one student to assess. The teacher asked the student to retell the story on the book they read the previous day. During this time, the teacher assessed the student's ability to identify the characters and setting, sequence, summarize, state the problem in the story, and identify the solution if they existed in the story. Naturally, these strategies would depend on the genre of the text that was read.

Next, the teacher asked the student to begin reading the text. At this time, the teacher provided a tic for each word the student read correctly. Whenever the student miscues the teacher identified the type(s) of miscues made in my notes. For instance, the text will read /what/ and the student may articulate /what/ as /went/. Now, if the student pauses to make a self-correction, the teacher noted the miscue as a self-correction and did not count the miscue an error. When the student repeats a word or part of the passage, the teacher made a note about the student's repetition of the text. This was a clue to let me know that the student maybe reading for clarification of the passage. Repeating a passage is not counted against the student, if they were reading the passage as it was written. Additionally, if the student has substituted or omitted a word and it has not changed the meaning of the passage, the substitution or omission will not count against the student. Yet, if these miscues change the meaning of the passage, the miscues would be counted against the student. Once the assessment phase was over, calculations and evaluations were made.

After the assessment phase, if the students appear to be reading the current text independently, all students

would be introduced to another text following the same format as the initial text. The hope is to provide the students with a new next each day and the students would be required to read each text at home to reinforce what was acquired during the guided reading session. Overall, the goal of the guided reading process is to strengthen the student's word recognition, prosody, and reading comprehension at an independent reading level. Guided reading should provide a stable direct instructional environment in the classroom to allow students to participate in ongoing successful reading opportunities.

If these struggling second-grade students were not engaged in reading comprehension strategies, during the reading process, deep structures of learning would be impeded upon. As a result of reading comprehension strategies, "All operations of the brain—and that means the cognitive, sensory-motor, emotional, artistic, and creative functions—used in the process of reading" (Pinnell, 2006, p. 79) would not work as a systematic unit to produce the desired outcomes. Cognitive psychologists define comprehension as a coherent communication via covert or overt means. Essentially, does the student understand the text at hand? If second-grade struggling readers are to

achieve success at the secondary grade level, comprehension should be the goal for every reading teacher and the reward for every student. When teaching reading comprehension strategies, it is not essential to teach students what the writer has already explained, we need to reveal to them what the writer did not explain.

### Workstation 2: Prosody

Once a reading group has left station 1 (guided reading table), the same reading group would reread the same text again at station 2 in order to articulate word pronunciation and prosody. Prosodic features consist of reading with automaticity, accuracy, intonation and expression. It is important to note what Johnston (2003) says about patterns in regard to literature, reading, and writing: The aim is to move beyond what is merely familiar. To see patterns and not treat them as though they are all the same, but to see them instead as an individual's way of organizing domains of experiences and then to consider ways of responding appropriate to that pattern (p. 12).

For clarity, reading prosody (which is under the umbrella of fluency) is the ability to decode words without frustration to enhance the student's reading comprehension. Teaching the student that punctuation marks in written

communication i.e. literature, are tools to assist the student in constructing patterns of word accuracy, expression, and intonation from the author. Oral speech has acquired these patterns. Once the student moves past word calling they can orally hear pattern in speech. The prosodic reader gives little attention to phonological awareness. Therefore, this station was designed to move the student past word calling, on to chunking, and syntactical organization that should aid them in their oral acquisition of language. Furthermore, the ultimate goal of this station was to foster reading comprehension.

The fluency stage is when the brain absorbs the language it has been prepped to absorb. When students access language, word patterns are created and organized syntactical structures are formed. As the student demonstrates prosody, they make obvious that they understand the basic syntactical structures of the material being read. Prosody is the precursor of reading comprehension, because they no longer struggle to word call. In as much, if the student was not challenged with word recognition, reading for comprehension was not hindered. As a result, familiar reads (books that students have previously read) become comprehensible text. Brantley

(2007) concludes, without strategic knowledge in each area of reading, a reader is often left ill-equipped to read. Also, she adds, reading involves making sense from a printed text through the use of graphophonic, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic cueing systems (p.62).

### Workstation 3: Word Recognition

At this station, the students were given 10 words from their spelling list to work on for one week. From these 10 words, the students would focus on a specific spelling pattern. Monday thru Friday, prior to the guided reading time, the teacher stated the sound of the spelling pattern, pronounce the word and stress the spelling pattern sound. Also, the teacher would use each word in a sentence. Each day, the teacher would randomly call on students to repeat what the teacher has modeled for them. This concept is supported by Jeffery D. Whilhem (2001) when he states, "I do, you watch; I do, you help; you do, I help; and you do, I watch."

Student activities at this station would look like the following: On Monday, students would highlight the spelling pattern in red and say the sound as they do so. On Tuesday, students would use each spelling word in a sentence. They would read their sentences to each other to evaluate their

knowledge of word usage. On Wednesday, students would place these words in ABC order. On Thursday, students would be provided a worksheet with different words, but the same spelling patterns. On the worksheet, students would need to place the correct word in a cloze sentence format. Calkins (2001) has established sticking to predictable and simple word work is important for students to master not only chunking word patterns but complete words also.

I believed in using three major language cues for a balanced literacy approach, which consist of: Word recognition (graphophonics = visual), syntax (grammatical = structures), and semantics (meaning from print). The first level of three major language cues is phonics (graphophonics). Weaver (2002) established, "Explicit phonics knowledge can refer to letter-sound knowledge that readers can verbalize; this is, letter-sound knowledge that they are metacognitively aware of." (p. 309). Phonological awareness was a developmental process that can be expounded upon at the second-grade level. Phonological awareness at this stage enables the student to manipulate the language in order to construct words, which is the basic level of reading. Making sure that students have mastered phonological awareness is the initial process of language

acquisition and mastery of this skill should be obtained through familiar reads.

Clearly, the purpose of phonics instruction is to assist the struggling student's word recognition independence, not to help them state rules. In addition, Weaver (2002) acknowledges that, "Learning to pronounce the sounds of one's language is a gradual business from birth to seven or eight" (p. 74). Therefore, having a rich language environment, through thoughtful phonics instruction, second-graders should begin to read words that they would otherwise be unable to recognize.

Goodman (2003) emphasizes that, "Teaching children sight words is teaching them to name words, not to recognize them. When a child reads words from a list he is calling their names, and this task of calling the names of words from a list is a much more difficult task than reading" (p.209). However, when the student was asked to find a word in the text during a guided reading session, the teacher was engaged in an informal assessment of word recognition and not the semantics (meaning) of words. Needless to say, if the teacher was meeting with a more proficient reading group, vocabulary can be an area of focus versus word recognition. All in all, phonological

awareness was structured to provide struggling students with more reading time and develop their reading routines when engaged in independent reading. In order to mature a student's word recognition competence, they must read often. The more struggling students see words, the more word patterns they become aware of and these word patterns become increasingly automatic to the student's cognitive reading development.

#### Workstation 4: Listening

The listening station allows the student to hear stories. This station engages the student into prosodic reading. On the first day, students were instructed to listen to the story only and carefully follow along with the storyteller. The second and third day, the student was whisper reading with the storyteller. The fourth day, students will pair-up and partner read the text. On the fifth day, the student attempts to read the text on their own. Calkins (2001) encourages students to listen to each other read. Teaching children to truly listen to each other read enhances the listener's comprehension skills.

The goal designed for this station was for the student to first, acquire word recognition and prosody. Then the student was to gain ownership of the text through

independent reading. The book that was initially presented to the student was above instructional level for the struggling student, because a lot of support comes from the storyteller. Therefore, the text was at the instructional level for the medium reading groups and below instructional level for the high reading group. The medium and high reading groups had the opportunity to enhance their prosodic level.

CHAPTER FOUR  
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

Based on my observations as a Reading Specialist with struggling students, it was proven that these students lack the consistency of a balanced literacy approach. They need to spend additional time with familiar reads, word recognition and reading comprehension strategies. It is the belief that guided reading is where students can be given small group instruction for the purpose of acquiring access to reading comprehension strategies, in order for them to be well-equipped during silent independent reading. Additionally, during each guided reading session, the workstations in which each group rotates should provide ongoing assistance to reinforce strategies and skills that have been taught during guided reading and whole group instructional lessons. It is this belief that led me to conduct the following study.

The intent of this study was to observe how effective a consistent guided reading program in the classroom would benefit struggling students. Likewise, how effectively would the struggling reader respond to comprehension

questions that follow the Question-Answer Response Strategy (QAR) by Raphael (1984). The student whom was chosen for the study was Sam. Sam was a student in a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom. After the beginning of the school year assessments were administered, it was observed that he was having reading difficulties to the point where he scored significantly below grade level. Yet, he was highly motivated to acquire more reading strategies. Prior to interviewing Sam, it was observed that a few of his needs were word recognition and comprehension strategies. His one-to-one matching with words was good. He was phonetically stuck on words at the point of difficulty as opposed to using pictures and other resources in the text to assist him in his recognition of words. Also, during the time of Sam's observations, it was noticed that his academic focus increased during small group activities. During an interview with Sam, he was asked, what would you like to learn in order to become a competent reader? Sam stated that he would like to learn more words in order to become a competent reader. Sam demonstrated his desire to learn and his ability to master new reading vocabulary and strategies across the course of the study. This information

will be detailed in the data that will be presented in Chapter Four.

To begin with, it was necessary to develop a baseline of Sam's skills in order to note any progress made across time. Locating the student's initial reading level for the study was obtained by way of a DRA Word Analysis and Running Record (RR) assessment with DRA leveled books. At the end of the ten week project the student was assessed again by way of DRA leveled books. During the ten weeks study, Sam was regularly assessed with leveled guided reading books by way of a running record (RR).

#### Presentation of Student Data

The DRA that was administered to Sam was the *Word Analysis Task 9*. The *Task Selection Criteria for DRA Word Analysis* instructs the test administer to choose the initial task. The task that Sam was successful with identified his current text level range in order to determine his placement in a guided reading group. The following figure is an example of the chart used to determine the information needed for a reading group, and more specifically, for Sam.

**Initial Task Selection Criteria for *DRA Word Analysis***

Student's Current <i>DRA</i> Text Level	Initial Task	Range of Tasks to Administer*
A-3	1	1-10
4-8	8	8-17
10-12	12	12-22
14-18	16	16-28
20-24	20	20-32
28-30	24	24-36
34 or higher	28	28-40

Figure 3. Example of the Initial Task Selection  
Developmental Reading Assessment Word Analysis

The range of a *DRA Word Analysis* tasks that Sam completed was based upon his previous experiences and current strengths and needs. For example, if Sam is administered tasks 16-28, his *DRA* text level would be in the range of 14-18. Therefore, he would be identified as an Early Stage reader. Due to prior teaching experiences with Sam, he was administered Task 9. This assessment was chosen because of the results from his second-trimester assessments earlier in the school year; Sam continued to need more focused assistance with word recognition and comprehension strategies. The goal in this task was to

assess the student's ability to read each word fluently. The time (meaning- how fast) in which Sam finished reading the word list was not a relevant piece to the data that was evaluated. Hence, the assessments that were evaluated were to reveal if he could read the words fluently and independently. If Sam struggled with the pronunciation of a word, it was counted against him. If he read most of the words with accuracy, that would be an indication that he might read most 4th-8th text levels independently. These assessments should reveal Sam's instructional reading level to move him across the plain of a variety of texts.

(Task 2)

I	in	is	look
the	dog	you	my
a	to	can	at
go	see	he	on
up	and	it	like

Figure 4. Example of the Developmental Reading Assessment Word Analysis Administered to Sam

Name Sam  
 1st Date April 2nd Date \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Control	No. Words	Some	Gaining	Control
Total Score	0-7	8-15	16-19	20

	1st	2nd	3rd
1 I	✓		
2 the	<del>the</del>		
3 a	✓		
4 at	✓		
5 up	under		
6 it	it		
7 and	✓		
8 to			
9 for	✓		
10 and	that		
Score	5 /10	10 /10	10 /10

	1st	2nd	3rd
1 is	<del>is</del>		
2 you	✓		
3 can	✓		
4 he	✓		
5 if	✓		
6 look	—		
7 my	✓		
8 at	<del>at</del>		
9 on	—		
10 like	—		
Score	5 /10	10 /10	10 /10

Total Score	10 /20	20 /20	20 /20
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Figure 5. Sam's Results of the Developmental Reading Assessment Word Analysis

The results of Sam's DRA Word Analysis Task 9, reveals that Sam had read 50% of the high frequency words accurately. This places him in the "Some" category of 8-15 words read accurately. To be in the "some" category a student must read approximately 50% or less of the high frequency words accurately. Based upon this information, Sam will be given a DRA text level 8 for the purpose of administering a RR. The information from the RR will be used to indentify Sam's guided reading level. If Sam reads the passage with 90-100% percent accuracy rate, he will be

matched to a guided reading leveled text which will be used as his instructional text in the classroom. Figure 6 provides a comparison leveling chart between Scholastic Guided Reading, DRA, and Lexile Leveled texts.

**Help every child become a successful reader by matching EACH STUDENT with the RIGHT MATERIAL at the RIGHT TIME!**

	Scholastic Guided Reading Level	DRA Level	Lexile Level
<b>Kindergarten</b>	A	Δ	
	B	1-2	
	C	3	<u>200-400</u>
	D	4	
<b>First Grade</b>	A	Δ	
	B	1-2	
	C	3	
	D	4	
	E	6-8	<u>200-400</u>
	F	10	
	G	12	
	H	14	
<b>Second Grade</b>	I	16	
	J	6-8	
	K	10	
	L	12	
	M	14	<u>300-600</u>
	N	16	
	O	18-20	
	P	24-30	
<b>Third Grade</b>	Q	18-20	
	R	24-28	
	S	30	<u>500-800</u>
	T	34-38	
	U	40	
<b>Fourth Grade</b>	V	24-28	
	W	30	
	X	34-38	<u>600-900</u>
	Y	40	
<b>Fifth Grade</b>	Z	44	
	AA	40	
	AB	44	<u>700-000</u>
<b>Sixth Grade</b>	AC	-	
	AD	44	
	AE	-	<u>80-1050</u>

Figure 6. Reading Level Correlation Chart

The rationale for Sam to begin reading instruction at text level 8 is to allow him to be successful in his first guided reading session. The more successful and confident he becomes with literature, the more he will look forward to each guided reading session. Each data table in the following section will identify Sam's weekly progress. All of Sam's RR's were calculated based on a 50 word count. More specifically, the first column is the title of each book read. The second column is the student's DRA or his Guided Reading (GR) level. Once guided reading instruction begun for Sam, there was a variety of letters in the second column. These letters represent the guided reading level of the text the student was reading. The higher the alphabetical letter the more challenging the leveled text. The third column is the student's Running Record (RR) accuracy percentage which was calculated from a 50 word count. Column four is the student's Ratio of Errors (RS), which means out of every 50 words read; the student made a specific the number of errors out of the number of words read to the right of the colon. For instance, with a Ratio of Errors (RS) of 1:10, RS states that 1 out of every 10 words read, the student made 1 error. In the fifth column, the student's comprehension level was based on three

questions which followed the Question-Answer Response (QAR) method. The questions were stated in a, "Text-Based" (Right there in the text) and "In My Head" (Author-and-me) approach. Finally, the last column reveals the genre of the book that was read by Sam. Equally important, next to some of the titles you will notice an asterisk. These asterisks are indicators of familiar reads that were assessed. Each asterisk next to the title identifies the number of times Sam was assessed on the text.

Table 1. Week 1: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	DRA Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
Duke	DRA #8	100 %	0	Independent	R
Shoe Boxes	DRA # 10	90 %	1:10	Instructional	R

Sam read two different DRA leveled texts, 8 and 10. In the first text, Duke, Sam scored at an independent reading level. In the second text, Shoe Boxes, Sam scored on an instructional reading level. Therefore, his guided session began with a Scholastic Guided Reading Level of "E" which

places him at a mid first-grade instructional reading level for word accuracy but not necessarily for comprehension. In as much, the following charts revealed Sam's weekly assessment scores.

Table 2. Week 2: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	GR Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
Peter's Painting	E	100 %	0	L	R
Ellen Ochoa	F	96 %	1:25	M	NF
Me Too!	G	98 %	1:50	L	R
**Me Too!	G	100 %	0	M	R

Table 2 demonstrates Sam's increased progress with word accuracy. However, his reading comprehension remained low. In the same manner, take a look at the RR percentage with the nonfiction (NF) text. The RR percentage has decreased; nevertheless, this is to be expected with NF text, due to the vocabulary these texts present to the reader. Above all, look at the RR percentage and the

comprehension column. After the second reading of the text Me Too!, Sam's RR percentage and reading comprehension has increase. Take note that Me Too! was assessed in the same week. Therefore, retention of information read and the reading instructions from the prior days could have added to her growth.

Table 3. Week 3: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	GR Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
Melting	G	100 %	0	L	NF
Jake's Greenthumb	H	100 %	0	L	R
Acorn to Oak Tree	H	100 %	0	L	NF
**Ellen Ochoa	F	100 %	0	M	NF

This week Sam's RR percentage increased in word accuracy, change in type of genre, and in guided reading (GR) levels. Overall, his reading comprehension remains low for a second-grade student who was well into his second trimester. Yet, when looking at the asterisks next to Ellen

Ochoa, it is obvious the text was assessed twice, Sam's increase his RR percentage, and maintained his reading comprehension level. Also, Sam's enunciation, expression, and intonation improved with each reading assessment of a familiar read.

Table 4. Week 4: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	GR Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
The Three Bears	I	100 %	0	H	Folktale
Somewhere	I	86 %	1:6	L	Poem
***Ellen Ochoa	F	100 %	0	M	NF
**Acorn to Oak Tree	H	98 %	1:50	M	NF

In Table 4 Sam had entered the threshold of more challenging text. The Three Bears had longer sentences and smaller print size; however, his RR percentage articulated the fact that the text was on his reading level. Additionally, Sam had been exposed to a version of The

Three Bears, but not this particular version. Somewhere was a book of poetry and the style of the text was new to him. When reading the text, Sam would pause often. I asked him, "What made you pause more in this text than the other texts you have read?" He said, "Sometime it did not make sense when I was reading it." Due to his score with Somewhere, I decided to revisit a previously read text to continue to build upon his reading confidence. When Sam revisited Acorn to Oak Tree (for the second-time), Sam's word accuracy was maintained at an independent level, by scoring 98% in the RR column. On the first read of Acorn to Oak Tree, he scored 100% in the RR column. However, his understanding of the text improved the second-time he read the text.

Table 5. Week 5: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	GR Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
**Peter's Painting	E	100 %	0	H	F
Red-eyed Tree Frog	I	100 %	0	L	NF
**Somewhere	I	100 %	0	M	Poem

In Table 5, Sam did show growth in his overall RR Percentage and reading comprehension. Nonetheless, two of the texts in Table 5 he has read twice. Based on these facts, it is increasingly clear to me, the revisiting of texts continues to reveal a correlation between levels of guided reading texts, reading comprehension, and genres. For example, the first time that Sam read Ellen Ochoa, Me Too, Acorn to Oak Tree, and Somewhere, his comprehension scores were not high; however, he maintained a 95% average in his RR percentage. This allows him to fluently read the previously mentioned texts at an independent level. Two of the texts were nonfiction, one was fiction, and the other was Poetry. Nevertheless, in regard to his familiar reads, he maintained a 100% average in his RR percentage and progressed in guided reading levels, error ratio, and

reading comprehension. This is proof of the need for students to revisit previously read texts to increase their reading fluency and understanding of a variety of texts genres.

Table 6. Week 6: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	GR Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
**Red-eyed Tree Frog	I	100 %	0	M	NF
Goldilocks	I	100 %	0	H	Folktale
Shadows	I	100 %	0	L	NF
A flag for All	I	88 %	1:8	L	R

In the fourth week of the study, the data within Table 6 reveals that after the rereading of Red-eyed Tree Frog, Sam maintained a 100% RR percentage with a zero error ratio. Also, he was able to raise his reading comprehension of the story. This means that each time Sam independently reread Red-eyed Tree Frog, he should obtain greater understanding of the story. Again, Sam was continuously

being challenged with the same level of text. Yet, within these guided reading levels, there is a range of reading levels. For instance, each guided reading level provides a variety of reading genres that range from low, average, and high levels of texts for the purpose of each reader to become increasingly challenged at the level they are on. A flag for All could be a text for an average "I" level reader. In A Flag for All, the font is smaller, the sentences are longer on each page, terms consist of names of people, and the language was content based. In the text Shadows the print size was larger than in A flag for All. Also, in Shadows the font size was larger and in a bolder print. These were characteristics that were not found in the other text within Table 6 with an exception to Red-eyed Tree Frog. Additionally, in Shadows the sentences were longer, because they extended to another page, and the terms were simpler.

Table 7. Week 7: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	GR Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
**A flag for All	I	98 %	1:50	M	R
**The Three Bears	I	100 %	0	M	Folktale
Straight Line Wonder	J	100 %	0	L	R
***The Three Bears	I	100 %	0	H	Folktale

After revisiting A Flag for All, Sam showed improvement in his RR percentage and a significant decrease in the amount of reading errors made, and at the same time increased his reading comprehension of the text. Overall, based upon this week's data, Sam has shown a healthy rise in guided reading levels, RR percentages, and reading comprehension across genres.

Table 8. Week 8: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	GR Level	RR Percentage	ER	Comprehension	Genre
***A Flag For All	I	100 %	0	H	R
**Shadows		100 %	0	H	R
My Lucky Hat	H	100 %	0	M	F
****A Flag For All	I	100 %	0	H	R
***Shadows	I	100%	0	H	NF
Jewels	J	98	1:50	M	Poem

Once again, as shown in Table 8, Sam's data reflected his improved guided reading levels, RR percentages, ER, reading comprehension, and his approach to different genres. In regard to the retesting on A flag for All, it was a text that he enjoyed reading. He like how the students came up with a class project together. Also, I noticed how he pondered over the pictures in this text. Although, Jewels was a long book, he enjoyed the rhymes and rhythm that the words presented. Some of the poems in the book made him laugh. Initially, I did not think that Sam

would do well on this text. Instead, he surprised me, because he proved he could read the text independently after the first read.

Table 9. Week 9: Developmental Reading Assessment Results

Title	DRA Level	RR Percentage	ER	DRA Reading Stage	Genre
A New School	14	100 %	0	Transitional	R
The Wagon	14	100 %	0	Transitional	R
Baby Bird	16	100 %	0	Transitional	NF

At the end of the study, Sam was once again given a DRA reading assessment. I placed three different titles in front of Sam for the purpose of allowing him to choose which text he would like to read first. Also, amongst his selections was a nonfiction text, because these types of texts appeared to challenge Sam's content knowledge. Sam's RR percentages were consistent with each text and his ER's per 50 word count was zero. At the end of the study, this

information placed Sam at a Transitional reading stage, which is the reading entry level within the second-grade reading range. This signifies that Sam had improved his reading prosody.

### Summary

Daily guided reading sessions with Sam allowed me to observe the day-to-day developments of his word recognition strategies and fluency. Through his acquisition of word recognition strategies and accurately applying these skills, Sam was able to alleviate some reading frustrations during the reading process. Therefore, he demonstrated effective word recognition strategies, by fluently pronouncing words that would have challenged him in past readings. Moreover, he noticed that the printed word made sense in the sentence or the passage he read. As a result, Sam focused on what was structurally sound and entered the threshold of meaningfully thinking about text.

Based on the previous findings, my preliminary analysis suggested that a consistent guided reading program in the classroom would be a successful reading intervention for struggling students. The data revealed that Sam's initial comprehension with a variety of texts and genres

was low. Nevertheless, as each guided reading session progressed; Sam regularly developed his word recognition strategies, which was revealed in his RR percentages. The rereading of texts through familiar reads assisted in the cultivation of his reading comprehension. This tenaciously suggests a correlation between guiding a student through texts and the student applying that information while engaged in the reading process.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

Chapter Five will provide an overview of the research study and discuss possibilities for future instruction inside a guided reading program. Additionally, Chapter Five will reintroduce the importance of literacy workstations and its relevance to the students' reading independence. Likewise, Chapter Five will allow you to comprehend the process of the acquisition of language to enhance the students' reading prosody through carefully matched texts. Finally, this chapter will prove how prudent observations and meaningful feedback can redirect the student to accurate word choices and syntactical phrases in each text presented to the student.

Guided reading has proven to be a stabilizing factor that was a pathway toward giving Sam specific reading comprehension strategies he could use during silent sustained reading. Also, guided reading existed in order to build reading routines, specifically for struggling students. Moreover, each reading comprehension strategy taught during a guided reading session was a building block

to strengthen his understanding of the text. Reading prosody and comprehension was the goal of what guided reading provided for Sam. Guided reading was defined by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (1996) as, "A context in which a teacher supports each reader's development of effective [reading] strategies for processing novel texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty" (p. 2). Furthermore, when Sam was presented with challenging levels of texts he grew to enjoy stories and the information he acquired from literature.

The purpose of explicit reading instruction during guided reading was to promote Sam's reading level and to cultivate an enjoyment for literature. Calkins (2001) defined guided reading as, "Our new appreciation for the close access [researchers] gave us to the minds of young readers as they traveled along contours of particular texts. What a thrill to feel I was teaching reading-as-it happened" (p. 42). Similarly, Mooney (1990) promoted, "In guided reading there is a careful match of text and children to ensure that each child in the group is able to enjoy and control the story throughout the first reading" (p. 45). As a result, the guided reading area within the

classroom was a place where learning was constructed and outcomes were consistently measured.

### Summary

The systemic methodology that was used in this study was based on the guided reading concepts by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (1996). The reading instruction that was provided over a ten week period was designed to primarily measure the reading prosody and comprehension of one struggling student. The outcomes were based on the Sam's usage of guided reading strategies presented in a small group environment and his ability to transfer those reading strategies into silent sustained reading. The two major components that were effective in this guided reading program were: a) guided reading instructions and b) literacy workstations i.e. word recognition, familiar reading, writing, and a listening station to enhance various components of a balanced literacy program.

### Conclusion

This study was not only meaningful to the teacher; it was also meaningful to the student. When searching the literature for longitudinal studies, I found that Sam would

benefit greatly from a consistently based guided reading program. Guided reading instruction over time moved Sam forward in the reading process through a small group setting. Essentially, he benefited from the close day-to-day observations, feedback, and instruction from the teacher. The other significant reality of this guided reading program was the ongoing student participation in all literacy workstations such as, word activities, listening to stories on tape and matching the oral language to the text that was in front of him. An equally important task was rereading texts to build his reading confidence, and writing activities to reinforce any one of the previously mentioned activities.

One weakness of this study was the fact that it was limited to one student and one teacher. This was due to time constraints when choosing a student that would benefit the most from the study. With a limited amount of time available, Sam was chosen and had demonstrated his ability to work hard and was motivated to learn. Additionally, when he did not reread assigned leveled texts as a homework assignment it was overtly obvious during a RR. Moreover, when other students in the classroom were too noisy at literacy workstations, they were asked to settle down for

the purpose of allowing the students who were meeting with the teacher to receive quality reading instruction and accurate feedback on their area of need. At most, when students did not comply with the rules stated for each workstation, workstations were temporarily shut down. It was my belief that shutting down workstations hindered the growth of the student's literacy independence. Shutting down workstations caused students to remain at their seats to finish their work. While at the same time, students were not able to collaborate with one another if they encountered challenges, thus taking away an important component of a quality learning environment.

The results of the study revealed that Sam progressed in reading levels and improved in his ability to understand most of the texts at hand. Therefore, as a result of carefully evaluated assessments, succinctly planned lessons, and with assertive direct instruction it was possible to attentively equip the student with effective reading strategies. A direct link to Sam's reading enhancement was his reading level at the beginning of the study and his reading level at the end of the study. In the end, it was his ability to briefly discuss each text after repeated reads.

## Recommendations

### Recommendations for Classroom Teachers

The catalyst of an effective guided reading program is the enabling performance of a knowledgeable teacher. Classroom teachers should diligently create an approach to improve upon their reading praxis to promote the reading progression of struggling students. Once students are given instruction on how-to-apply reading strategies presented to them, they need the opportunity to apply the reading strategies necessary for mastery. If workstations (also called centers) are not available to promote literacy independence, skill acquisition could be hampered for students. I would like to suggest to new teachers who would like to engage in a guided reading program that they begin the first half of the school year with simply providing quality guided reading instruction. Then, seek to incorporate one literacy workstation at a time, but making sure students understand the rules to each literacy workstation before adding a new one. With the implementation of guided reading and literacy workstations within the same school year at the same time, it could be potentially overwhelming for the teacher and not effective for the student. However, keeping workstations simple, yet

academically effective makes transference less challenging for students, which is the key to education. Keeping workstations standard based is crucial to academic effectiveness. Therefore, changing the activity at each workstation weekly should enhance and promote the student's mastery of previously taught skills. Additionally, "It is appropriate to teach students all through the sequence of activities that build procedural knowledge about how to make meaning with text," (Wilhelm, 2001, p.44). These recommendations should maintain a less stressful environment for the teacher for the purpose of providing the classroom teacher the time to assess, evaluate, and reflect upon student learning goals.

#### Recommendation for Further Study

This study focused on building reading prosody and comprehension for struggling students. Based on the results of the study, more academic reading goals would be in place in order to foster the students' content knowledge for the purpose of broadening the students' comprehension of their world. This would be a focus of an active inclusion of information while seeking a balance literacy approach. Additionally, an interactive writing piece would be incorporated to improve upon the students' ability to make

extensive connections with literature. These changes would be made based on how well Sam progressed in the program. Also, it is my belief that when students involve as many cognitive faculties as possible they are capable of fostering the depth of academic knowledge. In conclusion, for all students engaged in the reading process, it is important for the effective knowledgeable teacher to consistently hone in on academic gaps, fill them in, and actively move students forward.

APPENDIX A

YETTA M. GOODMAN, DOROTHY J. WATSON,

AND CAROL L. BURKE READING

MISCUE INVENTORY

FORM A

FORM A

Transcript: The Man Who Kept House

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
Reference \_\_\_\_\_

THE MAN WHO KEPT HOUSE

0101       Once upon a time there was a woodman  
0102   who thought that no one worked as hard as  
0103   he did. One evening when he came home  
0104   from work, he said to his wife, "What do you  
0105   do all day while I am away cutting wood?"  
0106       "I keep house," replied the wife, "and  
0107   keeping house is hard work."  
0108       "Hard work!" said the husband. "You don't  
0109   know what hard work is! You should try  
0110   cutting wood!"  
0111       "I'd be glad to," said the wife.  
0112       "Why don't you do my work some day? I'll  
0113   stay home and keep house," said the woodman.  
0114       "If you stay home to do my work, you'll

FORM A

Transcript: The Man Who Kept House Continues

0115 have to make butter, carry water from the

0116 well, wash the clothes, clean the house, and

0117 look after the baby," said the wife.

0118 "I can do all that," replied the husband.

0119 "We'll do it tomorrow!"

---

0201 So the next morning the wife went off to

0202 the forest. The husband stayed home and

0203 began to do his wife's work.

0204 He began to make some butter. As he put

0205 the cream into the churn, he said, "This is

0206 not going to be hard work. All I have to do

0207 is sit here and move this stick up and down.

0208 Soon the cream will turn into butter."

0209 Just then the woodman heard the baby

0210 crying. He looked around, but he could not

0211 see her. She was not in the house. Quickly,

0212 he ran outside to look for her. He found the

0213 baby at the far end of the garden and

0214 brought her back to the house.

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FORM A

Transcript: The Man Who Kept House Continues

0301           In his hurry, the woodman had left the  
0302 door open behind him. When he got back to  
0303 the house, he saw a big pig inside, with its  
0304 nose in the churn. "Get out! Get out!"  
0305 shouted the woodman at the top of his voice.  
0306           The big pig ran around and around the  
0307 room. It bumped into the churn, knocking it  
0308 over. The cream splashed all over the room.  
0309 Out the door went the pig.  
0310           "Now I've got more work to do," said the  
0311 man. "I'll have to wash everything in this  
0312 room. Perhaps keeping house is harder work  
0313 than I thought." He took a bucket and went  
0314 to the well for some water. When he came  
0315 back, the baby was crying.  
0316           "Poor baby, you must be hungry," said the  
0317 woodman. "I'll make some porridge for you.  
0318 I'll light a fire in the fireplace, and the  
0319 porridge will be ready in a few minutes."

FORM A

Transcript: The Man Who Kept House Continues

0320           Just as the husband was putting the

0321   water into the big pot, he heard the cow

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0401   mooing outside the door. "I guess the cow is

0402   hungry, too," he thought. "No one has given

0403   her any grass to eat or any water to drink

0404   today."

0405           The man left the porridge to cook on the

0406   fire and hurried outside. He gave the cow

0407   some water.

0408           "I haven't time to find any grass for you

0409   now," he said to the cow. "I'll put you up

0410   on the roof. You'll find something to eat

0411   up there."

0412           The man put the cow on top of the house.

0413   Then he was afraid that she would fall off

0414   the roof and hurt herself. So he put one

0415   end of a rope around the cow's neck. He

0416   dropped the other end down the chimney.

---

0501   Then he climbed down from the roof and

FORM A

Transcript: The Man Who Kept House Continues

0502 went into the house. He pulled the end of the

0503 rope out of the fireplace and put it around

0504 his left leg.

0505 "Now I can finish making this porridge,"

0506 said the woodman, "and the cow will

0507 be safe."

0508 But the man spoke too soon, for just then

0509 the cow fell off the roof. She pulled him up

0510 the chimney by the rope. There he hung,

0511 upside down over the porridge pot. As for the

0512 cow, she hung between the roof and the

0513 ground, and there she had to stay.

0514 It was not very long before the woodman's

0515 wife came home. As she came near the

0516 house, she could hear the cow mooing, the

---

0601 baby crying, and her husband shouting for

0602 help. She hurried up the path. She cut the

0603 rope from the cow's neck. As she did so,

0604 the cow fell down to the ground, and the

FORM A

Transcript: The Man Who Kept House Continues

0605 husband dropped head first down the chimney.

0606 When the wife went into the house, she

0607 saw her husband with his legs up the

0608 chimney and his head in the porridge pot.

0609 From that day on, the husband went into

0610 the forest every day to cut wood. The wife

0611 stayed home to keep house and to look

0612 after their child.

0613 Never again did the woodman say to his

0614 wife, "What did you do all day?" Never

0615 again did he tell his wife that he would

0616 stay home and keep house.

No. words 791 (not counting the title)

No. sentences 68

APPENDIX B

YETTA M. GOODMAN, DOROTHY J. WATSON,

AND CAROL L. BURKE READING

MISCUE INVENTORY

FORM B

Narrative Retelling Guided: The Man Who Kept House

-----  
**THE MAN WHO KEPT HOUSE**

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

**Character Analysis:**  
**(40 points)**

*Recall (20 points)*

- 9 – Man (husband)
- 9 – Woman (wife)
- 2 – Baby

*Development (20 points)*

- Husband
  - 2 – Woodman
  - 3 – Thought he worked very hard
  - 5 – Changed attitude over time
- Housewife
  - 5 – Worked Hard
  - 5 – Accepted challenges

**Events:**  
**(60 points)**

Woodman thinks he works very hard. He comes home and asks his wife what she does all day. Wife responds that she keeps house and keeping house is hard work. (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The husband challenges the wife to change places. The wife agrees and tells husband what he has to do. The husband says they will change places the next day. (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The wife goes off to the forest and the husband stays home. (5 points) \_\_\_\_\_

The husband is involved in a number of events that cause problems: (15 points) \_\_\_\_\_

Butter making.

Baby cries and woodman goes to find her. He leaves the door open.

Pig gets into the house, the woodman chases it and the pig spills the cream.

Woodman starts to clean up the mess.

The baby cries again and the woodman prepares to feed the baby.

The cow's mooing interrupts the woodman who realizes that the cow needs to be fed. He puts the cow on the roof to feed. He is afraid the cow might fall off the roof so he throws the rope from the cow's neck down the chimney. When he gets into the house he ties the rope to his own leg.

As he thinks again about the porridge, the cow falls off the roof pulling the woodman up the chimney. Cow and woodman are hanging, one in the house and one outside.

As the wife returns home she hears the commotion. She cuts the cow down and then finds her husband upside down with his head in the porridge pot. (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_

FORM B

Narrative Retelling Guided: The Man Who Kept House  
Continues

Every day after that the husband goes to his work and the wife to hers. The husband never again asks the wife what she does every day nor says he will do her work. (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_

Character Analysis (40) \_\_\_\_\_

Events (60) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_

**Plot**

The woodman believes his work is harder than his wife's. When he trades places with her he discovers her work is more complicated and harder than he thought.

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**Theme**

Things aren't always as easy as they appear to be. Keeping house is demanding work. A woman's job is just as hard as a man's. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

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