

The Reading Professor

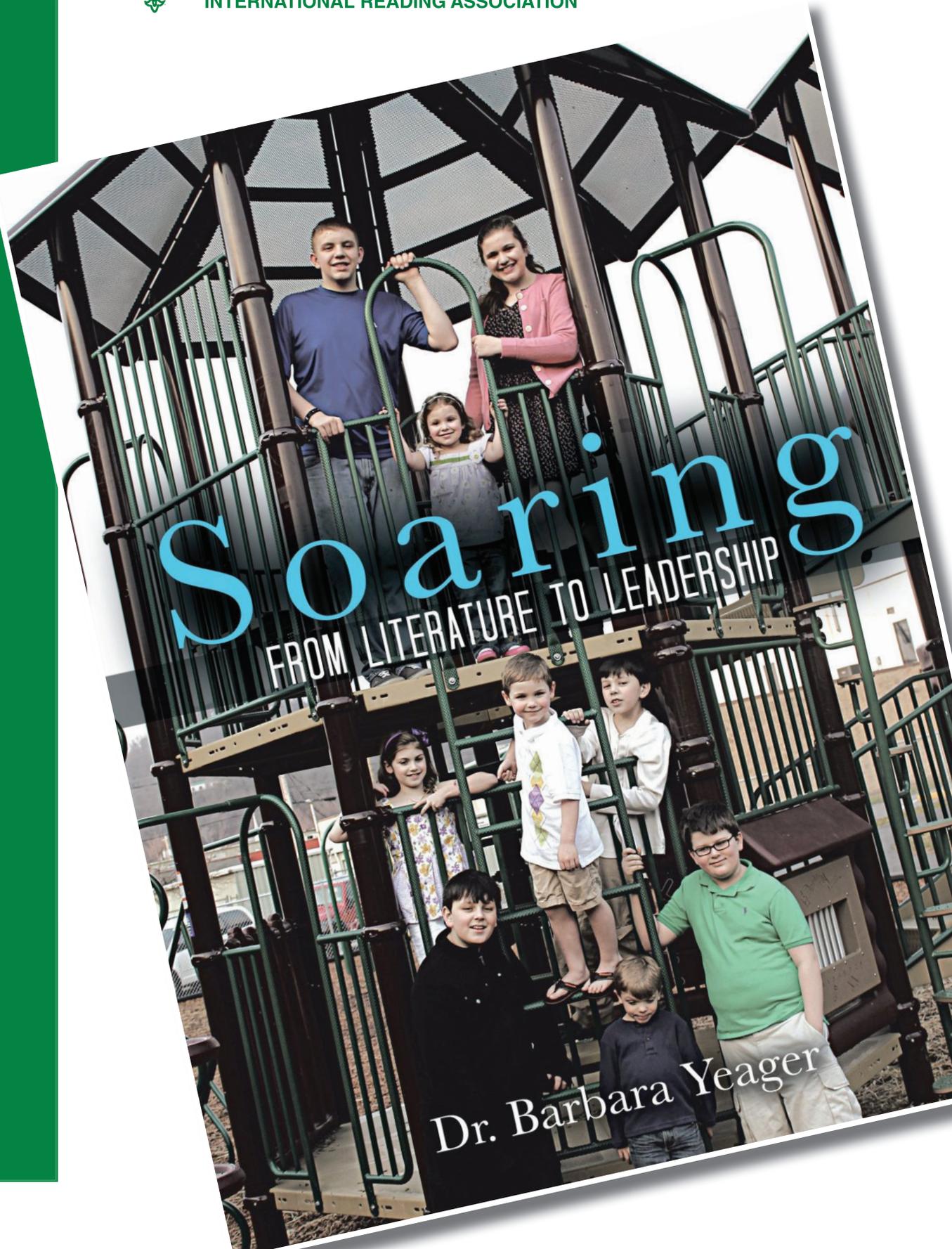
Publication Forum for



*Professors of Reading
Teacher Educators*

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

**Volume 35
Number 1
Summer/Fall 2013**



Soaring
FROM LITERATURE TO LEADERSHIP

Dr. Barbara Yeager



The Reading Professor

The Journal of Professors of Reading Teacher Educators
A Special Interest Group of the International Reading Association

Editor: **Dr. Terrence V. Stange, Professor, Reading Education
Marshall University Graduate College, S Charleston, WV**

Editorial Advisory Board

Lois A. Bader, East Lansing, Michigan
Rita M. Bean, University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Delane Bender-Slack, Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio
Allen Berger, Savannah, Georgia
Carianne Bernadowski, Robert Morris University, Monroeville, Pennsylvania
Susan Blair-Larsen, The College of New Jersey, Ewing
Beverly Brenna, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
Elaine Bukowiecki, Bridgewater State University, Massachusetts
Mary Campbell, Saint Xavier University, Chicago
Cynthia Elliott, Southeastern Louisiana University, Baton Rouge
Sharon R. Gill, Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky
Amy Hoffman, John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio
Jane Kelley, Washington State University, Pullman
Bonnie Johnson, St. Norbert College, Wisconsin
Lawrence M. Kenney, Middlesex International College, May Pen, Jamaica, West Indies
Nancy Kolodziej, Tennessee Technical University, Cookeville
Mary Kropiewnicki, Wilkes University, Pennsylvania
Janet McIntosh, Nipissing University, North Bay, Ontario
Jesse C. Moore, East Stroudsburg University, Pennsylvania
Mary Hardy Mosley, Literacy Action of Central Arkansas, Conway
Molly Ness, Fordham University, New York
Daniel Pearce, Texas A & M University, Corpus Christi
Monica Gordon Pershey, Cleveland State University, Ohio
Donita Massengill Shaw, The University of Kansas, Lawrence
Gerry Shiel, St. Patrick's College, Dublin, Ireland
Guofang Wan, Virginia Commonwealth University
Katherine Wiesendanger, Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia
Yuanzhong Zhang, University of Arizona, Tucson



Professors of Reading **Professors of Reading Teacher Educators**

Manuscripts for The Reading Professor – Dr. Terrence V. Stange, Editor; The Reading Professor, Marshall University Graduate College; 100 Angus E. Peyton Drive; S Charleston, WV 25303-1600 USA; Tel: 304-746-8987; Fax: 304-746-1942; Toll Free: 1-800-642-9842; Email: stange@marshall.edu

PRTE Newsletter – Dr. Elaine Bukowiecki, Bridgewater State University, 137 Hart Hall, Bridgewater, Massachusetts 02325, Email: ebukowiecki@bridgew.edu. The Newsletter is available online at our website

Table of Contents:

Columns

About the Cover –	2
Editor’s Corner –	3

Featured Articles

Implementing Fidelity of Instructional Practices by Pre-K Teachers for Fostering Emergent Literacy SAMUEL SECURRO, JR. & LESLIE (RINEHART) PAPELIER	4
--	----------

Igniting a Passion: A Model for Developing Reading Engagement with Teacher Candidates CAROLINE B. HOPENWASSER	12
--	-----------

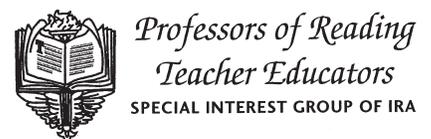
Investigating Preservice Teachers’ Sense of Reading Efficacy REBECCA M. GILES , ANDREA M. KENT & MARY HIBBERTS.....	18
---	-----------

Reading Assessments for Screening/Placement, Diagnosis, and Summative/Outcomes: What Are Schools Using? JULIE JACKSON ALBEE, JILL MAYES ARNOLD, LARINEE DENNIS, B. JANE SCHAFER, & SARAH OLSON	25
---	-----------

A Puzzling Association: How an Educator and Author Influenced Teacher Candidates SHARRYN LARSEN WALKER & JODY FELDMAN	35
--	-----------

Book Review

REVIEWER: TARIE LEWIS	40
------------------------------------	-----------



ABOUT THE COVER -

COVER STORY ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Barbara Yeager taught language and literature to undergraduate and graduate students for over fifty years. Her research activities included studies in developmental psychology, especially the works of Lawrence Kohlberg. With five children of their own, she and her husband Jack were always interested in encouraging moral maturity in the family. The five are now happy and successful adults while Jack and Barbara are retired and they enjoy encouraging the growth and development of their grandchildren. From research, reading, and the recognition that the Soaring Program can have a positive influence on the lives of children, parents and teachers, this publication was born.

ABOUT THE BOOK FEATURED ON THE COVER

Soaring: From Literature to Leadership is the result of research in developmental psychology and socialization theory, years of teaching children's and adolescent literature, and the awareness that moral judgment development takes place in the classroom as well as in the home. Dr. Yeager has devised five research-based activities which can be applied to any piece of literature. Merging the literature with the activities provides the opportunity for movement toward moral maturity and, therefore, leadership among peers. The Soaring Program presented here includes fable, fairy tales, and seven novels and is meant to be used in classrooms beginning in the sixth grade and beyond or in the home. It is hoped that teachers and parents will follow the examples and create additional resources for advancement of moral judgment by merging the types of activities with literature they love. Copies of all handouts in the book are available from Yeagerbooks@aol.com.

Editor's Corner:

**Editor, DR. TERRENCE STANGE, Professor,
Marshall University, Graduate College**

The Cover/Cover Story of Volume 34, Issue 1, of *The Reading Professor* released in Summer, 2012, was dedicated to the late renowned Educator, Dr. Dale D. Johnson. To further honor Dr. Johnson's contributions to the field of reading education, the PRTE Outstanding Article Award was renamed The Dr. Dale D. Johnson Outstanding Article Award.

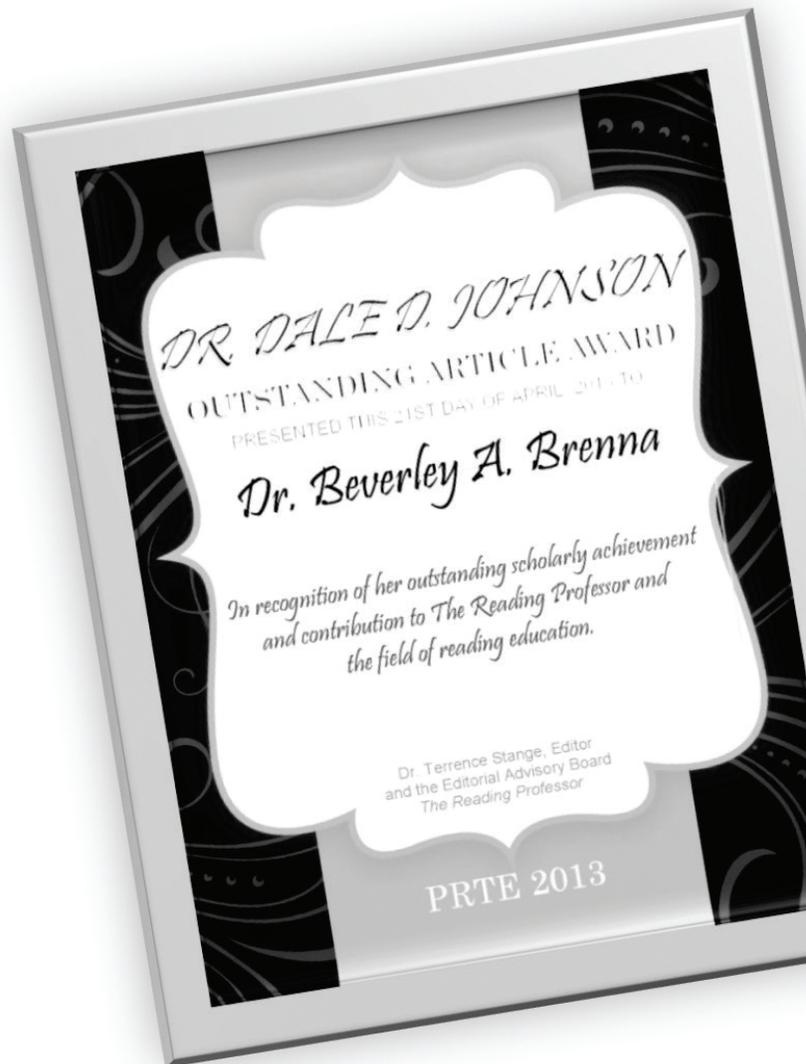


DR. BEVERLEY BRENNNA

And, on the 21st day of April, 2013, the selection of the first recipient of the Award was announced and presented. Dr. Beverley A. Brenna received the Award for her article entitled *One Literate Life: A Case Study of a Ninety-Four-Year-Old Reader*. By chance, Dr. Johnson was actually one of the Board members who reviewed Dr. Brenna's article, and he especially liked the author's submission. Included in this Report is a special thank you from Dr. Brenna, *in her own words*:

"I am overwhelmed at being the first recipient of the Dr. Dale D. Johnson Outstanding Article Award from the Professors of Reading Teacher Education (PRTE). Dr. Johnson's fine work is very well known in the field of reading education, and he was a mentor and inspiration to many. It is particularly meaningful that his name is on this award, and for that, and for the consideration of the awards committee, I am truly grateful. It is important that we in the field of reading education support new research, and I commend the Professors of Reading Teacher Educators for continuing, as a special interest group, to encourage scholarship through the publication of the journal *The Reading Professor* and through the various conferences, newsletters, and websites they command. We continue to need committed and skillful teachers of reading who will support our citizens young and old in an activity that brings school success, life success, and great individual satisfaction to many. I take encouragement from this award, as well as from all of the supports provided by the PRTE, in my career as a teacher educator. Again—many thanks."

Beverley A. Brenna, PhD
Associate Professor
Curriculum Studies
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
3121 28 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7N 0X1
Room 3121 Education
phone: 306 966 7563
bev.brenna@usask.ca
<http://www.beverleybrenna.com>



Implementing Fidelity of Instructional Practices by Pre-K Teachers for Fostering Emergent Literacy

SAMUEL SECURRO, JR., Marshall University
and LESLIE (RINEHART) PAPELIER, West Virginia

Literacy development is a process embedded in young children's social and educational environments and the consistent ways in which they are provided opportunities to become involved with books and writing materials (Isaacs, 2008; Peisner-Feinberg, et al. 1999 and Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Historically, it was not uncommon for children ages birth to four to experience initial literacy opportunities and experiences solely in the home given by parents, notably the mother who assumed the role of teacher and educator (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). However, that practice would change as the roles of women (and mothers) in the workforce evolved, notwithstanding existing research which pointed to the home as the major stimulant of young children's initial images and practices for literacy acquisition (McKay & Kendrick, 1999).

In addition to an increase in the number of families in which both parents work, the United States has experienced an increase of single-parent households due to divorce and unmarried single mothers. The net effect of these circumstances has brought about an increasing need for childcare outside the home and a corresponding decrease in the amount of time and energy that parents would give inside the home to caring for and teaching their young children (Kessler & Harris, n.d.; Klein, 2004 and Dickinson & Tabors, 2001).

Consequently, the need for a stable, secure, consistent school environment is essential. In effect, changing family structures have resulted in many parents relinquishing their "teaching" roles to those outside the family, particularly to different types of preschool programs and their practitioners. The result is a strong dependence on the personnel in early childhood programs to provide young children with quality literacy instruction and related experiences.

Programs

Various initiatives and programs to assure children's academic success have been established particularly the emergence of Universal Pre-K Programs (UPK), since 1995. The basic rationale for UPK is that, while school readiness discrepancies are greater for children targeted as at risk, middle-income children, too, frequently are not prepared academically to achieve in kindergarten and beyond.

Currently, 38 states are underway for establishing universal (free) preschool education programs for 4-year-olds. At issue with these programs is the variability found in policies and standards regarding teacher credentialing and program curricula and delivery (Ackerman, Barnett, Hawkinson, Brown & McGonigle, 2009, Ackerman, & Barnett, 2005; Ackerman, Barnett & Robin, 2005; Illinois State Board of Education, 2006 and Schulman & Barnett, 2005).

Additionally some states operate a "two-tiered" system (e.g., Georgia, Florida, West Virginia and New York) for

program delivery and teacher qualifications. For example, in West Virginia programs can be delivered within the auspices of public school districts, Headstart and private facilities. Pre-K teachers in public school districts are required to have at least a bachelor's degree while teachers in private facilities can be credentialed with an associate's degree, provided they are working toward full certification. West Virginia also requires that at least one-half of all UPK programs be under the auspices of private facilities (Bushouse (in press); Regional Education Laboratory Appalachia, 2009 and Schumacher, Ewen, Hart & Lombardi, 2005).

Although these tiers of child care delivery increase access to Pre-K programs such settings operate under different controlling bodies with varying expectations and regulations. The effect that these variations might have on program quality is an issue, particularly for curriculum standards, teacher qualifications and the fidelity given to implementing research-based instructional practices.

The growth experienced in these programs has created an enormous need for teachers who are qualified to teach emergent literacy and language learning. Thus, they will need a fund of research-based principles and the dispositions to give fidelity to these principles in practice. It is important for studies in early childhood research to report instructional fidelity results because of the variability that exists in the academic preparation of teachers and the lack of unified curricula standards (O'Donnell, 2008).

Purpose

It is argued that practicing Pre-K teachers with differing teaching credentials, years of teaching experience, and hours of professional development will vary significantly in the instructional fidelity given to research-based, instructional practices. The argument is based upon several existing factors surrounding the early education of young children. First, the field lacks a unified set of curricula standards and guidelines for structuring programs and related teacher preparation qualifications. Second, there is inconclusive evidence about the link between teacher credentials and instructional effectiveness and the academic success of young children. Third, state licensing boards vary in their requirements for licensing and employing Pre-K teachers. Each has its particular credentialing requirements for teachers, varying between child development associate and collegiate preparation (associates, bachelors and masters degrees (Early et al., 2007).

Implementation Fidelity.

Conventional wisdom is that teacher beliefs and expectations about their instructional practices prompt fidelity given to what and how they implement. An assumption is that beliefs and perceptions become part of a valid "self system" of knowing, which likely influences or directs classroom

discourse (Alexander, Murphy, Guan & Murphy P.A., 1998); Chou, 2008; Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992; Williams & Burden, 1997; Woolfolk, Davis & Pape, 2006 and Stodolosky & Grossman, 1995).

Too, existing beliefs may influence novices' perceptions of how to effectively teach reading (Haverback, 2010). Literacy instruction in initial teacher education programs not only must model "best practices" but also dispel existing misconceptions that may run counter to effective practice (Barnyak & Paquette, 2010). In short, teacher beliefs and actions appear to be highly contextual matters layered in different aspects of instructional settings and professional perceptions. It appears that it is not always predictable that beliefs focus efforts or shape related practices (Carradine, 2004).

Rationale

Teachers are the major component of quality programs and compelling evidence is needed attesting to the fidelity given to research-based principles of literacy and language instruction. Existing research has focused extensively on fidelity studies where designed interventions moderated the instruction via specific curricula and lesson guides. Overall, measures were to know whether participants stayed true to the related objectives and to the extent they followed the various lesson scripts or intentions of the designers. Conversely, few fidelity studies have investigated issues of curriculum fidelity in settings where teachers moderated the instruction "unsupervised" e.g., in a typical early childhood classroom with the instructional autonomy primarily in their hands (O'Donnell, 2008).

A beginning path for such research is to assess the perceptions of Pre-K practitioners about appropriate, research-based teaching practices and to what extent they perceive these to be consistently implemented in their classrooms. Self-evaluation and personal performance monitoring can be the first approximations of progressive change. Such results are important to respective practitioners and to their immediate supervisors for evaluating programs to target related, local and state professional development needs. Too, the status of language and literacy practices is important for teacher preparation personnel for correlating their related curricula to such findings, particularly in field-based practica and practice teaching where initial instructional practices arise. Moreover, initial collegiate teacher preparation is an important time and place for candidates to reflect on and to understand how their beliefs and dispositions (and misconceptions) relate to and influence their instructional behaviors. The following methodology was designed to conduct a quantitative research-based investigation of the relationship of these events.

Methodology

Participants/Procedures

This study uses existing data collected from a statewide sample of Pre-K teachers currently practicing in public school, Head Start, private and special education programs for four-year-olds.

Participants included 221 Pre-K practitioners sampled from a statewide population of 760 teachers in four-year-old

classrooms in West Virginia. Teachers were employed, by percentage, in the following types of programs: *Headstart* (19%), *Public School* (59%), *Community-Private* (5.9%), *Special Needs* (13.1 %), and *Other* (4.1%), the latter being a combination of *Head Start* and *Special Needs*. Teaching experience included groupings of 0-3 years (34 %); 4-7 years (27 %) and 8 or more years (38.5 %). Academic credentials were: *Child Development Associate* (2); *Associates Degree* (11); *Bachelors* (n, 90); *Masters and Advanced* (n, 118). Professional development experiences were grouped as the number of clock hours completed over the previous two years, collapsed into four groupings: *18 hours or less* (n, 99), *between 18-30 hours* (n, 61), *more than 30 hours* (n, 52) and *none* (n, 8).

Measures

The data collection tool was the *Language and Literacy Preschool Survey* (LLPS), which included: *Demographic Information*, *Teacher Instructional Practices and Resources and Materials*. Teaching practices were 18 instructional competencies adapted from *The Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Pre-K* (ELLCO). The ELLCO is an instrument designed to observe and assess the quality of K-2 practitioners' emergent literacy instruction (Smith, Brady & Anastasopoulos, 2008 & Smith & Dickenson, 2002). Its authors report an overall reliability estimate of .84, with .76 for Books & Reading; .75 for Writing and .84 for Literacy Environment. Cronbach reliability for the 18 descriptors on the LLPS estimated overall at .94 with .86 for Language Environment; .88 for Books & Reading and .88 for Print Environment.

The adaptation translated 18 instructional practices into self-evaluative descriptors organized in three literacy domains (*Language Environment*, *Books and Book Reading and Print and Early Writing*), shown in Table 1. Instructional practices were nested into these domains and posed on the survey for teachers to assess their perceptions of the fidelity given to implementing these respective practices. Participants rated each descriptor keyed to a numerical scale, from 1 to 6, with 1 being "Almost Never" (*This is not a common practice in my setting*) and 6 being "Almost Always" (*I do this daily throughout class activities*). The content of the practices is based on research-based principles of early literacy acquisition. For example, item # 10, "During read-alouds features of text, pictures and ideas to support comprehension are demonstrated". Giving fidelity to this outcome means that the teacher consistently and explicitly draws attention to and reinforces these features for the children (Smith, Brady & Anastasopoulos, 2008 and Smith & Dickenson, 2002).

Discussion of Findings

What was the overall degree of implementation fidelity given to the 18 practices by Pre-K teachers? Initially, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean ranks, sums and standard deviations). These results are shown in Table 1. Inferential analysis was obtained by the Kruskal-Wallis Test for each language and literacy domain in relationship to teacher experience, professional development experiences, academic credentials and type of teaching setting. These results are depicted in Table 2

Table 1 Overall Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Practices

Language and Literacy Descriptors in Related Domains.	N	Sum	Mean	SD
<i>Language Environment.</i> (Mean Score, 5.51; sd= 7.7)				
1. I talk with children about their ideas, personal experiences, and learning experiences.	216	1213	5.62	.70
2. I provide opportunities that engage children in individual, small group, and large group conversations.	218	1233	5.66	.72
3. I use conversation to extend children's knowledge and build oral language skills.	217	1239	5.71	.63
4. Vocabulary learning is integrated with ongoing classroom learning activities.	217	1177	5.42	.85
5. Learning activities are used to build phonologic awareness. Books and Book Reading. (Mean Score, 5.63; sd=5.7	216	1112	5.15	.93
6. Opportunities are provided for children to freely and independently access books.	217	1276	5.88	.51
7. Guidance is provided for children's use of books.	217	1145	5.28	1.01
8. Read alouds are implemented with small or large groups.	216	1242	5.75	.63
9. During read alouds, I demonstrate features of text, pictures, and ideas to support comprehension.	214	1217	5.69	.70
10. During read alouds, I model expressive and fluent reading.	215	1258	5.85	.54
11. After read alouds, children are engaged in discussions that foster comprehension.	218	1180	5.41	.84
12. During read aloud discussions, children are encouraged to contribute.	218	1209	5.55	.74
<i>Print and Early Writing.</i> (Mean Score, 5.23; sd=.95)				
13. Planned opportunities are provided for children to use their emergent writing skills.	216	1125	5.21	.96
14. I model different purposes of writing.	217	1096	5.05	.99
15. Guidance is provided to enhance children's writing process.	217	1093	5.04	.98

16. I model active and purposeful use of environmental print.	217	1133	5.22	.94
17. Environmental print is integrated into children's classroom routines.	212	1152	5.43	.87
18. I model appropriate print conventions (e.g., correct use of upper- and lower-case letters, spelling, and spacing between words).	217	1179	5.43	.97

Overall, participants perceived to be implementing the majority of descriptors very frequently, averaging 5.46 of 6 on the scale. The greatest single ratings (90th percentile) were found for Items # 6 (*Opportunities for children to freely and independently choose books*); # 8 (*Read alouds are implemented in small and large groups*) and # 10 (*During Read-Alouds I model expressive and fluent reading*), all of which occurred in the *Books and Book Reading* domain. However, # 7 (*Guidance is provided for children's use of books*) was among the lowest mean scores (5.28) with the highest variability (s.d., 1.01).

The *Print and Early Writing* domain had the lowest implementation scores (and greatest variability) for emergent writing skills, with a mean score of 5.19. The very lowest scores occurred for Items #14 (*I model different purposes of writing*) and #15 (*Guidance is provided to enhance children's writing process*) respectively at 5.05 and 5.04, with standard deviations near 1.

Language Environment resulted in a mean score of 5.51 indicating a fairly high level of overall implementation fidelity, with the exception of # 5 (*Learning activities are used to build phonological awareness*) with a mean score of 5.15 and a standard deviation of .93. It could be that teachers are unsure about what activities constitute *phonological awareness* or some confusion exists between *teaching awareness* of phonics and *teaching "phonics"*. Of the three domains, respondents perceived the greatest level of implementation fidelity for *Books and Book Reading* (mean, 5.63) with the exception of # 7, "*Guiding children to use books*" (mean, 5.28). In contrast, the highest rating (mean, 5.88) occurred for #6 ("*Children encouraged to independently and freely access books*").

These results indicate that West Virginia Pre-K teachers perceived to be implementing instructional practices that involve children's access to books and small and large group read alouds. Instructional practices involving more guidance from the teacher and engagement with the children were perceived to be less frequently implemented, especially for print and writing and surprisingly for phonological awareness.

Inferential analysis was obtained by the Kruskal-Wallis Test for each language and literacy domain in relationship to teacher experience, professional development experiences, academic credentials and type of program. These results are depicted in Table 2

To what extent did the *teaching experience* of Pre-K

teachers influence implementation fidelity for fostering language and literacy? Preschool teaching experience was identified in three groupings: *between 0-3 years, 4-7 years and 8 or more years*. For *Language Environment*, only Item #2 (*Opportunities to engage children in individual small and large group conversations*) was significant (p .027). Results showed a mean rank of 98.97 for those with *0-3 years* of experience compared to a mean rank of 121.51 for those with *between 4-7 years* of experience (p.022), and a rank of 118.5 for experience beyond 8 years (p. 025).

Table 2
Inferential Data for Implementation and Teacher Experience, Degree Completion, Professional Development and Type of Program

Language and Literacy Descriptors in Related Domains.	Experi-ence	De-gree	Pro-gram	Profession. Dev.
<i>Language Environment.</i> (Mean Score, 5.51; s d= 7.7)				
1. I talk with children about their ideas, personal experiences, and learning experiences	n. s	.041	n. s	n. s
2. I provide opportunities that engage children in individual, small group, and large group conversations.	.027	n. s.	n. s.	.005
3. I use conversation to extend children’s knowledge and build oral language skills	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	.024
4. Vocabulary learning is integrated with ongoing classroom learning activities.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	.010
5. Learning activities are used to build phonological awareness	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	.004
<i>Books and Book Reading.</i> (Mean Score, 5.63; s d= 5.7)				
6. Opportunities are provided for children to freely and independently access books	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
7. Guidance is provided for children’s use of books.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s
8. Read alouds are implemented with small or large groups.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s
9. During read alouds, I demonstrate features of text, pictures to support comprehension	n. s.	.013	n. s.	n.s.
10. During read alouds, I model expressive and fluent reading.	n. s.	.077*	.083*	n. s.
11. After read alouds, children are engaged in discussions that foster comprehension.	.043	.099*	n. s.	.025
12. During read aloud discussions, children are encouraged to contribute	.043	n. s	n. s.	.050
<i>Print and Early Writing.</i> (Mean Score, 5.23; s d=.95)				
13. Planned opportunities provided for children’s emergent writing skills	n. s.	n.s.	n.s.	.020
14. I model different purposes of writing.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n.s.

15. Guidance is provided to enhance children’s writing process.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n.s
16. I model active and purposeful use of environmental print.	.088*	n. s.	n. s	.016
17. Environmental print is integrated into children’s classroom routines.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	.019
18. I model appropriate print conventions (e.g., correct use of upper- and lower-case letters, spelling, and spacing between words).	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s

n.s –not statistically significant

*Item not significant at p < .05 but considered as a noteworthy outcome (p <.10).

Those with greater teaching experience perceived to engage children accordingly in creating and extending conversations in individual and group instructional formats compared to their peers with less teaching experience. However, an experience effect was not operative for all other language and literacy practices in the domain. Perhaps as teachers become more experienced they are able to stray from the curriculum and provide time for conversation. It may be that most new teachers teach straight from a scripted curriculum. Those with greater experience may have realized the importance of “free” conversation and teacher-child interactions for developing language skills. Also, they may have learned to manage their time more efficiently to allow greater opportunities for conversations and discussions.

For *Books and Book Reading*, only two of its seven items (#’s 11 and 12) were significantly related to teaching experience. Experienced teachers perceived to engage and encourage children in discussion after reading a book (p < .05), particularly for those with *8 or more years* of experience. These teachers are likely to give greater fidelity to implementing strategies to foster children’s comprehension and to continue discussions in read alouds. The kinds of books consulted by the teachers in these circumstances were not known, but the kind of literature chosen can be very instrumental in discussion achievement when these resources mirror the social-cultural characteristics of the children (Morgan, 2009).

Print and Early Writing had the lowest mean score (5.23) and the greatest overall variability (SD .95) among the three language and literacy categories in Table 2. None of its six practices showed significance with preschool teaching experience. However, #16 (Opportunities for children to freely and independently access books) was an “important” consideration at p. < .088. However, these results further indicated that lesser emphasis was being given to emergent writing outcomes. Perhaps teachers are unaware of the connection between reading and writing because writing historically has not been emphasized until formal schooling. Also, it may be that teachers are not knowledgeable about pre-writing and associate the teaching of writing as formal, direct instruction such as handwriting and sentence composition.

What was the relationship between *academic training* for teachers and perceived fidelity of implementation of effective literacy instruction? Academic credentials were grouped as: *Child Development Associate (CDA), Associate’s, Bachelor’s, and Master’s/Doctorate*. The latter two categories

comprised over 94 % of the cases. *Language Environment*, Item # 1(Talking with children about their experiences) was significant; however, no other items were moderated by academic credentials. These results were most likely limited by the great majority of teachers holding either bachelors or master's degrees (94%) and who apparently were on an even keel with the related content of the practices.

For *Books and Book Reading*, only Item #9, (*demonstrate features of text*) was significant (p .026), which refers to read alouds emphasizing features of text, pictures and ideas to support comprehension. The difference occurred between teachers with associates and masters degrees with a mean rank of 65.14 for the latter and 15.45 for associates (p <.035). However, this finding is limited due to the disproportions in sample sizes (n, 11 for associates and n, 200 plus for bachelors/masters). Although not significant, two items, #'s 10 (Modeling fluent reading) and 11 (Engaging children in discussions), were noted as "important" information given p levels < .10 .

For *Print and Early Writing*, none of its six descriptors rejected the null hypothesis. The degree level of teachers did not appear to influence their implementation fidelity for modeling different purposes for writing. Overall, this domain continued to be relatively low for fidelity implementation.

Overall, the three domains for language and literacy were modestly related to academic credentials. Interestingly, Justice, Mashburn, Hamre and Pianta (2007) found that teacher credentials negatively predicted language and literacy instructional quality and reported that teachers with advanced degrees received lower ratings for instructional quality. However, the authors noted that the advanced degrees were not all in the area of early childhood education. Although teachers may have advanced degrees, they may not have the specialized knowledge needed for providing quality language and literacy instruction in the preschool setting.

Participants reported the clock hours of *professional development* completed for language and literacy in the past two years. Hours were collapsed into four groupings: *18 or less* (n, 99), *between 18-30* (n, 61), *more than 30* (n, 52) and *none* (n, 8). As seen in Table 2, for *Language Environment*, professional development was significantly related to practice items 2, 3, 4, and 5 for those with *any* amount of professional development. Specifically, those completing *18 hours or less* differed significantly from those completing *more than 30 hours* on all four items (p .025). Those with *more than 30 hours* of professional development perceived to implement with greater frequency than did teachers having *18 hours or less* of professional development (p < .017). Overall, there is some evidence that teachers with greater hours of language and literacy professional development frequently used conversation to extend knowledge and to build oral language skills, to integrate vocabulary learning in ongoing classroom activities and to implement phonological awareness activities. For *Books and Reading*, items 11 and 12 (*Engaging children before and after read alouds*) were significantly related to those with 30 or more hours of professional development (p < .05).

For *Print and Early Writing*, teachers with *more than 30*

hours of professional development perceived to implement planned opportunities for children to use their emergent writing skills more than their peers' with *18 hours or less*. Specifically for items #13 (Opportunities to use emergent writing skills) and #16 (*modeling the use of environmental print*), significance was found for those with between 18-30 hours and greater than 30 hours of professional development (p .043). Essentially this held true for Item #17, *Integration of environment print* for those with more than 30 hours of professional development (p < .019). Overall, teachers with greater language and literacy professional development experiences perceived to more frequently integrate environmental print into children's classroom routines. This is especially notable given the relatively lower scores throughout for the domain.

Overall Ratings of Abilities

Overall, how did Pre-K teachers rate their ability to effectively foster language and literacy practices for four-year-olds? Item #19 on the *Language and Literacy Practices Survey* assessed the 18 descriptors across the three conceptual domains to examine the perceived level of ability to provide an effective language and literacy environment. Subjects assessed the practices by responding to a 6-point scale as follows: 1 (*Less than Inadequate*); 2 (*Inadequate -Implement few practices; need major improvement and development*); 3 *Functional* (Implement some practices; many not so well; need significant improvement); 4 (*Sufficient- implement many of the practices; need some specific improvements*); 5 (*Competent -Implement the majority of practices effectively*) and 6 (*Optimal- implement the great majority of practices effectively*).

Of 211 respondents, the great majority perceived their overall ability to implement effective language and literacy instructional practices as *Competent* (44.6%) or *Optimal* (38.3%), with a mean score of 5.25. About 13 % perceived their ability as *Sufficient* and one percent (1.4) *Less than sufficient* (one respondent indicated *Functional* and one indicated *Less than Inadequate*). Table 3 highlights the frequencies across the rating categories.

Although the great majority of teachers perceived their overall level of ability as above average for implementing

Table 3
Overall Frequency Ratings for Language and Literacy Perceived Abilities

	Scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than Inadequate (1)	1	.5	5	.5
	Functional (3)	1	.5	.5	9
	Sufficient (4)	25	11.3	11.8	12.8
	Competent (5)	99	44.6	46.9	59.7
	Optimal(6)	85	38.3	40.3	100.0
	Total	211	95.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	5.0		
Total		222	100.0		

Note. No frequencies occurred for Inadequate (2). Rating Scale: 1= Less than Inadequate, 2= Inadequate, 3= Functional, 4= Sufficient, 5= Competent and 6= Optimal

language and literacy instruction, 12.3% (n, 27) indicated that ability as *Sufficient* or less. This is not large proportionally to the sample, yet it is practically important. Twenty-seven teachers potentially impact the learning and development of approximately 540 preschool children. It is a large number of children who may be receiving ordinary or less than adequate language and literacy instruction, thus not benefiting from the jump start preschool should provide.

Discussion

Of the domains, teachers perceived to most frequently implement practices associated with *Books and Book Reading* (Mean, 5.70). Reading to children has long been considered a beneficial endeavor in school and in the home. Often, the quality of language and literacy experiences in the home (or at school) are defined by the amount of books available and the amount of time children spend reading and interacting with books. These relationships have some grounding in the research literature on language and literacy development of young children (Dodici, Draper & Peterson, 2003; Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal, 2005 and Senechal & LeFevre, 2002). Specifically, Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal (2005) examined four importance aspects of shared book reading in the home. Of those, maternal book reading strategies and maternal sensitivity were significantly related to growth of children's receptive vocabulary. Because maternal book reading strategies can positively affect emergent literacy, the same logic can be implied regarding preschool teachers' book reading strategies and sensitivity. This domain is clearly a perceived strength of West Virginia Pre-K teachers.

However, the same was not true for *Print and Early Writing* (mean 5.19). Although considerable research exists examining the impact of emergent literacy on future reading success, there is limited research on the relationship between early writing skills and future reading and/or writing success. Clearly, young children should be building a foundation of print awareness and early writing skills in addition to book reading and language skills in high-quality preschools. It may be that teachers are not particularly knowledgeable about these connections and how to implement effective print and writing instructional practices. Or, they may be giving emphasis to other areas of language and literacy mandated by local/state policies and related requirements (Madison, 1991).

Results for *Language Environment* showed that teachers consistently implemented the associated practices for engaging children in conversations to extend oral language skills and vocabulary development, with the exception of using *learning activities to build phonological awareness*. In high-quality preschool programs, knowledge about the effective implementation of phonological activities is of great importance because research has suggested it to be a strong predictor of future success in reading (Beverly, Giles & Buck, 2009; Gettelfinger, 2000; Koehler, 1996); Lonigan, Burgess & Anthony, 2000 and Paulson, 2004).

Relatively large standard deviations (.85 >) occurred for eight of the literacy practices, indicating that respondents varied in their assessments, including phonological awareness activities, guidance for children's use of books, print awareness and early writing environment. These

variations most likely mean that instruction is not a linear process keyed to the consistent implementation of practices known or believed to be qualitative. Variations are likely related to the emphases given by teachers for the reasons noted previously, including local curriculum mandates or policies.

We argued that Pre-K practitioners would vary significantly in their perceptions about fidelity given to implementing instructional practices distinguished by types of programs, academic training, teaching experience and professional development experiences. Overall, teachers perceived to give fidelity to the associated practices and reported the ability to deliver the majority of these practices. Specifically, *Books and Book Reading* emerged as a perceived strength (mean 5.63) followed by *Language Environment* (mean 5.51) However, the lowest level occurred for *Print and Early Writing* (mean 5.23). Preschool teaching experience only moderately affected respondents' perceptions related to incorporating book literature and reading. Additionally, preschool teaching experience was not an important factor related to emergent print and early writing, with the exception of modeling environmental print.

While it was assumed that academic training would be a factor, academic credentials of participants had little effect on perceived implementation for the great majority of descriptors. For example, it was expected that those with master's degrees would have acquired practical and theoretical training and therefore be more knowledgeable about practices aimed toward building stronger literacy foundations. But, teachers with higher academic training perceived to significantly implement but a single practice: *enhancing comprehension skills by pointing out features of text, pictures and ideas during read alouds*. However, read aloud engagement items # 10 and # 11, were considered as "important" outcomes. Perhaps as teachers move farther away from their initial collegiate degree programs and gain practical classroom experience and know-how, the effects of generalized teacher preparation become less applicable in instructional environments that are highly structured to promote specific reading and literacy growth.

The type of *professional development training* completed by participants was unknown. However, the data showed that professional development had the most significant relationship across the domains. Nine of the 18 practices are noted as significant in Table 2. Teachers with greater hours of language and literacy professional development reported to implement the majority of these practices more frequently than their peers with lesser hours of professional development. Justice, Mashburn, Hamre and Pianta (2007) found that the number of language and literacy development workshops attended by teachers was a strong predictor of quality language and literacy instruction. The current results point to the general conclusion that *professional development training* is the strongest indicator of teachers' perceived levels of implementation of effective language and literacy instruction. Consequently, program planners should pay considerable attention to the amounts and kinds of professional development training for Pre-K practitioners, regardless of their existing academic credentials and years of teaching experience.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, West Virginia Pre-K practitioners perceived to be implementing quality language and literacy experiences and instruction for young children. However, the results point to varying associated strengths and weaknesses inherent in their practices. These findings are important to local and state policy makers responsible for funding and evaluating West Virginia Pre-K programs, to teacher education programs and to curriculum supervisors who will design and implement future professional development endeavors. Future studies should be designed to collect objective data that directly measure the actual growth of children's emergent literacy using research-based principles of language and literacy acquisition. Howe, Radcliff & Higginson (1999) note the need for research to focus on literacy comprehension in content areas. The authors propose that the current lack of content literacy instruction in the early grades is tied to unjustified beliefs that such instruction is too difficult for the young learner. They advocate that young learners can progress to at least a rudimentary understanding of expository text through appropriate literacy instruction supported with reading materials matched to their emerging abilities.

While the current study concentrated on academic descriptors and related literacy skills, preschool educators are reminded that the concomitant development of social and emotional skills and a positive sense of identity among preschool children are important elements in a program that is developmentally appropriate. Affective components go hand in hand with the development of *cognitive learning* (e.g., attending, perceiving, associating and scaffolding) and *academic learning* skills (e.g., letter naming, decoding, letter-sound correspondence and rhyming) in high quality programs for four-year-olds. Moreover, educators must recognize that, notwithstanding the efforts and mandates from NCLB, the gap in reading and literacy achievement continues to hold for minority children and for those who are at risk for other causes (Burt, Ortlieb, & Cheek, 2009).

Dr. Samuel Securo, Jr. is a professor at Marshall University, College of Education and Human Resources. Research interests and publications include instructional software effects on reading achievement and literacy practices. Several such studies have been presented at national conferences.

Leslie (Rinehart) Papelier is a kindergarten teacher in a public school system in West Virginia who completed her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction in 2010 at Marshall University. Her research interests are early literacy acquisition and instructional practices, teacher training and parent involvement.

References

Ackerman, D. J., & Barnett, W. S. (2005). Prepared for kindergarten: What does "readiness" mean? New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

Ackerman, D. J., Barnett, W. S., Hawkinson, L. E., Brown, K., & McGonigle, E. A. (2009). Providing preschool education for all 4-year-olds: Lessons from six state journeys. *NIEER Preschool Policy Brief*, 18, 1-29.

Ackerman, D. J., Barnett, W. S., & Robin, K. (2005). Making the most of kindergarten: Present trends and future issues in the provision of full-day programs. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Available at <http://nieer.org/resources/policyreports/report4.pdf>.

Alexander, P.A., Murphy, P.K., Guan, J. & Murphy, P.A. (1998). How students and teachers in Singapore and the United States conceptualize knowledge and beliefs: Positioning learning within epistemological frameworks. *Learning and Instruction*, 8, 97-116.

Barnyak, N.C. & Paquette, K.R. (Spring, 2010). An investigation of elementary preservice teachers' reading instructional beliefs. *Reading Improvement*, 47, Issue 1, 7-17.

Beverly, B.L., Giles, R.M. & Buck, K.L. (Winter, 2009). First grade reading gains following enrichment: Phonics plus decodable texts compared to authentic literature read aloud. *Reading Improvement*, 46, Issue 4, 191-205.

Burt, J.L., Ortlieb, E.T. & Cheek, E.H. (Spring, 2009). An investigation of the impact of racially diverse teachers on the reading skills of fourth-grade students in a one race school. *Reading Improvement*. 46, (1), 35-49.

Bushouse. M. (in press). Interview with Margie Hale. West Virginia Education Code § 18-5-44, Early Childhood Education Programs.

Carradine, K.A. (2004). A study of preschool teacher beliefs and instructional practices in relationship to Head Start classroom quality. Doctoral Dissertation, available from *ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Database*. (UMI No. 3172876).

Chou, Y.C. (2008). Exploring the reflection of teachers' beliefs about reading theories and strategies on their classroom practices. *Feng Chia Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 16, 183-216.

Dickinson, D.K., & Tabors, P.O. (Eds.) (2001). Young children learning at home and school: Beginning literacy with language. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Dodici, B.J., Draper, D.C. & Peterson, C.A. (2003). Early parent-child interactions and early literacy development. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 23(3), 124-136.

Early D.M, Maxwell, K.L, Burchinal M., Alva, S., Bender R.H., Bryant D., Cai, K., Clifford R.M., Ebanks., Griffin, J.A., Henry G.T, Howes C., Iriondo-Perez J., Jeon H.J., Mashburn A.J., Peisner-Feinberg, E., Pianta, R.C, Vandergrift N, & Zill, N. (2007). Teachers' education, classroom quality, and young children's academic skills: Results from seven studies of preschool programs. Chappell Hill: Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina.

Gettelfinger, M.M. (2000). Cognitive processes as predictors of reading success. Doctoral Dissertation, available from *ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Database*. (UMI No. 9996352)

Haverback, H.R. (Winter, 2010). A fresh perspective on preservice teacher reading efficacy beliefs. *Reading Improvement*. 46, Issue 1, 35-49.

Howe, M.E., Radcliff, R. & Higginson, B. (Fall, 1999). A comparison of teacher's knowledge and their use of content literacy strategies. *The Reading Professor*, 22, (1), 8-34.

- Illinois State Board of Education. (2006). Early learning council releases Preschool for All report: Report is the blueprint for Governor's initiative [press release]. Springfield, IL: Author.
- Isaacs, J.B. (2008). *Impact of early childhood programs*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.
- Justice, L.M., Mashburn, A.J., Hamre, B.K., & Pianta, R.C. (2007). Quality of language and literacy instruction in preschool classrooms serving at risk pupils. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23, 51-68.
- Kessler-Harris, A. (n.d.). Women and the work force. US History Companion: The Reader's Companion to American History, Eric Foner and John A. Garraty, Editors, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, Retrieved May 30, 2009 from <http://www.answers.com/topic/women-and-the-work-force>
- Klein, H. S. (2004). Population: The changing American family. *Hoover Digest: Research and Opinion on Public Policy*, 3. Retrieved May 30, 2009 from <http://www.hoover.org/publications/digest/3020821.html>
- Koehler, K.M. (1996). The effects of phonological awareness and letter naming fluency on reading acquisition for first-graders experiencing difficulty learning to read. Doctoral Dissertation, available from *ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Database*. (UMI No. 9638095)
- Lonigan, C.J., Burgess, S.R., & Anthony, J.L. (2000). Development of emergent literacy and early reading skill in preschool children: Evidence from a latent-variable longitudinal study. *Developmental Psychology*, 36, (5), 596-613.
- Lortie, D.C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Madison, C.J. (1991). The development of print awareness in four- and five-year-old children. Doctoral Dissertation, available from *ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Database*.
- McKay, R.A. & Kendrick, M.E. (Fall, 1999). Young children draw their images of literacy. *The Reading Professor*, 22, (1), 8-34.
- Morgan, H. (2009). Using read-alouds with culturally sensitive children's books: A strategy to lead to tolerance and improved reading skills. *Reading Improvement*. 46, Issue 1, 3-8.
- O'Donnell, C. (2008). Defining, conceptualizing and measuring fidelity of implementation and its relationship to outcomes in K-12 curriculum intervention research. *Review of Educational Research*. 78(1), 33-84.
- Pajares, F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, 62, 307-332.
- Paulson, L.H. (2004). The development of phonological awareness skills in preschool children: From syllables to phonemes. Doctoral Dissertation, available from *ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Database*. (UMI No. 3166292)
- Peisner-Feinberg, E.S., Burchinal, M.R., Clifford, R.M., Yazejian, N., Culkin, M.L., & Zelazo, J. (1999). The children of the cost, quality, and outcomes study go to school: Technical report. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED449883)
- Regional Education Laboratory, Appalachia (REL). (2009). West Virginia's progress toward universal prekindergarten. Retrieved May 30, 2009 from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectId=98>
- Roberts, J., Jurgens, J., & Burchinal, M. (2005). The role of home literacy practices in preschool children's language and emergent literacy skills. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 48, 345-359.
- Schumacher, R., Ewen, D., Hart, K., & Lombardi, J. (2005). All together now: State experiences in using community-based child care to provide pre-kindergarten. Washington, DC: CLASP.
- Senechal, M., & LeFevre, J. (2002). Parental involvement in the development of children's reading skill: A five-year longitudinal study. *Child Development*, 73(2), 445-460.
- Shulman, K., & Barnett, W. S. (2005). The benefits of prekindergarten for middle income children. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Available at <http://nieer.org/resources/policyreports/report3.pdf>.
- Smith, M.W., Brady, J.P., & Anastasopoulos, L. (2008). User's guide to the Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation Pre-k Tool (ELLCO). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- Smith, M.W., & Dickinson, D.K. (with Sangeorge, A., & Anastasopoulos, L.). (2002). *User Guide to the Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation Toolkit* (Researched.). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Technical Appendix 79.
- Stodolosky, S.S. & Grossman, P.L. (1995). The impact of subject matter on curricular activity: An analysis of five academic subject areas. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32, 227-249.
- Whitehurst, G. J., & Lonigan, C. J. (1998). Child development and emergent literacy. *Child Development*, 69 (3), 848-872.
- Williams, M. & Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for language learners: A social constructivist approach*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.
- Woolfolk, H., Davis, A. & Pape, S. (2006). Teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and thinking. In Alexander, P.A. & Winne. (Eds.) P.H. *Handbook of Educational Psychology* (2nd), 715-737. Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum.

Igniting a Passion: A Model for Developing Reading Engagement with Teacher Candidates

CAROLINE B. HOPENWASSER, State University of New York, New Paltz

I always loved reading as a child. My mother and I would take weekly trips to the library where I would always leave with no less than five books to read. It seemed that as my school work became more demanding towards the end of high school and all through college, I became less interested in reading for my own pleasure.

– “Tara,” teacher candidate in *Children’s Literature*, Spring 2009

As more demands are placed on K-12 educators, so too are these demands placed on teacher educators. Implementing the Common Core Standards, facing the anxiety of teacher evaluation which is tied to student performance on high stakes testing, and endeavoring to keep up with new technology to enhance digital literacy can leave teachers at all levels exhausted. One of the first casualties of these demands, and their accompanying stress, is leisure reading. Smith (2012) asserted that teacher educators are faced with “the daunting task of preparing teachers of reading who measure up to the many standards that guide reading practice” (p. 9). Although it is necessary for teacher preparation courses to focus on how to teach the skills of reading, the affective component of reading education is often minimized (Layne, 2009). This omission directly impacts teacher candidates’ ability to meet the International Reading Association’s standards for reading professionals (International Reading Association, 2010). Specifically impacted is the need for candidates to create a literate environment, to model reading engagement for their students, and to continue to expand their personal repertoire of children’s literature in ways that will benefit their diverse students. Moreover, lack of reading for pleasure can impede a teacher’s ability to lead an interesting, fulfilling life outside of school: a component that Routman (2012) identifies as a key to being an effective teacher.

In their study that addressed the reading habits and literacy attitudes of in-service and prospective teachers, Nathanson, Pruslow, and Levitt (2008) reported that many teachers do not make “personal, leisure-time reading a priority” (p. 314). While this response may not be surprising to many literacy teacher educators, it is certainly disheartening. Nathanson et al. (2008) explained that this trend may stem from a “lack of passion for reading in literacy professionals” (p. 319). Consequently, when teachers who are non-readers are faced with students who resist reading, they cannot draw from their own personal love of reading to inspire these students. This fact, when coupled with the lack of preservice instruction of the affective domain means such teachers will lack the tools

to guide these students toward a love of leisure reading.

Fortunately, in their study on the reading habits of preservice teachers, Applegate and Applegate (2004) found that well-designed college courses can ignite the love of reading in teacher candidates. Teacher educators, therefore, should not only design experiences to prepare the knowledge and skills of teacher candidates, “but their hearts as well” (Nathanson et al.; 2008, p. 319). Teacher educators must address the reading lives of teacher candidates in addition to their other professional preparation (Commeyras, 2001).

Many educators would agree that teachers need to share their reading lives with their students (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Commeyras, 2001; Nathanson et al.; 2008; Routman, 2003). Routman stated, “I deliberately use my influence as a teacher and role model to foster a love of reading along with excellent reading habits” (2003, p. 23). This is essential not just for teachers of elementary school students, but for teacher educators as well. When teacher educators share their own purposes for reading, personal reading habits, and passion for reading with college students, they can help reignite their students’ love of reading that has often been buried under the burden of assigned school reading.

The lack of wide reading among teacher candidates can affect their coursework on many levels. For example, pre-service teachers often do not have a large repertoire of books to draw from, so they have difficulty integrating books into their designing of lesson plans. On the graduate level, literacy specialist candidates have difficulty finding books to inspire struggling or reluctant students to read. Consequently, teacher educators have a great responsibility to connect or reconnect students with leisure reading as a joyful experience. Teacher educators are obligated to design experiences in their college courses that provide multiple opportunities and models that encourage their candidates’ personal engagement in reading (Applegate & Applegate, 2004).

The Model

To address the often neglected affective component of literacy teacher education, I decided to utilize my graduate course, *Children’s and Young Adult (YA) Literature*, to implement new techniques designed to help teacher candidates ignite or reignite their love of leisure reading. This article describes the instructional protocol implemented in the course and summarizes student response to the procedure. The steps involved in this instructional protocol are as follows: (a) setting the stage for change, (b) immersing students in inspiring literature with a capable guide, and (c) sustaining reading momentum throughout the semester.

Step 1: Setting the Stage for Change

Fullan (1996) contends that there are several key lessons to enacting change of any kind: the first is that outside forces cannot mandate what matters to individuals. From this perspective, attempting to dictate attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs will eventually cause the change process to break down (Fullan, 1996). Consequently, professors cannot “assign” that students become passionate about personal reading, as compliance will only be surface level at best. Instead, opportunities must be provided for students to discover this need to read for themselves.

In Step One, the model provided teacher candidates with several opportunities to examine and discuss themselves as readers. The teacher candidates began the course by introducing themselves to each other. This introduction assignment asked students to indicate their favorite genre of literature and discuss what they were currently reading for pleasure. Many candidates could not name the last book they had read for fun. One student confided to the class that she had never read any text that was not assigned by a teacher.

Following the introductions, each teacher candidate was presented with several questions regarding their personal reading habits, adapted from Tunnel, Jacobs, Young and Bryan (2012). The teacher candidates used these questions to evaluate themselves as personal reading models for their students. The questions pertained to: (a) amount of pleasure reading done each week, (b) number of books in one’s personal children’s book library, (c) favorite children’s author, (d) favorite author for adults, and (e) title of books the student plans to read next. After answering the questions individually, the teacher candidates discussed their responses with each other. During this discussion, the teacher educator observed the body language of the teacher candidates. Many people ducked their heads like they were in trouble with the teacher. There was grimacing and much nervous laughter. When the class reconvened to talk as a whole, a few brave souls spoke for the class. The overwhelming consensus was that these teachers felt like inadequate reading models for their students. Given the level of embarrassment demonstrated by the teacher candidates, the teacher educator intentionally revealed her personal reading journey that began much like theirs. She, too, stopped reading for pleasure for a period of time until she was brought back to her passion for reading by a professor in graduate school. She assured the students that this course was designed to help them develop reading habits that would enable them to present a strong personal reading model to their own students.

Step 2: Immersion into Inspiring Literature

Once candidates believed in the need to change their personal reading habits, the second step of the model required that the teacher educator inspire them to participate in wide, self-selected reading over the course of the semester. This necessitated immersion in

books that would capture their hearts and imaginations. Cambourne (1995) defines immersion as “the state of being saturated by, enveloped in, flooded by, steeped in, or constantly bathed in that which is to be learned” (p. 185). Consequently, candidates needed to be immersed in a large number of books at the beginning of the semester.

When real readers want to be enveloped by books, they go to the bookstore. There, book lovers are surrounded by the excitement of new titles, steeped in a wealth of authors, and bathed in the familiar warmth of favorite books which greet them like old friends. To provide this experience for students, the third class of the semester was held at a local bookstore. The bookstore visit consisted of three activities: a book talk, a scavenger hunt, and the completion of student-selected reading goals.

Book talks. The fieldtrip began with the whole class meeting in the children’s section. The teacher educator then shared children’s and young adult books that were carefully selected to pique the candidates’ interest from other areas of the bookstore that they might seldom frequent on their own. The book talks included graphic novels, teen lit, and science fiction. The teacher educator shared *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, by Brian Selznick and introduced them to *Baby Mouse*, by Jennifer Holme. She tantalized them with the mystery in *When You Reach Me*, by Rebecca Stead and explained the bleak future depicted in *The Hunger Games*, by Suzanne Collins. Every ounce of personal passion felt for these books was transmitted to the candidates in about 15-20 minutes of book talks by the professor.

Novel contracts. After the book talks, the teacher educator presented a novel contract for candidates to complete while at the bookstore. Candidates were required to list four novels they would read during the course and indicate a time-line for completing the novels throughout the 15 week semester. Novels could range from earlier readers to young adult literature, as well as include graphic novels. Additionally, candidates indicated why they chose each text on the contract, helping the teacher educator ensure that students were choosing books for a variety of reasons. See Appendix A for an abbreviated example of the novel contract.

In actuality, the teacher educator wanted and expected the students to read more than four books. However, knowing that many of her students already felt the pressures of work, home, and school, she realized that they would balk if she announced that they were expected to read 5–10 novels as well as 30–40 picture books, a textbook, and supplemental articles. Instead, she explained that they needed to read 2–4 chapter books depending on the length of the texts. They were to list four novels on the contract, but were allowed to write “optional” by the books they thought they might not have time to get to. The only requirement of the students in addition to having four novels was that one be outside of their “comfort zones.” For example, if they predominantly read historical fiction and professed

to hate science fiction, they might have one sci-fi novel on their contract. Students filled out the contract and signed it before leaving the store.

Scavenger hunt. To facilitate finding novels for the contract, the teacher educator provided a scavenger hunt sheet for students. This activity contained lists of the children's and young adult sections of the bookstore, broken down by the section headings found on the store shelves. For each section heading, there was a listing of excellent books and authors to be found there. Students were also asked to jot down the books they found exciting or trends they noticed in the different sections (see Appendices B and C).

For this activity, students were divided into teams and encouraged to talk and share with each other as they explored. When possible, the teacher educator recruited knowledgeable volunteers to serve as a resource in particular sections of the store. For example, having an expert on graphic novels was particularly helpful to encourage students to explore that genre, which is unfamiliar to many students. The teacher educator devoted most of her time to the Young Adult section, helping students find books that would captivate them and encourage them to read outside of their usual genres. A timer was used to indicate when it was time to move to another section; however, this practice was quickly abandoned, as the teacher educator noticed how well the students navigated through the sections without it.

Students spent approximately one and a half to two hours perusing the shelves. Most candidates gave themselves three to four weeks to read each book on their contract. Most students left the store with at least one book, and all left with a list of titles to order from their local library or on e-book. Students left in small groups, still chatting about their books and what they planned to read first. After this initial immersion into the exciting world of books, students left the store excited and ready to read.

Step 3: Continuing Reading Momentum throughout the Semester

Since the fieldtrip occurred as class number 3 out of 15, the initial burst of excitement generated from immersion at the bookstore could be easily lost. Therefore, intentional steps were taken to extend the initial excitement so that it was maintained throughout the semester. To foster the momentum, the teacher educator implemented and promoted the following activities or behaviors in all subsequent classes: sustained silent reading, self-selected discussion, book talks, book passes/book looks, and recommendations.

Sustained silent reading. Each class session began with 10-15 minutes for students to read their novels. The teacher educator either read her own novel or circulated through the class to see what the students were reading. However, she did not engage them in discussion about their books at this time. Initially, students took a moment to settle down and start reading. However, they soon began

to look forward to this time – many commenting that they arrived to class early so they could have more time to read.

Self-selected discussion. Silent reading time was always followed by a 10–15 minute discussion period. Students were allowed to group themselves and were always given time to discuss whatever they wished about their novels. As the semester advanced, the teacher educator also added topics to be addressed, such as: character, theme, interesting leads, and amazing vocabulary. Again, students were allowed to group themselves, permitting them to discover the many similarities among seemingly very different books. For example, finding traits shared by a strong female character in a science fiction novel and in a historical fiction novel allowed them to see how students in a class can discuss the same big ideas while reading self-selected books. Each discussion period ended with a whole class conversation about some big ideas that students learned about themselves as readers and how those ideas apply to their teaching. These ideas included: reading a run of books in a particular series or genre before moving to a new one is normal, abandoning a book is acceptable (not all of them are worth finishing), reading outside of your comfort zone can lead to some exciting discoveries, and discussing books with friends is a fulfilling experience when the talk is real.

Book talks. Each of the remaining class periods focused on a particular genre. Each week, the teacher educator presented a book talk on one or two novels that were her favorites from that genre. Students skeptical about a particular genre were often willing to try a book based on her description. This was particularly important in helping students read outside of their comfort zones. Many of the female students in the class professed to hate science fiction; however, after a book talk highlighting the love story in a science fiction book, they were willing to try this genre and often became fans. Additionally, the teacher educator endeavored to bring examples of as many genres as possible in graphic novel format, as this was often new and intimidating to some students.

Book passes/book looks. For each genre studied, students brought in examples of novels or picture books that exemplified that genre. The teacher educator also brought 20 to 30 examples of that genre as well. Time was dedicated to either doing a book pass, in which books were passed around the classroom and each student had 50 seconds to peruse the book, or a book look, in which books were laid out on tables in the classroom and students had a designated amount of time at each table. During these activities, students created lists of books they wanted to read in the future. The majority of candidates indicated that this was the first time that they knew what they were going to read next, some indicating that they even had a pile of books stacked on their bedside table.

Recommendations. As fellow students began to know each other through their in-class discussion times, they began to recommend books to each other. The teacher

educator made recommendations to students as well. For example, one candidate was particularly taken by the *Uglies* series by Scott Westerfeld. The teacher educator found a graphic novel version of the story told from another character's perspective at a local book fair and brought it in to the student. The candidate took the book home and read it before the next class meeting. Her enthusiasm for the book spread to her tablemates, and they too began reading the series.

Students also made recommendations to the teacher educator. Because her comfort zone was Young Adult literature, they encouraged her to read their favorite adult novels: *The Help*, by Kathryn Stockett, and *My Sister's Keeper*, by Jodi Picoult. In order to honor and support their enthusiasm for reading, she read their recommendations and discussed the books with the recommenders.

Student Response

Novel Contract

Each student was required to read four novels. The first semester that this procedure was implemented, there were 20 students in the course. If these 20 students each read a minimum of 4 books each, a total of 80 novels would have been read by the class. At the end of the semester, when the total number of novels actually read by each student was tallied, the class had read a total of 160 novels. In fact, only 2 of the 20 students had read the minimum, with the remaining 18 reading a range of novels between 5 and 14.

As part of the novel contract, students were required to read at least one novel outside of their comfort zone. At the beginning of the semester, students self-reported their favorite genres. Two students reported that historical fiction was their favorite, one reported realistic fiction, while no students listed science fiction or fantasy as their favorite. At the end of the semester, when the genres of the novels read was tallied, 20 historical fiction novels, 50 realistic fiction novels, 25 science fiction, and 45 fantasy books had been read by the class. Out of the 160 novels read, 60 were YA literature, while the rest were classified as early or middle grade texts.

Student Reflection

At the end of the semester, students were asked to reflect on their experience as readers over the course of the semester and post their responses on Blackboard. Students wrote prolifically about their journeys as readers over the course of the semester. Themes that emerged in many responses included: (a) reawakening as a reader; (b) development of readerly behavior; (c) the importance of class discussion and professor enthusiasm; and (d) how students felt the class had shaped, or reshaped, their behavior as readers and teachers.

Reawakening as a reader. Many students wrote of a love for reading as a child, but indicated that this love of pleasure reading had diminished over time. This was summed up succinctly by one student who stated, "Before this class, I had completely forgotten how important it is to take time and read for pleasure." Reasons given for the

relegation of pleasure reading included more demanding school work, with one student stating, "My undergraduate career of reading countless pages of textbook jargon turned me off to reading for pleasure." Another reason stated by many students was the busy pace of adult life. "As adults, I think we get wrapped up in our lives and how busy they are and forget how nice it is to just sit and read." One student stated that, though she loved to read as a child, she went through a long period without reading – attributing this to the fact that she was never able to read a book of her own choosing in school and was, therefore, never taught how to choose books which interested her. A large number of students indicated that the Children's Literature course reconnected them with their childhood love of books. One student captured this sentiment vividly:

I have this memory of myself as an 11-year-old, spending days in my room making my way through one Nancy Drew book after another. I begrudgingly went downstairs for meals and then ran back up to my room for more adventures. I can't quite devote the same number of hours to reading now with two kids and a job, but I am that excited about reading again! Thank you!

Readerly behavior. Students' comments revealed an understanding of readerly behaviors that they developed as a result of their time in this course. Many revealed that they did not know many book titles or authors at the beginning of the semester. One student commented, "Before this class, I was stuck with only the author I liked to read (Nicholas Sparks)." As a result of their immersion in books on the class fieldtrip, as well as through in-class experiences, students began to develop lists of authors and books that they wanted to read. One student comment captured this sentiment well, "I also have a list of books that I want to read now, which I NEVER had before." Another student revealed a horrifying moment when she realized that she did not have a book to read upon finishing the one she was reading. "For the first time in my life, not having another book to read was startling. My professor's words came to mind – we should always have a stack of books close by and we should always be planning what we will be reading next. I won't let that happen to me again!" Other students indicated that they were watching less television and visiting the book store more frequently. One confessed, "I even go on Friday nights sometimes. I just get excited to see what books are out and what books I can add to my ever growing list."

Class discussion/professor enthusiasm. Many students attributed their reawakened love of reading to the professor's enthusiasm about books. "What I loved about this class was that the professor continually discussed various kinds of books and made them seem exciting to read. As I began to read some of her suggestions, I found myself getting hooked back into reading." Students

also looked forward to discussions with classmates, one indicating that “discussions with my classmates made me more eager to read books.” Another stated, “I think one of the most important aspects of the experience was having the opportunity to discuss books with my fellow classmates.”

New genres. Students also indicated insight gained by the requirement to read one book outside of their comfort zones. One student indicated that she “mostly knew novels that [she] had read as a child and have now realized how many great new stories there are.” Many students were amazed at their love of science fiction in particular. Many students began their foray into this genre with the *Hunger Games*. One student loved it so much that, to her amazement, she finished it in three days. She stated, “Although it was not on my contract, I went out and bought the sequel, *Catching Fire*, and finished it in one day.” Unfortunately for her, *Mockingjay* had yet to be released at the time. Perhaps this reader captured the essence of her foray into new genres best when she stated, “It is amazing what you learn about yourself as a reader once you open your mind to new things!”

New behaviors as readers and teachers. Many students discussed how they felt or behaved as readers before the class and how these behaviors changed or evolved over the course of the semester. One student admitted that she “went from dreading to pick up a book, to having a list of books I have finished reading from the beginning of this semester and a pile of books sitting in my room waiting to be read.” Another shared, “This class has made me realize that I wasn’t a reader four months ago (even though I thought I was). I can now say with certainty that I am a reader and reading has changed my life.” Students began reclaiming time for pleasure reading in many ways, “I keep my book with me in my purse during the day and on my nightstand at night. When I’m sitting in my car with a few extra minutes, I pull out my book. Before going to bed at night I relax and read for ten minutes or so. All of those little minutes really add up and before I know it, the book is complete and I can’t wait to pick up the next one!”

Students also commented on how the effects on their personal reading lives transferred to their teaching practices. One student stated, “This class has shifted my thinking as a teacher. Though there is a tremendous amount of content to get through every day, a primary concern should be getting kids interested in books and having them read for an authentic purpose.” Another commented, “Now that I am an avid reader and am excited about it, I can show this excitement to students and get them hooked on reading. There were some great ideas presented in class that make reading fun and I cannot wait to try them out!”

They were also excited about the bond reading could forge between their students and themselves. After reading *Wake*, by Lisa McMann, a book outside of her comfort

zone, one student found an opportunity to discuss it with students at the school in which she was substitute teaching. “I was able to relate to the students and discuss the book! I think that helped to form a bond between me and the students I was working with.”

One student commented that, as a teacher, she now finds herself reading during silent reading time or during free periods. “I personally am reading because I want to, but I know that my students will see me reading and many will want to copy my behavior. This class has not only helped me become a more active reader, but has helped me teach my students how to become active and engaged readers.”

Conclusion

This teaching protocol presents promising support for Applegate and Applegate’s (2004) findings that well-designed college courses can ignite the love of reading in teacher candidates. However, this model was implemented in just one course in a graduate program and the impact of its ability to enact sustainable change requires further study. In the same way that we encourage our teacher candidates to apply reading and writing across their curriculum, ideally, teacher candidates would encounter pieces of this model in multiple courses across their teacher preparation program. Being provided with the opportunity to develop and practice the habit of reading again and again would likely solidify sustainable change.

One of the teacher candidates in my class summed up the intent, the hope, and the power of this model with remarkable eloquence:

When we set up our classrooms to encourage [these kinds of] joyful connections with text – through book talks, book clubs, and other structures that encourage children to view themselves as a community of readers, by providing diverse literature in both reading level and genre, and by building in and prioritizing time for authentic reading – there is no stopping our students from reading.

Her statement applies equally well to college professors as it does to classroom teachers. As teacher educators, we must create teachers who feel that reading is an essential part of their personal lives. It is precisely when a deep love for reading has become so interwoven into their daily world that they can most effectively and truthfully transmit this passion for reading to their students. And it is precisely when a deep love for reading has become so interwoven into our daily lives as reading professors that we can most effectively and truthfully transmit this passion for reading to our own students.

Caroline B. Hopenwasser is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Elementary Education at the State University of New York, New Paltz. Her research interests include the affective reading domain, young adult literature, and effective methods for preparing reading teachers. You

may contact her at hopenwac@newpaltz.edu.

References

Applegate, A. J., & Applegate, M.D. (2004). The peter effect: Reading habits and attitudes of preservice teachers. *The Reading Teacher*, 57(6), 554-563.

Cambourne, B. (1995). Toward an educationally relevant theory of literacy learning: Twenty years of inquiry. *The Reading Teacher*, 49(3), 182-190.

Commeyras, M. (2001). Pondering the ubiquity of reading: What can we learn? *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 44(6), 520-525.

Fullan, M. (1996). Professional culture and educational change. *School Psychology Review*, 25(4), 496-500.

International Reading Association (2010). Standards for reading professionals – revised 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.reading.org/General/CurrentResearch/Standards/ProfessionalStandards2010.aspx>

Layne, S. L. (2009). *Igniting a passion for reading: Successful strategies for building lifetime readers*. Stenhouse: Portland, ME.

Nathanson, S., Pruslow, J., & Levitt, R. (2008) The reading habits and literacy attitudes of inservice and prospective teachers: Results of a questionnaire survey. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59(4), 313-321.

Routman, R. (2003). *Reading essentials: The specifics you need to teach reading well*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Routman, R. (2012). *Literacy and learning lessons from a longtime teacher*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Smith, M. (2012). Critical thinking: Essential skills to include in reading education courses. *The Reading Professor*, 34(1), 9-14.

Tunnel, M. O., Jacobs, J. S., Young, T.A., & Bryan, G.W. (2012). *Children's literature, briefly*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Appendix A

Chapter Book Contract

Title	
Author	
Genre	
Why this book?	
# of pages	
I will complete this novel by	

Student _____

Professor _____

Appendix B

Directions for Bookstore Scavenger Hunt

Please visit each section noted on this form in the order indicated. We will have about 10-12 minutes in each section. As you visit each section, search for books that excite you! Look outside your favorite genre; you never know what you will find. I have made suggestions of what to look for at each section. Please make notes for a class discussion to be held in class next week.

Appendix C

Sample Section from Bookstore Scavenger Hunt

➤ YA Lit

- Look at the New for Teens section
- Note the genres you notice for teens in this section
- Note the variety of topics you notice
- Look for titles and authors of interest to you

Here are just some of my favorite authors in this section:

- Walter Dean Myers
- Carolyn Mackler
- Suzanne Collins
- Scott Westerfeld
- Sharon Draper
- Laurie Halse Anderson
- Libba Bray
- Patricia McCormick
- K.L. Going
- Brian Green
- David Levithan

Investigating Preservice Teachers' Sense of Reading Efficacy

REBECCA M. GILES, ANDREA M. KENT & MARY HIBBERTS,
University of South Alabama, Mobile

Learning to read is a complex linguistic achievement, and teaching reading is a multifaceted process that draws upon an extensive knowledge base and vast repertoire of strategies. This study was designed to investigate the impact of differing field experiences in amount, type, and context on elementary preservice teachers' efficacy in the domain of reading. With the established link between teachers' self-efficacy and student learning, the results of this study have significant implications for the design of teacher education programs and the support of preservice elementary teachers in their mastery of teaching reading.

While the most effective methods to teach reading have been debated for decades, the recent focus of teaching reading has centered upon tailoring the teaching of the five essential components--phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000)--to the needs of individual students. It is not uncommon, however, for beginning preservice teachers to view learning to read as simply a decoding process without much regard for the remaining critical components (Smith, 2012).

In teacher preparation programs, preservice teachers are working to learn both the theory of teaching reading, as well as how to apply research-based best practices. Like the best way to teach a child to read, the best methods of preparation for providing competent reading instruction is also surrounded by debate. As a result, colleges and universities with approved licensing programs employ diverse approaches to preparing elementary teacher candidates with the expertise needed to teach reading. This process, however, typically occurs through methods courses in the theories and pedagogy of teaching reading, coupled with field experiences wherein teacher candidates are asked to apply their learning in public school classrooms under the tutelage of mentor teachers. Regardless of the specific approach, identifying the abilities needed to be an effective reading teacher and understanding preservice teachers' beliefs regarding these abilities is of utmost importance for reading teacher educators.

Theoretical framework

Teacher Efficacy

Efficacy beliefs have long been associated with the work of psychologist Albert Bandura (1997), who defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). As a social cognitive theory,

self-efficacy conceives a set of beliefs about teachers' capacity to have a positive influence on their students' learning (Henson, 2002).

The value and power of teachers' sense of efficacy has been well established in the literature (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008; Putnam, 2012). Teachers who have confidence in their own teaching abilities (i.e., a greater sense of self-efficacy) provide a greater academic focus in the classroom (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), are more likely to try innovative practices (Sparks, 1988), and engage in a greater degree of ongoing staff development programs (Gersten, Chard, & Baker, 2000) than their peers with lower expectations concerning their ability to influence student learning. Additionally, a strong sense of efficacy "can pay dividends of higher motivation, greater effort, persistence and resilience" (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998, p. 238). Further, teacher self-efficacy has a direct link to students' performance (Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990) and is considered a powerful influence on teachers' overall effectiveness with students (Pendergast, Garvis, & Keogh, 2011). Graham, Harris, Fink, and MacArthur (2001) assert that teachers' efficacy is "one of the few teacher characteristics that reliably predicts teacher practice and student outcomes" (p. 178).

The observation that teacher education programs play an important role in the development of teachers candidates' self-efficacy and identity (Pendergast, Garvis, and Keogh, 2011) makes the topic of preservice teacher efficacy of particular importance to teacher educators.

Preservice Teacher Field Experiences

The results of research investigating the link between field experiences and preservice teacher efficacy have been varied (Haverback & Parault, 2008). Gunning and Mensah (2011), along with Ebrahim (2012), suggest that the types of teaching experiences offered within a methods course are valuable for increasing the self-efficacy to teach science of preservice elementary teachers. In contrast, Plourde (2002) found that classroom experience did not have a significant effect on preservice student teachers' self-efficacy in teaching science. Gao and Mager (2011) found that preservice teachers in an inclusive teacher education program exhibited a higher perceived sense of Personal Teaching Efficacy in more advanced phases of their preparation. Similarly, Lancaster and Bain (2010) reported that preservice teachers who completed a field experience working with students who had special needs demonstrated increased teacher efficacy following the experience. In regard to reading teacher efficacy,

Nierstheimer, Hopkins, Dillon, and Schmitt (2000) reported increased efficacy for elementary preservice teachers participating in a corrective reading methods course and pre-requisite tutoring practicum. Likewise, Haverback and Parault's (2011) investigation of two field experiences, tutoring and observing, on elementary preservice teachers' self-efficacy showed that both groups reported growth in reading teacher efficacy.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of two preparation programs on elementary preservice teachers' efficacy of teaching reading. Specifically, the study sought to determine if there was a difference in candidates' efficacy for teaching reading in a teacher education program that merged standards and increased field experiences for a dual certification in elementary and special education, as compared to a traditional elementary education program that offered candidates the opportunity to earn the elementary teaching certificate only.

Methodology

Participants

Participants were 54 elementary preservice teachers (53 females and 1 male) at a southeastern university classified by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as a Level VI institution and by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a Doctoral/Research Intensive University. All participants were seeking an elementary teaching certificate through either the Elementary Education ($n=31$) or K-6 Teacher Education ($n=23$) program. It should be noted that the concurrent presence of participants in these two separate programs represented a period of transition resulting from recent institutional changes rather than typical program offerings.

The primary difference between the programs was that candidates in K-6 Teacher Education were meeting all state department of education mandates (minimum standards and field experience/internship requirements) to be recommended for dual certification in both Elementary and Collaborative Teaching upon successful completion of the program and satisfactory PRAXIS II test scores. As a result, the program for K-6 Teacher Education majors contained significantly more special education content in coursework and field experiences, while the total number of credit hours remained at 128 for both programs. A specific listing of required courses for both programs appears in Table 1.

Further, the total number of field experience hours prior to internship doubled (increasing from 235 to 470 clock hours) for K-6 Teacher Education majors with candidates evenly splitting their time between regular and special education settings. The increase in content covered without an increase in credit hours resulted in increased responsibilities along with the increase in clock hours (see Table 2).

Procedures

Haverback (2007) adapted the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) to examine teacher efficacy within the specific domain of reading. This resulted in the Reading Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (RTSES), which was then subjected to reliability and validity procedures, and has been used and accepted in studies of preservice teachers' sense of reading efficacy (Haverback, 2007; Haverback, 2009; Haverback & Parault, 2011). Responses to "how much can you do" for each of the 16 RTSES questions use the same nine-point Likert-like scale as used in the original TSES, which lie on a continuum of 1-nothing to 9-a great deal, making 144 the highest possible total score. The RTSES was used as a posttest measure to assess teacher efficacy within the domain of reading for all participants.

The research design of this study was a posttest-only, nonequivalent control group design. A pretest was not administered to avoid testing threat, where taking a test affects subsequent testing by increasing participants' performance as a result of their familiarity with the test items rather than any actual treatment.

The RTSES was disseminated via Survey Monkey™ correspondence to a sample of 54 preservice teachers in two separate teacher education programs at the end of their semester long internship in a public school K-6 classroom. Fifty-three participants responded for a response rate of 98.1%. Respondents were evenly distributed across the two programs represented—Elementary Education ($n=30$) and K-6 Teacher Education ($n=23$).

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data and determine if significant differences existed between the mean scores of Elementary Education and K-6 Teacher Education preservice teachers' overall RTSES scores, as well as individual item means for all 16 items. The alpha value for comparison was set at .05 with 95% as the confidence level.

Results

Independent sample *t* tests were conducted to compare reading teacher efficacy in Elementary Education and K-6 Teacher Education preservice teachers. Total scores from the RTSES revealed that there was not a statistically significant difference between Elementary Education majors' ($M = 132.83$, $SD = 12.23$) and K-6 Teacher Education majors' ($M = 131.96$, $SD = 12.45$) overall sense of reading teacher efficacy ($t(51) = .26$, $p = .80$).

Group mean scores from the 16 individual items were also compared (see Table 3) using independent-sample *t* tests. These analyses also yielded statistically non-significant results ($p > .05$). Together, these results suggest that differences within the two programs did not affect the preservice teachers' sense of reading teacher self-efficacy.

Discussion

Because differences in coursework and field

experiences within two distinct teacher preparation programs did not yield a significant difference in elementary preservice teachers' sense of reading teacher self-efficacy, the idea that multiple pathways can yield similar results is affirmed. This is yet another example of variation among programs not necessarily impacting quality. This same occurrence was noted by the International Reading Association (2003) when eight different programs all received excellent ratings in the six essential features for creating and sustaining preparation programs that produce teachers who teach reading well despite significant variations among the programs.

While Bandura's theory states that mastery experience is the most influential way to create high self-efficacy (1994), it is understandable that a limited amount of such an experience may not produce this desired effect but, in fact, result in the opposite. In this case, perhaps the increased time in classrooms allowed K-6 Teacher Education participants to more fully grasp the complexities involved in teaching reading, particularly in the area of special education. Thus, the increased experience teaching reading resulted in more realistic rather than higher perceptions of self-efficacy in the domain of reading. This finding is consistent with those of Haverback and Parault (2011), who found that elementary preservice teachers serving as reading tutors reported less change in reading self-efficacy than those simply completing classroom observations.

In addition, it should again be noted that although both programs were deemed rigorous by participants, the elementary program participants were focusing on meeting standards for one certification only, while K-6 program participants were meeting standards for both elementary and special education certification. A critical aspect to be considered was that, even with a significant increase in standards in the K-6 program, candidates were completing both programs in equivalent semester hours. The additional time in the field was implemented to help participants in the K-6 program have the opportunity to analyze the theory and apply it to practice. It is speculated, however, that the intense demands impacted their sense of efficacy, especially in the critical area of teaching reading.

An overly high sense of self-efficacy, though, may not necessarily be desirable for preservice teachers. Haverback and Parault (2011) speculate that it may be beneficial for preservice teachers to have a moderate level of self-efficacy which will result in a more realistic sense of what they will be able to accomplish as they begin their careers. As a result, they will also have a better understanding of what they still need to know. Teaching, particularly learning to teach reading, requires ongoing learning, which begs the question of whether any program of academic study can fully prepare novice teachers for this immense task. Rather, it may be postulated that teacher education programs should

focus on a beginning teacher's readiness to practice independently by providing them with the highest quality preparation program that focuses on meeting the needs of all students (Duncan, 2011).

Limitations

There are several limitations that should be considered when examining the results of this study. The primary limitation of this study was the limited sample size (n=54). A larger sample size would increase the precision of being able to generalize the findings to a larger population. Furthermore, the study site was likely not representational of all four-year colleges, as there are many variations among program characteristics at different institutions. Another limitation of the study is that program enrollment cannot be considered random selection, thus, limiting the generalizability of the study findings.

Future Research

Abbitt (2011) reminds us that "Although self-efficacy beliefs will influence decisions and behaviors, these self-efficacy beliefs are influenced by other characteristics and prior experience within a particular domain" (p. 136). Factors such as each participant's own experiences with learning to read and/or their children's learning to read experiences may influence their perceived efficacy in the domain of reading. Consequently, participants' personal attitudes towards reading in relation to their reading teaching efficacy would have provided additional insight.

As noted by Bordelon et al. (2012), preservice teachers might also benefit from students' perceptions of how efficacious they are, since feedback on efficacy from the recipients of their efforts would provide a deeper understanding of the student-teacher relationship, which exists at the very core of teaching and developing a sense of self-efficacy. Further, it is possible that preservice teachers' efficacy changes as they matriculate through their teacher education programs (Pendergast, Garvis, & Keogh, 2011) making an investigation of reading teacher self-efficacy at various program checkpoints additionally informative.

Conclusion

Despite acknowledged impact of teacher efficacy on student achievement (Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Graham, Harris, Fink, & MacArthur, 2001; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990), these findings are not necessarily generalizable to preservice teachers or across domains. Haverback (2009) cautions that high efficacy in preservice teachers does not necessarily yield the same positive impact that has been noted for inservice teachers. According to the International Reading Association (2000), it is the teacher's knowledge, rather than self-efficacy, that makes a difference in student achievement. The teacher's role in the reading process is to create experiences and environments that introduce, nurture, or extend students' abilities to engage with text. Accordingly, studies measuring both knowledge and efficacy are needed to determine the link between knowledge, efficacy, and

student achievement. Further investigation of the link between reading teacher efficacy and better reading teaching can only contribute to our growing understanding of what exactly constitutes effective reading teacher preparation.

Rebecca M. Giles is a Professor of Education at the University of South Alabama in Mobile, AL where she serves as coordinator for the K-6 Teacher Education (B.S.), Early Childhood Studies (B.S.), Elementary (M.Ed. and Ed.S.), and Early Childhood Education (M.Ed. and Ed.S.) programs. Dr. Giles has spoken and published widely on a variety of topics related to teacher preparation and early childhood education.

Andrea M. Kent is the Director of Field Services, and Professor of Literacy Education in the Department of Leadership and Teacher Education, College of Education at the University of South Alabama. Her research interests include literacy development in all content areas, mentoring and induction of new teachers, and meaningful technology integration.

Mary Hibberts is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Instructional Design at the University of South Alabama and an Instructional Systems Specialist at the Aviation Training Center for the U.S. Coast Guard. Her primary academic interests are mixed-methods research, statistics, and program evaluation.

References

- Abbitt, J. (2011). An investigation of the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs about technology integration and technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) among preservice teachers. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, 27(4), 134-143.
- Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachandran (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Human Behavior* (Vol. 4 pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Bordelon, T. D., Phillips, I., Parkison, P. T., Thomas, J., & Howell, C. (2012). Teacher efficacy: How teachers rate themselves and how students rate their teachers. *Action in Teacher Education*, 34, 14-25.
- Dembo, M. H., & Gibson, S. (1985). Teachers' sense of self-efficacy: An important factor in school improvement. *The Elementary School Journal*, 86, 173-184.
- Duncan, A. (2011). *Our future, our teachers. The Obama administration's plan for teacher education reform and improvement*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- Ebrahim, A. H. (2012). The self-efficacy of preservice elementary teachers in Kuwaiti science programs. *Education*, 133(1), 67-76.
- Gao, W. & Mager, G. (2011). Enhancing preservice teachers' sense of efficacy and attitudes toward school diversity through preparation: A case of one U.S. inclusive teacher education program. *International Journal of Special Education*, 26(2), 92-107.
- Gersten, R., Chard, D., & Baker, S. (2000). Factors enhancing sustained use of research-based instructional practices. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 33, 445-458.
- Gibson, S., & Dembo, M. H. (1984). Teacher efficacy: A construct validation. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76(4), 569-582.
- Graham, S., Harris, K. R., Fink, B., & MacArthur, C. A. (2001). Teacher efficacy in writing: A construct validation with primary grade teachers. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 5, 177-203.
- Gunning, A. M., & Mensah, F. M. (2011). Preservice elementary teachers' development of self-efficacy and confidence to teach science: A case study. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 22, 171-185
- Haverback, H. R. (2007). Preservice reading teachers as tutors: An examination of efficacy and content knowledge. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park).
- Haverback, H. R. (2009). Situating pre-service reading teachers as tutors: Implications of teacher self-efficacy on tutoring elementary students. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 17(3), 251-261.
- Haverback, H. R., & Parault, S. J. (2008). Pre-service reading teacher efficacy and tutoring: A review. *Educational Psychology Review*, 20(3), 237-255.
- Haverback, H. R., & Parault, S. J. (2011). High efficacy and the preservice reading teacher: A comparative study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27, 703-711.
- Henson, R. (2002). From adolescent angst to adulthood: Substantive implications and measurement dilemmas in the development of teacher efficacy research. *Educational Psychology*, 37(3), 137-150.
- Knoblauch, D. H., & Hoy, A. W. (2008). "Maybe I can teach those kids." The influence of contextual factors on student teachers' efficacy beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(1), 166-179.
- International Reading Association. (2000). *Excellent reading teachers: A position statement of the International Reading Association*. Newark, DE: Author.
- International Reading Association. (2003). *Standards for reading professionals—Revised 2003*. Newark, DE: Author.
- Lancaster, J., & Bain, A. (2010). The design of pre-service inclusive education courses and their effects on self-efficacy: A comparative study. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(2), 117-128.

- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Nierstheimer, S. L., Hopkins, C. J., Dillon, D. R., & Schmitt, M. C. (2000). Preservice teachers' shifting beliefs about struggling literacy learners. *Reading Research and Instruction, 40*(1), 1-16.
- Pendergast, D., Garvis, S., & Keogh, J. (2011). Pre-service student-teacher self-efficacy beliefs: An insight into the making of teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 36*(12), 46-57.
- Plourde, L. A. (2002). The influence of student teaching on preservice elementary teachers' science self-efficacy and outcome expectancy beliefs. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 29*(4), 245-253.
- Putman, S. M. (2012). Investigating teacher efficacy: Comparing preservice and inservice teachers with different levels of experience. *Action in Teacher Education, 34*(1), 26-40.
- Smith, M. (2012). Critical thinking: Essential skills to include in reading education courses. *The Reading Professor, 34*(1), 9-13.
- Sparks, G. M. (1988). Teachers' attitudes toward change and subsequent improvements in classroom teaching. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 80*, 111-117.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Hoy, A., & Hoy, K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research, 68*(2), 202-248.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Woolfolk-Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teacher and Teacher Education, 17*(7), 783-805.
- Woolfolk, A., & Hoy, W. (1990). Prospective teachers' senses of efficacy and beliefs about control. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*(1), 81-91.

Table 1 Course of Study by Program

Elementary Education		K-6 Education	
COURSE NAME	HOURS	COURSE NAME	HOURS
Professional Studies	28	Professional Studies	32
EDF 211 Clinical & Lab Exp. in Ed. Found.	0	EDU 302 Classroom Management II	1
EPY 251 Human Growth & Development	3	EDM 310 Microcomputing Systems in Ed.	3
EDM 310 Microcomputing Systems in Ed.	3	EDU 311 Partnerships in SPE	3
EDF 315 Education in a Diverse Society	3	EDU 312 Intellect and Physical Disabilities	3
EEC 345 Sequence Field Experience	1	EDF 315 Education 3in a Diverse Society	3
EEC 346 EEC School Program	3	EDU 345 Field Experience	1
SPE 400 Ed. for Exceptional Child. & Youth	3	EPY 351 Human Growth & Development	3
EEC 430 Student Teaching	9	EPY 355 Evaluation of Teaching & Learning	3
EPY 455 Evaluation of Teaching & Learning	3	EDU 430 K-6 Internship	6
		EDU 495 K-6 Internship SPE	6
Teaching Field	36	Teaching Field	32
PE 166 Movement, Rhythms, and Dev. Act.	3	EDU 300 Classroom Management I	1
HS 262 Personal Health	3	EDU 301 Arts in the Elementary School	3
EEC 300 Classroom Management	3	EDU 303 Field Experience SPE	1
AED 301 Art in the Elementary School	3	EDU 313 Learning & Behavior Disorders	3
MUE 301 Music for Elem. Classroom Teachers	3	EDU 330 Found. of Reading Instruction	3
RED 330 Found. of Reading Instruction	3	EDU 331 Teaching Reading	3
RED 331 Teaching Reading	3	EDU 335 Teaching Mathematics	3
EEC 332 Teaching Language Arts	3	EDU 336 Teaching Social Studies	3
RED 333 Literature for Children	3	EDU 337 Teaching Science	3
EEC 335 Teaching Mathematics	3	EDU 346 K-6n Education	3
EEC 336 Teaching Social Studies	3	EDU 362 Behavior Management	3
EEC 337 Teaching Science	3	HS 365 HPE Curr/Methods-Elem. Teachers	3
Total	128	Total	128

Table 2 Description of Field Experiences by Program

Program	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3		Semester 4	
	Hours	Type	Hours	Type	Hours	Type	Hours	Type
Elementary Education	10	vicarious	75	vicarious	150	vicarious/mastery	525	mastery
K-6 Teacher Education	20	vicarious	200	vicarious/mastery	250	mastery	525	mastery

Table 3 Reading Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale Means for Preservice Teacher Groups

RTSES Items (abbreviated)	Elementary Education		K-6 Teacher Education		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
1. Help students think critically while reading	8.53	0.68	8.26	1.00	0.26	51
2. Motivate students who show low interest in reading	8.23	0.86	8.39	0.94	1.17	51
3. Get students to believe they can do well in reading	8.50	0.78	8.52	0.79	0.64	51
4. Respond to difficult questions from students about reading	8.17	1.01	8.30	0.88	0.10	51
5. Help students value reading	8.30	1.02	8.43	0.79	0.52	51
6. Help to gauge student comprehension of reading skills you have taught	8.37	0.89	8.43	0.73	0.52	51
7. Craft good reading questions for your students	8.30	0.92	8.26	0.96	0.30	51
8. Foster student creativity while reading	8.47	0.73	8.35	0.83	0.15	51
9. Improve the understanding of a student who is failing reading	8.10	1.14	7.91	1.31	0.31	51
10. Adjust your reading lessons to the proper level for individual students	8.30	0.88	8.22	0.90	0.67	51
11. Use a variety of reading assessment strategies	8.40	0.81	8.57	0.84	0.99	51
12. Provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused about reading	8.40	0.86	8.22	1.09	0.53	51
13. Assist families in helping their children do well in reading	8.07	1.23	7.74	1.36	0.54	51
14. Implement alternative reading strategies in your classroom	8.20	0.87	8.04	1.15	0.72	51
15. Provide appropriate challenges for very capable readers	8.47	0.73	8.35	1.02	0.84	51
16. Get through to the most difficult students in reading	8.07	0.98	7.96	1.10	0.26	51
RTSES Total	132.8	12.23	131.9	12.4	0.45	51

Note. All *t* test statistics were not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Reading Assessments for Screening/Placement, Diagnosis, and Summative/Outcomes: What Are Schools Using?

JULIE JACKSON ALBEE, JILL MAYES ARNOLD, LARINEE DENNIS,
B. JANE SCHAFER, and SARAH OLSON,
Hannibal-LaGrange University, Hannibal, Missouri

With the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2001), the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) that authorizes Response to Intervention (RtI), and more recently the adoption of the Common Core State Standards by 45 states (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2011), a focus on reading assessment has increased. Schools are required to follow the mandates of NCLB and IDEA due to the link between federal funds and student performance. To meet the challenges of these federal mandates, schools of education need to know what reading assessments are currently used in order to prepare preservice teachers to administer assessments with the goal of improving reading performance.

Review of the Literature

The results of the “2012 What’s Hot and What’s Not Literacy Survey” (Cassidy & Loveless, 2011) revealed that reading assessment and remediation are at the forefront of today’s educational concerns. Programs of teacher education need to intentionally prepare future teachers to meet this challenge. According to Merkley, Duffelmeyer, Beed, Jensen and Bobys (2007), “Supporting all children’s reading needs within the core curriculum requires extending and refining teachers’ knowledge of literacy instruction and monitoring. Additional preparation in diagnostic teaching and classroom assessment are of paramount importance in teacher education programs at the preservice level” (p. 464). In teacher education programs, understanding assessment purposes should be as seriously emphasized as instructional proficiency (Popham, 2011). Good and Kaminski (2002) defined four different reading assessment purposes: screening, diagnosis, progress monitoring and outcomes. Numerous reading assessments are used to meet each of these four purposes. However, the ultimate purpose of the selection and use of any reading assessment should be based on “whether it helps students” (Farr, 1992, p. 28). Instructional change in response to test results is the goal. Educators “face a formidable task of finding appropriate tools, obtaining them, and then adapting the assessments to their own purposes and students” according to the results of four surveys conducted by the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) (Paris & Hoffman, 2004, p. 205). Paris and Hoffman also noted, “This research, as well as studies outside the immediate CIERA network, points to the need for continuing study of assessment in early literacy” (2004, p. 214). This study addresses that need by gathering data on current literacy assessment practices, based on

three purposes—screening, diagnosis, and summative/outcome—to inform teacher education programs. Before taking a look at current practices, it is important to examine reading assessment in the past.

Reading assessments have changed significantly in the past twenty-five years. Stahlman and Pearson (1990), early reading assessment researchers, examined 20 commercial formal measures of early literacy and found they were primarily group-administered, time-consuming, and focused on identification of skills rather than the production of skills. Meisels and Piker (2000) studied 89 informal curriculum-embedded K-3 reading assessments and found that these assessments were more often individually administered and required the production of oral and written responses. They reported that most of the informal assessments were developed between 1989 and 1999.

A select group of schools was surveyed by Paris, Paris, and Carpenter (2002), who studied the reading assessments used in K-3 classrooms to identify the frequency of use. Teachers in this study rated the following types of assessments according to their impact on student motivation and student production of skills: performance, teacher-designed, word attack/word meaning, fluency and understanding, commercial, and standardized. When teachers had a voice in selecting the assessment, they perceived it was more beneficial to students’ learning than high-stakes assessments over which they had no voice. Teachers rated the assessments over which they participated in selection as more beneficial to students’ learning than high-stakes assessments over which they had no control. Burke and Wang (2010) surveyed reading assessment techniques used by reading teachers in grades 3-5 in five school districts in the Mississippi Delta. Their research revealed that “daily observations of students was the most frequently reported technique used, followed by questioning techniques, pencil and paper tests, performance assessments and writing” (Burke & Wang, 2010, p. 661). These studies also revealed a significant shift from group-administered to individually-administered assessments.

Stakeholders—states, school boards, administrators, parents, teachers, students, and the general public—have varying expectations for student achievement. Not all stakeholders have a realistic understanding of the variance in students’ capabilities and background knowledge that significantly impacts students’ ability to learn and perform on tests. With an increase in the amount of mandated

testing and the wide variety of reading assessments available, educators must make strategic decisions in order to obtain helpful information about students' performance. Determining "who needs information about reading, what kind of information is needed, and when it is needed" (Farr, 1992, p. 28) is essential in planning assessment and appropriate instruction. Selecting from the broad variety of reading assessments available for use in elementary schools is a daunting task. A primary purpose of this survey was to determine what reading assessments are used across the United States for screening/placement, diagnosis and summative/outcomes, at the kindergarten, primary, and intermediate levels, in order to inform the reading curriculum of teacher education programs.

Research Questions

This article addresses four research questions that were answered in the survey: 1) What screening/placement reading assessments are currently used, and what are their corresponding levels of satisfaction? 2) What diagnostic reading assessments are currently used, and what are their corresponding levels of satisfaction? 3) What key outcome/summative assessments are currently used, and what are their corresponding levels of satisfaction? 4) How effectively do reading assessments meet specified needs?, and 5) How are reading assessments primarily determined in schools?

Methodology

Prior to conducting the study, institutional financial support was secured to purchase the mailing list, survey materials, and postage; then permission was granted from the university's Institutional Review Board. The Reading Assessment and Remediation Survey was mailed to a random sample of 1,000 principals, drawn from 22,027 members of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), representing elementary school leaders across the nation. The principals' names were obtained from a computer-generated mailing list of 1,500 random names of NAESP active members purchased from Rickard List Marketing. One hundred ninety-seven names on the list were deleted due to no accompanying school identification. An additional 303 names were omitted using a prescribed pattern of every third then every fourth name, alternating, until 1,000 names remained. Each of the 1,000 participants was mailed a survey packet containing three parts: a cover sheet with directions requesting demographic information and explaining that the survey could be completed in either online or paper/pencil version, a survey, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Nine surveys were returned as undeliverable.

Description of Participants

In fall 2010, 85 participants completed the paper version of the survey and 17 completed the online version, for a total of 102 surveys. In spring 2011, a follow-up reminder email was sent to 544 participants whose school email addresses could be determined. The follow-up email included a link to the survey that could be completed

online, if it was not returned earlier. Nineteen additional online surveys (3.4%) were completed, bringing the total surveys completed to 121 (85 paper and pencil, 36 online) or 12.2% (121 out of 991) return rate.

Although the return rate was considerably lower than desired, postmarks on 85 paper surveys and online response of 19 spring 2011 surveys showed that respondents represented schools in 34 of the 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia. All geographic regions of the United States, including Hawaii and Alaska, were represented in this study. State representation was not possible to determine for the 17 fall 2010 online surveys, so it is probable that responses represented more than 34 states.

Of the 121 returned surveys, 119 included the requested demographic information, although ten surveys did not contain responses to at least one item. Principals (80.4%), reading/literacy coaches (6.3%), and Title I teachers (4.5%) were the primary survey respondents reporting a range of 7 to 46 years in the field of education, a mode of 30 years (8.8%), and a median of 25 years of experience. The majority, 83.1%, possessed masters or specialist degrees and 11.6% had earned doctorates. Districts ranged in size from 1 to 65 elementary schools.

Respondents from schools with more than 300 students comprised 74.8% of participants while 3.5% were from schools with fewer than 100 students. A majority of respondents was from rural districts (50.9%), followed by suburban (36.6%), and urban (12.5%). The number of school districts on the U.S. Census 2010 as reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics (United States Department of Education, 2011), is 36.5% town/rural districts, 34.4% suburban districts, and 29.0% city/urban districts. The percentage of survey respondents followed a similar pattern—more responses from town/rural, followed by suburban, and fewer from city-urban districts, but the proportion of responses over-represented rural districts and under-represented urban districts.

Survey Instrument Development

To query principals or building literacy leaders about the current state of reading assessment and remediation, a survey instrument was sought. After a review of the literature, no survey instrument was located that completely addressed the previously listed research questions. Therefore, an instrument was created to collect the desired data. For validation purposes, the instrument was reviewed by literacy experts at two universities, by three elementary principals, and by one retired school superintendent. Feedback from these reviewers, such as content, clarity, spacing, formatting, placement of definitions, and Survey Monkey option, was used to simplify and revise the survey instrument. In fall 2010, a pilot group of elementary principals in a regional principals' association completed and critiqued the instrument. Additional revisions were made to the instrument based on their feedback, such as omitting a few open-ended questions. The final survey was a 21-item, semi-structured instrument to measure reading assessment

and remediation in elementary schools.

The three parts of the Reading Assessment and Remediation Survey contained a variety of question types: a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Highly Dissatisfied), categorical, single response, ordered response, listing, rating and open-ended. This article reports two portions of the survey, including identification of reading assessments used for the purposes of screening, diagnosis, and outcomes (Good & Kaminiski, 2002) as well as general information. In the Reading Assessments portion, respondents listed the reading assessments used for different purposes, the grade level where the assessments were used, and the degree of satisfaction with the assessment. For example: “What key screening or placement reading assessment/instrument is given to kindergarten students? What is the degree of satisfaction with this instrument?” In the General Information portion, respondents replied to prompts, such as, “The reading assessments used in our school provide adequate information to monitor our students’ literacy program.”

Data Analysis

The researchers were primarily interested in establishing the existence and frequency of use of specific assessments, techniques, and actions, so the analysis involved quantifying and tallying the presence of each listed item and determining percentages. Predictive Analysis Software (PASW), Statistics 18, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, was used for the statistical analysis. The data recorded in each survey item was coded for analysis by PASW. A number was assigned to each response. The list of assessments was condensed to group similar responses (i.e. all state reading assessments were listed in one category). Descriptive statistics were used to report items with a specific, a/priori response option and to answer each research question.

Survey Results and Discussion

The survey results organized by research question are presented in this section. A discussion follows each question’s results. The categories in this section are: screening/placement, diagnostic, and outcomes reading assessments.

Screening/Placement Reading Assessment

The first research question asked, “What screening/

placement reading assessments are currently used in your school, and what are their corresponding levels of satisfaction?” Respondents listed one or two screening/placement assessments for kindergarten, primary, and intermediate students along with the corresponding level of satisfaction for each: 4) Highly Satisfied, 3) Satisfied, 2) Dissatisfied, and 1) Highly Dissatisfied.

Kindergarten Screening/Placement Reading Assessments. Survey respondents listed twenty-seven assessments or categories of assessments that are used in screening or placement of kindergarten students. Table 1 shows seven assessments that each received 5.0% or more of the responses.

Table 1: *Most Frequently Listed Kindergarten Screening/Placement Reading Assessments and Level of Satisfaction*

Category Number	Kindergarten Screening/Placement Assessments	Frequency	Percent	Average Level of Satisfaction (4 = Highly Satisfied, 1 = Highly Dissatisfied)
#1	DIBELS	51	28.2%	3.36
#4	*Leveled Benchmark Passages	30	16.6%	3.26
#10	*Early Literacy Assessments	21	12.0%	3.44
#2	*District Developed Assessments	14	7.7%	3.31
#3	*CORE/Basal Assessments	10	5.5%	3.33
#16	*Northwest Eval. Assoc. Tests	10	5.5%	3.0
#7	AIMSweb	9	5.0%	3.33
Other	20 assessments	5 or fewer	19.5%	

Note. A total of 181 responses were reported by 115 respondents; multiple responses were common. *Category of assessments: full listing in Appendix A

The assessment listed by 51 schools (28.2%) for screening/placement of kindergarten students was Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Building-level literacy leaders’ average level of satisfaction with DIBELS was 3.36, between Highly Satisfied (4) and Satisfied (3). The Leveled Benchmark Assessments category, including the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA, DRA2), Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), leveled literacy passages, and Rigby Leveled Books, was used by 30 (16.6%) respondents. The average level of satisfaction with Leveled Benchmark Assessments was 3.26, slightly further from Highly Satisfied than DIBELS’ rating. The Early Literacy Assessment category included a variety of concepts of print, letter and sound recognition, phonemic awareness, and phonics assessments (see Appendix A for full listing of assessments in categories)

Table 2: *Most Frequently Listed Primary Screening/Placement Reading Assessments and Level of Satisfaction*

Category Number	Primary Grades Screening/Placement Assessments	Frequency	Percent	Average Level of Satisfaction (4 = Highly Satisfied, 1 = Highly Dissatisfied)
#1	DIBELS	59	29.4%	3.26
#4	*Leveled Benchmark Passages	42	20.9%	3.39
#16	Northwest Eval. Assoc. Tests	16	8.0%	3.29
#3	*CORE/Basal Assessments	15	7.5%	3.36
#7	AIMSweb	13	6.5%	3.36
Other	23 assessments	10 or fewer	28.0%	

Note. A total of 201 responses were reported by 117 respondents; multiple responses were common. Other: less than 5.0% frequency *Category of assessments: full listing in Appendix A

and had the highest level of satisfaction (3.44). Twenty-one building-level literacy leaders, 12.0%, reported use of Early Literacy Assessments while District Developed Assessments were used by 14 schools or 7.7% of respondents. CORE/Basal Assessments (see full listing in Appendix A) and Northwest Evaluation Association Tests (NWEA, MWEA, MAP, and MAP-PGA) were both used in 10 (5.5%) schools, while AIMSweb was used in 9 (5%) schools. These seven assessments or categories accounted for 145 of the 181 (80.5%) responses.

Primary Screening or Placement Reading Assessments. Screening/ placement assessments given to primary students, and the level of satisfaction for each assessment were listed next by school building-level literacy leaders (see Table 2).

The two most frequently listed screening/ placement assessments for primary students were in the same order as the most frequently used kindergarten assessments—DIBELS (59 schools, 29.4%) and Leveled Benchmark Passages (42 schools, 20.9%). The average level of satisfaction with Leveled Benchmark

Passages was closer to Highly Satisfied at 3.39 than DIBELS's average level of satisfaction at 3.26. Sixteen literacy leaders (8.0%) listed tests from Northwest Evaluation Association, 15 (7.5%) listed CORE/Basal Assessments, and 13 (6.5%) listed AIMSweb. When compared with the kindergarten assessments, the CORE/Basal Assessments and AIMSweb were used with more frequency with primary students.

Intermediate Screening/ Placement Reading Assessments. Twenty-seven screening/ placement assessments or categories of assessments used with students in the intermediate grades were listed. Table 3 contains 8 assessments or assessment categories that were most frequently listed.

Although the same two assessments, Leveled Benchmark Passages in 27 schools (17.4%) and DIBELS in 26 schools (16.8%), were most frequently listed, their order was reversed from kindergarten and primary

Table 3: *Most Frequently Listed Intermediate Screening/Placement Reading Assessments and Level of Satisfaction*

Category Number	Intermediate Grades Screening/Placement Assessments	Frequency	Percent	Average Level of Satisfaction (4 = Highly Satisfied, 1 = Highly Dissatisfied)
#4	*Leveled Benchmark Passages	27	17.4%	3.22
#1	DIBELS	26	16.8%	3.32
#16	Northwest Eval. Association Tests	16	10.3%	3.38
#3	*CORE/Basal Assessments	13	8.4%	2.62
#19	*Informal Reading Inventories	11	7.1%	3.00
#6	*State Tests	10	6.5%	2.90
#8	STAR	9	5.8%	3.25
#7	AIMSweb	8	5.2%	3.17
Other	19 assessments	7 or fewer	22.5%	

Note. A total of 155 responses were reported by 118 respondents; multiple responses were common. Other: less than 5.0% frequency; *Category of assessments: full listing in Appendix A

Table 4: *Most Frequently Listed Diagnostic Reading Assessments and Level of Satisfaction*

Category Number	Diagnostic Reading Assessment	Frequency	Percent	Average Level of Satisfaction (4 = Highly Satisfied, 1 = Highly Dissatisfied)
#4	*Leveled Benchmark Passages	28	18.9%	3.52
#1	DIBELS	14	9.5%	3.35
#6	*State Tests	13	8.8%	2.64
#3	*CORE/Basal Assessments	12	8.1%	3.11
#7	AIMSweb	12	8.1%	3.67
#16	*Northwest Eval. Assoc. Tests	9	6.1%	2.00
Other	31 assessments	7 or fewer	40.5%	

are their corresponding levels of satisfaction?” the researchers found that thirty-seven assessments or categories of assessments were listed. School building-level literacy leaders listed up to three key diagnostic reading assessments along with the corresponding level of satisfaction for each assessment. Table 4 summarizes the diagnostic reading assessments.

The most frequently listed diagnostic assessments were Leveled Benchmark Passages, used in 28 schools (18.9%). DIBELS had the second most frequent usage, in 14 schools (9.5%). State Tests were listed third (13 schools, 8.8%) while both CORE/Basal Assessments and AIMSweb tied in fourth position with 12 schools (8.1%). Northwest Evaluation Association Tests, used in 9 schools (6.1%), was the sixth most frequently listed diagnostic

Note. A total of 148 responses were reported by 114 respondents; multiple responses were common. Other: less than 5.0% frequency *Category of assessments: full listing in Appendix A

grades’ screening/placement tests. Northwest Evaluation Association Tests (NWEA), used in 16 schools (10.3%), was the third most frequently used primary and intermediate assessment, moving up from sixth place on the kindergarten assessment list. CORE/Basal Assessments (13 schools, 8.4%) and AIMSweb (8 schools, 5.2%) also appeared on all three lists. Informal Reading Inventories (11 schools, 7.1%), State Tests (10 schools, 6.5%), and the Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading–STAR (9 schools, 5.87%) appeared only on the intermediate grades screening/placement list. The State Tests category was defined as tests required by particular states that were not specifically early literacy assessments. The top eight intermediate assessments combined accounted for 120 (77.4%) of the responses. The highest average level of satisfaction (3.38) was awarded to NWEA while the lowest level of satisfaction (2.62) was given to CORE/Basal Assessments.

Diagnostic Reading Assessments

In response to the next research question, “What diagnostic reading assessments are currently used, and what

assessment. Based on average level of satisfaction where “Highly Satisfied” earned a rating of 4.0, AIMSweb was rated the most positively (3.67), followed by Leveled Benchmark Passages (3.52). The extreme variety of assessments listed in this category is evidenced by thirty-one assessments that were listed seven times or less, while the top six assessments were listed by a total of

Table 5: *Most Frequently Listed Outcome/Summative Literacy Assessments and Level of Satisfaction*

Category Number	Outcome/Summative Assessment	Frequency	Percent	Average Level of Satisfaction (4 = Highly Satisfied, 1 = Highly Dissatisfied)
#6	*State Tests	59	43.4%	2.74
#1	DIBELS	12	8.8%	3.44
#16	Northwest Eval. Assoc. Tests	12	8.8%	3.33
#3	*CORE/Basal Assessments	11	8.1%	3.11
#4	*Leveled Benchmark Passages	9	6.6%	3.25
Other	20 assessments	6 or fewer	24.3%	

Note. A total of 136 responses were reported by 112 respondents; multiple responses were common. Other: less than 5.0% frequency *Category of assessments: full listing in Appendix A

59.5% of the respondents. Twenty-nine of the thirty-one “other” assessments were listed by one or two building-level literacy leaders.

Outcome/Summative Reading Assessments

“What key reading outcome/summative assessments are currently used and what are their corresponding levels of satisfaction?” was asked next. Survey respondents listed up to two outcome/summative reading assessments (see Table 5).

While state tests were overwhelmingly the most frequent outcome/summative assessments, listed by 43.4% of respondents, their average level of satisfaction (2.74) fell between “Satisfied” and “Dissatisfied” (see Table 5). The other four assessments, DIBELS, Northwest Evaluation Association Tests, CORE/basal and Leveled Benchmark Assessments combined were not listed as frequently as State Tests, yet all had significantly higher levels of satisfaction.

Reading Assessment Selection and Perceived Efficacy of Use

Six statements included in the survey were specifically targeted to answer how effectively reading assessments meet specified needs. Respondents’ ratings provided insight into reading assessment and remediation in the surveyed schools. Table 6 contains the analysis for these statements.

Table 6: *General Statements Related to Reading Assessment and Remediation*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The reading assessments in our school provide adequate information to monitor students’ literacy progress.	47.9% (58/121)	44.6% (54/121)	6.6% (8/121)	0.8% (1/121)	0.0% (0/121)
2. The reading assessments in our school provide adequate information to diagnose students’ literacy weaknesses.	36.4% (44/121)	52.1% (63/121)	10.7% (13/121)	0.8% (1/121)	0.0% (0/121)
3. Personnel in our school have expertise in diagnosing reading problems.	24.0% (29/121)	57.9% (70/121)	16.5% (20/121)	1.7% (2/121)	0.0% (0/121)
4. Personnel in our school have expertise in remediation of reading problems.	24.8% (30/121)	60.3% (73/121)	11.6% (14/121)	2.5% (3/121)	0.8% (1/121)
5. Teachers effectively use common assessments to monitor and remediate students’ reading skills.	21.5% (26/121)	62.8% (76/121)	14.9% (18/121)	0.8% (1/121)	0.0% (0/121)
6. In the last two years, the amount of time spent in reading assessment has negatively impacted the time for reading instruction.	2.5 % (3/121)	16.5% (20/121)	65.3% (79/121)	15.7% (19/121)	0.0% (0/121)

Note. 4—Strongly Agree, 3—Agree, 2—Disagree, 1—Strongly Disagree

Statement one rated how strongly the reading assessments provided adequate information for progress monitoring. Results indicate a very strong majority of respondents, 92.5% (see Table 6), either agree or strongly agree that the reading assessments used provide adequate information to monitor literacy progress. This is the only statement for which “strongly agree” was the highest response. Moving beyond the ability of the assessments to progress monitor, the adequacy of reading assessments to provide information to diagnose reading weaknesses was rated. Once again, a clear majority, 88.5% of those surveyed, agree or strongly agree that their schools’ reading assessments meet this need; however, the results indicate less confidence in the ability of reading assessments to provide information to adequately diagnosis reading problems than to progress monitor.

The perceived competence of school personnel to diagnose reading problems was also rated. Results of the survey (see Table 6) indicate 81.9% agree or strongly agree that school personnel have expertise in diagnosing reading problems. This result is 6.6% lower than confidence that reading assessments provide adequate information to diagnose reading weaknesses. School literacy leaders surveyed have more confidence in the assessments’ ability to provide adequate information, than in their personnel’s expertise to diagnose literacy weaknesses or reading problems. The statement following diagnosis of the

literacy problem was related to school personnel’s expertise in remediation. Building-level literacy leaders showed slightly higher confidence in the ability of school personnel to remediate than to diagnose reading problems. The term “school personnel” in the previous two questions was not specifically defined in the survey because those involved in reading assessment and remediation vary by school district.

Common assessments were relatively new in schools, so teachers’ efficacy in using these tools to monitor and remediate students’ reading skills was surveyed. Strongly agreeing or agreeing that common assessments were effectively used by teachers to monitor and remediate reading skills was reported by 84.3% (see Table 6). Second to school personnel having expertise in diagnosing reading problems, the effective use of common assessments received the most

Table 7: Reading Assessments Are Primarily Determined at What Level?

State	District	Building	Grade	Classroom Teacher	No Response
5.0%	46.2%	40.5%	2.5%	4.1%	1.7%
(6/121)	(56/121)	(49/121)	(3/121)	(5/121)	(2/121)

Note. 5—most influence to 1—least influence

disagree or strongly disagree responses (18.2% and 15.7%, respectively), with the exception of item #6 with reversed responses.

Since the number of reading assessments used in today’s classrooms is on the increase, the last statement in this section asked literacy leaders to rate if the time spent assessing students negatively impacts the time for instruction. The results show that reading assessment is considered a valuable component as 81.0% of the building-level literacy leaders did not perceive that it negatively impacts the time for instruction. Considering the amount of testing that happens in today’s classrooms, this result is very surprising! The researchers wonder if literacy leaders perceive that effective reading assessments actually increase learning, rather than detract from instructional time, because teaching is more targeted to students’ specific needs. Teachers’ perspective may vary significantly on this issue. The reverse scale on this item validates that participants read each survey question and did not follow a pattern of rating all statements similarly.

The final question revealed whether reading assessments were determined at the state, district, building, grade, or classroom level (see Table 7).

Based upon the results, it is clear that decisions concerning reading assessments in surveyed schools primarily take place at the district (46.2%) and building (40.5%) levels. Based on the demographic information gathered, consistency of reading assessments throughout districts was reported by 79.8%. Therefore, the results in this survey are representative of numerous additional schools in the districts of the surveyed schools.

Limitations and Recommendations

In survey and questionnaire research, inaccurate perceptions, erroneous question interpretations, and the population researched are potential limitations (Mrug, 2010). To sample a cross-section of elementary school literacy leaders across the United States, a sample of NAESP principals’ names was purchased that represented the organization’s total membership. To belong to NAESP, membership dues are required, therefore limiting this study to paying members of NAESP. This may have led to sample bias. A second consideration is that respondents to the survey were to rate level of satisfaction of the assessments their elementary schools used in the classroom. Perception of these assessments may be understood differently by each respondent. Third, the response rate in this survey was low, but it is similar to other studies where principals were surveyed (Petzko, 2008;

Reynolds, 2009). The results from this study cannot be generalized to all United States elementary principals’ perceptions and use of reading assessment and intervention strategies, but the results can be generalized to active members in NAESP’s membership. Another limitation is that qualitative data was not solicited on these survey questions. Future research should be conducted on what reading assessments are used in all 50 states and might include more opportunities for qualitative information from participants. A larger number of participants and a more representative sample from the three types of school districts are desired. Monitoring the emergence of computer-based and online assessments is another area of further research. This survey is currently being replicated with responses from classroom teachers in the same buildings as the initial survey, so their perspectives on assessment can be compared.

Anonymous surveys protect respondents in the study, but also limit the possibility of follow-up with respondents. Further research should be conducted that allows follow-up with participants on their use of reading assessments. This research would be vital in explaining what assessments continue to be used in schools and how reading assessment selection changes over time.

Summary and Conclusions

Overall, elementary school literacy leaders show confidence in three areas: 1) the reading assessments used in their schools provide adequate information to monitor students’ literacy progress, 2) the reading assessments provide sufficient information to diagnose students’ weaknesses, and 3) that school personnel have expertise in diagnosing and remediating reading problems. Strong district- and building-level involvement in the determination of reading assessments may promote satisfaction and ownership from school personnel administering the assessments. The value placed on reading assessment is shown by the perception that the time spent giving assessments does not negatively impact time for reading instruction.

An additional purpose of the survey was to identify which specific reading assessments are used for what purposes in schools across the United States. The results show that DIBELS, Leveled Benchmark Assessments, CORE/Basal Assessments, AIMSweb, and Northwest Evaluation Association Tests are used for a variety of reading assessment purposes. State Tests are predominantly used as outcome/summative assessment measures and have the lowest level of satisfaction. Several standardized reading

and achievement tests (STAR, Gates-MacGinitie, SDRT, SAT 10, WIAT III, etc.) were also listed (see Appendix A), although they were not in the top 5% in any category. An emerging trend of computer-based and online assessments and assessment systems was noted (see Appendix A): AIMSweb, Northwest Evaluation Association tests, SRI, SOARS, YPP, Accelerated Reader, DORA, ESGI, etc. This demonstrates a need for preservice teachers to become familiar with these types of assessments. Overall, building-level literacy leaders are satisfied with the assessments used in their schools, with the exception of State Tests.

Based on frequency, DIBELS, initially tied to federal mandates for Reading First grants, was the most used assessment. It was listed most frequently as a screening/ placement assessment for kindergarten and primary grades and it was the second most frequently cited for screening/ placement in the intermediate grades. For diagnostic and outcomes/summative assessment, DIBELS was the second most widely used instrument overall. This study supports the wide use of DIBELS, as reported by Goodman (2006) who found that in 8293 schools, over 1.7 million K-3 students, used DIBELS during 2004-2005. Although this survey revealed that some schools use DIBELS for all assessment purposes, it is important to note "no single assessment can serve all the audiences in need of educational performance information" (Farr, 1992, p. 30). Survey results may assist elementary principals in the selection of other frequently used assessments for their schools.

Preservice teachers need training to administer and interpret reading assessments. Selecting which assessments future teachers must be prepared to use is a challenge for reading professors who need to insure that students are prepared to administer reading assessments for different purposes. Hopefully, the results of this survey will assist education professors by identifying the reading assessments that are frequently used in elementary schools across the nation, as well as the level of satisfaction associated with each assessment choice. Based on the findings in this survey, training in the use of computer-based and online assessments and management systems needs to be included in the reading curriculum of early childhood and elementary education programs.

It is crucial that professors of reading are cognizant of the assessments currently used in today's classrooms so they can prepare future teachers to be competent in using assessment instruments to diagnose reading problems. However, assessments should be chosen by experts who know the strengths and weaknesses of each instrument. That duality defines the role of reading professors who prepare students for today's testing environment while educating current and future leaders to make wise choices in the area of selection and use of literacy assessments. Our goal is to prepare students for today's testing environment, while preparing them to influence the future selection of literacy assessments.

Julie Jackson Albee, PhD, Professor of Education

at Hannibal-LaGrange University in Hannibal, Missouri (jalbee@hlg.edu). Research interests include: literacy assessment and remediation, teacher education and supervision, and brain-compatible teaching strategies.

Jill Arnold, EdD, Associate Professor of Education and Director of Online Programs at Hannibal-LaGrange University in Hannibal, Missouri (Jarnold@hlg.edu). Research interests include: early literacy practices, assessment in early childhood and elementary education, and online education.

Larinee Dennis is an Assistant Professor at Hannibal-LaGrange University in Hannibal, Missouri (ldennis@hlg.edu). Her current research interests focus on effective educational technology integration and literacy.

Jane Schafer, PhD, Professor of Education, Director of Teacher Education and Graduate Studies at Hannibal-LaGrange University in Hannibal, Missouri (bscha@hlg.edu). Research interests include teacher education, literacy, and early childhood education.

References

- Burke, G., & Wang, Y. (2010). Methods and uses of classroom assessments employed in teaching grades three through five in five school districts in the Mississippi Delta. *Education, 130*(4), 657-665.
- Cassidy, J., & Loveless, D. J. (2011). Taking our pulse in a time of uncertainty: Results of the 2012 What's Hot, What's Not Literacy Survey. *Reading Today, 29*(2), 16-21.
- Common Core Standards Initiative. (2011). In the states. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>
- Farr, R. (1992). Putting it all together: Solving the reading assessment puzzle. *The Reading Teacher 46*(1), 26-37.
- Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds). (2002). *Dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills (6th ed.)*. Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Retrieved from <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>
- Goodman, K. S., (Ed). (2006). *The truth about DIBELS: What it is, what it does*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 (2004).
- Meisels, S. J., & Piker, R. A. (2000). Analysis of early literacy assessments used for instruction. (Technical Report, No. 2013). Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.
- Merkely, D., Duffelmeyer, F., Beed, P., Jensen, S., & Bobys, A. (2007). Using the R2D2 model for creating collaboration among practicing teachers and preservice teachers during reading assessment preparation at four universities. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, 15*(4), 463-482.
- Mrug, S. (2010). *Encyclopedia of research design* (Vol.3). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- National Association of Elementary School Principals. (2011). About NAESP. Retrieved from <http://www.naesp.org/about-naesp-2>
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 20 U.S.C. § 6319 (2008).
- Paris, S., & Hoffman, J. (2004). Reading assessments in kindergarten through third grade: Findings from the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement. *Elementary School Journal* 105(2), 199-217.
- Paris, S. G., Paris, A. H., & Carpenter, R. D. (2002). Effective practices for assessing young readers. In B. Taylor & P.D. Pearson (Eds.), *Teaching reading: Effective schools, accomplished teachers* (pp. 141-160). Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum.
- Paris, S. G., Paris, A. H., & Carpenter, R. D. (2001). Effective practices for assessing young readers. Findings from the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (Report No. 3-013). Ann Arbor, University of Michigan.
- Petzko, V. (2008). The perceptions of new principals regarding the knowledge and skills important to their initial success. *NASSP Bulletin* 92(3), 224-250.
- Popham, W. J. (2011). Assessment literacy overlooked: A teacher educator's confession, *The Teacher Educator*, 46(4), 265-273.
- Reynolds, A. (2009). Elementary school principals' knowledge and perceptions of research-based substance abuse and violence prevention programs. Ed.D. dissertation, University of the Pacific, United States -- California. Retrieved February 17, 2012, from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text.(Publication No. AAT 3356560).
- Stahlman, A. C., & Pearson, P. D. (1990). Formal measures of early literacy. In L. M. Morrow & J. K. Smith (Eds.) *Assessment for instruction in early literacy* (pp. 7-11). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- United States Department of Education. (2011). *Numbers and types of public elementary and secondary schools from the Common Core of Data: School Year 2009–10 first look*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Education.
- Baseline, CORE unit, Section Tests, CORE reading assessment, Book tests, Treasures Placement Test, Corporation grade level assessment
4. Leveled Benchmark Assessments - category
 - Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), DRA-2; Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), leveled reading passages; Rigby Leveled Books; benchmark assessments; Kilgore
 5. Raz-Kids
 6. State Tests - category
 - WA State Test (MSP), MAP (Missouri Assessment Program), NJ ASK, NJ PASS, PAWS, MCAS
 - NECAP (New England Common Assessment Program) (Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire), PASS (Utah State Reading Assessment), MEAP (Michigan Education Assessment Program),
 - MSP (Measurements of Student Progress –Washington State Assessment), PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment), NDSA (North Dakota State Assessment), State Assessment,
 - MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System), ITBS-Iowa Test of Basic Skills
 - CMT-Connecticut Mastery Test, Maryland School Assessment, CSAP (Colorado State Assessment Program), Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Achievement tests)
 7. AIMSweb (assessment system)
 8. STAR (Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading)
 9. Curriculum Based Measures (CBM)
 10. Early Literacy Assessments – category
 - Early Literacy, Kindergarten Inventory of Skills, Concepts of Print, Observation Survey, Early Screening Inventory (ESI), Marie Clay's, PLSS (Pre-Literacy Skills Screening), Emerging Literacy Survey, Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP); Phonological/Graphophonics Assessment, Letter ID, letter/sound recognition, kindergarten pre-assessment, Early Childhood Assessment Team (ECAT), Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), Reading Recovery, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening PALS; Kindergarten Early Literacy Assessment (KELA); SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phoneme Awareness and Phonics and Sight Words); Phonics, Phonics Screening, QPS-Quick Phonics Screener; Letter naming fluency; ISEL (Illinois Snapshot of Early Literacy)

Appendix A: List of Assessments

1. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), M Class, Text Reading and Comprehension Screening, (TRC)
2. District Developed Test, district assessment, common assessments
3. CORE/Basal Assessments - category
 - Houghton Mifflin Curriculum (basal tests), Scott Foresman Reading Assessment, Core Reading Assessments, Unit tests, Harcourt Storytown, Reading Street
11. Scantron
12. My Sidewalks (4-step assessment plan by Scott Foresman)—Intensive Reading Intervention
13. Gates MacGinite Reading Test
14. SDRT (Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test)

15. Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT)
16. NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association)/ MWEA (MAP-Measure of Academic Progress)-- PGA MAP- PGA (Measures of Academic Progress- Primary Grade Assessment) (computer-based)
17. GRADE (Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation) (standardized test)
18. Woodcock-Johnson-Revised; Woodcock Reading Mastery (WJR)(WRMT) (standardized)
19. Informal Reading Inventories - category
John's Basic Reading Assessment (BRI); Informal Reading Inventory (IRI); Brigance Reading Inventory; Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)
20. Gecklings Instructional Assessment
21. Fluency Assessments - category
Fluency, ORF (Oral Reading Fluency), Nonsense Word Fluency
22. Category moved
23. Special Education Assessment/Corrective Reading
24. Running Record (RR)
25. Brigance
26. Teacher-made tests, teacher made assessments
27. SRI (Scholastic Reading Inventory), Reading 180 Routine (computer-based)
28. Read Well Assessment
29. SOARS Student Online Achievement Resources (online program for military families)
30. Galileo Tests
31. Online Assessment
32. LSF (Letter Sounds Fluency)
33. MAZE
34. Wilson Reading
35. YPP (Yearly ProgressPro) online program monitoring research in curriculum-based management (online)
36. Words Their Way (spelling assessment)
37. No baseline
38. OWOCKI (Rtl Assessment)
39. CRTS (Criterion-Reference Tests)
40. DRI (Direct Reading Infrastructure)
41. Stanford Reading Achievement, SAT 10
42. 4 Sight (Success For All Foundation Testing Center), Success for All (SFA)
43. WIAT III (Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-3)
44. Gort-4 (Gray's Oral Reading Test), Gray's Silent Reading Assessment
45. Acuity
46. Accelerated Reader (computer-based or online)
47. DIAL 3
48. Think Link (Benchmark Learning Assessment Tests)
49. Wide Range Achievement Test-WRAT
50. Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment-DORA (online assessments)
51. Educational Software for Guiding Instruction-ESGI (online assessments)
52. Literacy by Design Reading Placement
53. ISOL testing
54. Lindamood-Bell
55. School Readiness Test-SRT
56. Wiley Blevins Reading Assessment
57. Predictive Assessment Technologies (PAT)
58. Course Level Evaluations-CLE

A Puzzling Association: How an Educator and Author Influenced Teacher Candidates

SHARRYN LARSEN WALKER, Central Washington University
and
JODY FELDMAN, Missouri

As a professor of children's literature at a Midwest university, Sharryn, the first author, met children's author Jody Feldman at a social event. The conversations about her writing and the field of children's literature continued as the two met over several years. However, when the Sharryn accepted a position at a regional, Pacific Northwest university, the conversations were hindered. Simultaneously wanting to continue the conversations with Jody and looking for a way to connect the pre-service teachers enrolled in a children's literature course with an author, the Sharryn approached Jody about the possibility of holding a Skype interview with pre-service teachers. Although both were novices in using this technology when they first started, they quickly learned how to effectively use this medium. Thus, quarterly Skype sessions began.

Children's authors frequently visit schools as a way to excite students about reading, to talk about their craft, and to promote their books, yet numerous teacher candidates have never had this experience as students, nor have they considered the value of such visits. Teachers have cited the importance of bringing writers to schools in order to support the teaching of writing (Rubin, 2007). Such school visits take the mystery out of writing, acknowledge how difficult a task it is, and offer demonstrations of writing strategies. The visits encourage young writers and foster enthusiasm for the reading/writing process (Naslund & Jobe, 2006). Additionally, visiting authors pass on their love of reading and of books, while encouraging family involvement in both. Bringing authors into schools puts names to faces and makes the reading of particular books more personal (Harvey, 2005).

When planning an author visit, schools should consider several factors (Harvey, 2005; Ruurs, 2005). First, the school community must decide which author to invite, and at what cost. Because of the economic downturn, many schools and children's authors are finding Skype visits to be viable alternatives to "live" ones (Lorenzi, 2009; Messner, 2009; 2010; Micklos, 2012). For children's authors, the benefits of this type of visit include the convenience of staying home and the ability to show their writing environments, while still maintaining the interactive nature of the visits. From their perspective, teachers and librarians note the economic benefits and the away-from-ordinary nature of the visits.

After the author has been selected and the mode of the visit agreed upon, the students and school

community must prepare so that everyone involved receives the full benefit of the event (Harvey, 2005; Ruurs, 2005). The preparation should minimally include introducing the author's books and could also include reading the books, holding discussions, and engaging in book-related responses. Using the book in an integrated teaching approach is one way to increase interest across classrooms and subject areas. In regard to in-school visits, Ruurs (2005) recommends creating art projects based on the author's books to increase student interest and to welcome the author with vibrant hallway displays.

Although there is research that supports and recommends hosting author visits in elementary and secondary schools, there is scant evidence of children's authors visiting pre-service teachers in college classrooms. The aim of this study was to solicit feedback from teacher candidates about the use of an author's visit via Skype in a children's literature course. The findings add to the depth of knowledge about teacher candidates' perceptions of the use of children's literature, author visits, and the use of technology in their teaching. Additional implications for teacher educators and children's authors are presented.

The Study

To investigate how teacher candidates perceived the author's visits through Skype and how such visits might affect their teaching, an on-line survey was created. After the course was completed, the teacher candidates were invited to participate in the study. The survey consisted of nine questions in which the teacher candidates wrote short answer responses.

Participants

Teacher candidates enrolled in a children's literature course at a Pacific Northwest university read either *The Gollywopper Games* or *The Seventh Level* by author Jody Feldman and participated in several different response strategies/activities before interviewing her through Skype. One hundred seventeen teacher candidates enrolled in different sections over a five-quarter span were invited to complete an on-line survey about the experience at the end of the course. Thirty-eight (32%) of the teacher candidates voluntarily completed the survey.

Research Methodology

As part of the children's literature course, the teacher candidates read either *The Gollywopper Games* or *The Seventh Level*. Before reading the book, the teacher candidates were assigned roles established by Daniels

(1994) within the literature discussion group format. While participating in the discussion group, the teacher candidates also used the premises of Questioning the Author (QtA) (McKeown, Beck, & Worthy, 1993; Beck & McKeown, 2002) in which they used the text and queries to develop questions for the author. As the discussion progressed, each teacher candidate refined his/her list of questions for the author. For instance, many of the teacher candidates noted similarities between *The Gollywhopper Games* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Dahl, 1964). Their questions centered around Jody's awareness and/or reasons for this. Additionally, many of the teacher candidates were curious as to how Jody became a children's author.

To further respond to the books, the teacher candidates participated in a variety of follow-up activities. Different follow-up activities were used in different quarters. These activities included playing board games, analyzing the use of games with students in the classroom, exploring the author's website, and writing riddles or jokes (Zipke, 2008). The follow-up activities were used to show the teacher candidates how to integrate experiences across the curriculum. Participation in these follow-up activities occurred in the time period between the group discussion and the author interview.

Each Skype interview began with Jody providing background about herself and her journey to becoming a children's author. Then the interview was opened up with the teacher candidates introducing themselves and asking questions. The teacher candidates took notes during the interview, and often used the notes to ask follow-up questions about the topics. Each Skype interview lasted approximately 75 minutes.

After course grades were posted, the teacher candidates were sent a link to the survey, created through *Qualtrics*, an on-line software system. In order to generate the survey questions, the researcher and the author communicated through email, suggesting the types of information they would like to know about the experience. Through this set of communications, nine (9) questions were devised. The first two questions inquired which book the teacher candidate read as part of the course, and which strategies and activities were included in the course. The remaining questions were open response, inquiring what they found interesting and not interesting about the interview; what they liked and disliked about the interview; what about the interview prompted different ways of thinking; how the interview might affect future teaching; and if either book was used in a teaching experience with children. It concluded with an opportunity to offer additional comments. The survey took no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Using a constant-comparative method, the raw data from the surveys were coded within each question type by the researcher. A preliminary list of categories was created from this initial reading (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

The children's author read through the initial coding, offered additional code names, and rearrangement of the data. That data was then coded into more specific categories by the researcher. The children's author reread the data in order to verify the consistency of the category names. Through this reading and rereading of the data, the researcher and children's author refined the categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Findings

Five categories of comments were elicited through the survey. Within each category, the teacher candidates cited activities as interesting or least interesting; gave positive and negative experiences of the Skype experience; highlighted elements of the interview that made them think differently; concluded how the interview might affect their teaching; and offered additional comments they wanted to share. Some ideas were cited in more than one area, thus creating some contradictions in the findings.

The most interesting and least interesting activities. Two broad areas were cited by the teacher candidates as the most interesting activities related to the Skype interview with Jody. First, the Skype interview itself was noted as a "unique experience." Because of the use of this digital technology, the teacher candidates gained an understanding of an author's life, the writing process, and insights into the publishing process. Through this unique experience, the teacher candidates enjoyed being able to see the author and were appreciative of her affability during the interview. Her willingness to share her writing influences and how she started as a writer were cited as interesting. The teacher candidates enjoyed learning about the author's perspectives on writing, most notably her personal writing process. Jody shared how she developed characters and their names, sequenced events, developed evolving ideas, and created the riddles and puzzles included in her books. They also appreciated being able to understand the reasons that she writes what she writes.

During the interview Jody also shared the path it takes to get a book published while noting the number of years it took her to get the first book to print. Because of the interview process, the teacher candidates asserted that they acquired a deeper level of comprehension of the book. The broader understanding of an author's life helped the teacher candidates look at the book from a different perspective, thus having more information to share with the students they will teach.

A second area the teacher candidates cited as interesting was the use of the in-class discussion groups. The discussion groups were used to both exchange ideas about the reading and to prepare for the interview itself. Teacher candidates stated that these groups helped them widen their perspectives of the concepts in the book. Entertaining the thoughts and opinions of others promoted the teacher candidates to gain a deeper understanding of the book.

Although the discussion groups were mentioned by some as interesting activities, others mentioned them as some of the least interesting. The comments here pointed out that discussion groups took much effort, and they were difficult to do successfully when some had not read or completed the reading of the book. The discussion group was also identified as being less interesting than the author interview itself.

Additionally, the use of the games and the web exploration were noted as least interesting. Teacher candidates commented they saw no observed connection between playing games and the concepts from the books. Those who found the web exploration as least interesting stated that teacher candidates spent enough time on computers for classes and did not want to spend more time on them for a class assignment.

Positives and negatives concerning the Skype experience. Four themes were listed as positive take-aways from the Skype experience. Many of the teacher candidates described the personal nature of the interview as positive. Because she shared her background and life as an author, Jody was perceived as “friendly,” “personal,” “open,” “fun,” “witty,” and “honest.”

The interaction of the interview was also viewed as positive in that the teacher candidates felt they were treated as “professionals,” as opposed to students. In this way, they felt they were able to “get to know the author as a person,” asking “deep and surface questions,” while gaining insights into her perceptions and inspirations for writing.

A third positive from the interview pointed to increased insight into the writing process. Jody’s personal touches to the interview helped the teacher candidates learn more about the writing process from inside an author’s mind. As Jody explained how she did or did not use background information for inspiration or ideas for writing, the teacher candidates were able to “translate the process into writing tips for teaching.”

Reading the books in preparation for the interview was voiced as a fourth positive from the Skype interview. Although it was stated that some had not read or completed the reading of the book before the discussion groups took place, some of the teacher candidates shared that they read the book differently because they were going to interview the author. Knowing there was a different purpose for reading and discussing a book, caused the teacher candidates to “read more deeply.”

Even though some of the teacher candidates cited the personal nature of the interview as a positive, a few highlighted as a negative that the experience “wasn’t in person.” In both cases the Skype connection was slow in some spots, then lost altogether. Having to reboot the system took away from the interview time, also seen as a negative. At least one teacher candidate stated that there were “no negatives” of the experience.

Elements of the interview that caused the teacher

candidates to think differently. The most frequent comment about how the Skype interview caused participants to think differently concerned the need to prepare for technological difficulties before they happened. The teacher candidates shared that having a plan of action in place, such as having the author’s phone number handy in order to make contact should Skype disconnect, was necessary. As a whole, they had not thought of this possibility until it happened during the interview.

The teacher candidates also gained new insights into the world of authors. They acknowledged that “authors are people,” and they also discovered a newfound appreciation for the books they read. Some had not considered how difficult it is to get a book published, and this new insight added a greater level of appreciation for literature. They also acknowledged that the process of writing takes much time, and that not everything gets published. This was a helpful tip for classroom teaching in that perhaps not everything written in a classroom needs to be taken to final draft.

How the interview will affect teaching. The teacher candidates realized that some of the behaviors they displayed in discussion groups may play out in their own classrooms. Coming to discussions prepared to participate is necessary for successful group work. The discussions led to a deeper level of understanding, and will work to strengthen their own teaching of story comprehension in the future.

They also cited the necessity of reading the whole book, including the dedication and acknowledgements. Those elements contain pieces of information which help complete the story. The interview also brought forth the notion that teachers need to consider students’ interests, including the content of the stories, when helping them select books. In this way, the teacher candidates surmised they could help create life-long readers.

The Skype interview illuminated the power a teacher holds. When Jody shared a story from her seventh grade year in which a teacher told her she was “disappointed” in the ending of a story she wrote, she also shared that this one comment discouraged her from writing for many years. This story illustrated the impact teachers can have on their students. The teacher candidates responded that should be careful in the feedback they provide to their students and they should utilize methods that encourage success and motivation in writing.

Additional comments shared. At the end of the survey, the teacher candidates were asked if they had any additional comments. A few shared ideas that were not part of the formalized interview questions. One student commented that she had a better understanding of the use of cross-curricular teaching because of the use of *The Seventh Level* in class. This teacher candidate noted that novels can be used in content classes, such as math, as a way to gain a deeper understanding of content.

Another student wrote that she wished that Skype was used in other courses. She felt the interaction between non-educators provided an outside perspective to teaching, especially when being able to talk to a children's author. Overall the Skype interview was viewed as "inspiring" and "rewarding."

Limitations of this Study

There are several limitations to this study. First, a small number of teacher candidates responded to the survey. As a way to avoid coercion, the voluntary survey was sent to the teacher candidates after the course grades were posted. A larger number of participants would add more credibility to the study, and perhaps add more depth to the ideas shared. A second limitation is that the teacher candidates offered perspectives on the interview soon after it happened. If the candidates had been able to apply the ideas and concepts learned in a classroom with students, it would add more credence to the impact a Skype interview may have on their teaching. Despite these limitations, this research does provide a number of implications.

Implications

There are three groups for which research implications can be presented. Clearly, as the participants of this study were teacher candidates there are implications for their teaching. Instructors of children's literature courses can also gain knowledge from the feedback. Finally, there are points of value for children's authors.

Implications for Teacher Candidates

A strong lesson learned by the teacher candidates through this interview was the power their words hold toward their students. Comments similar to, "What you say as a teacher can have lasting effects on your students," were frequently expounded in the survey. Many of the teacher candidates had not considered how their words and behavior can affect a student's motivation and success in a classroom. Jody's personal story of how a teacher's words impeded her writing made a lasting impression on these teacher candidates.

The teacher candidates also acknowledged the fact that "writing is hard work," and this is an important message to carry to their students. Being motivated to write, having an interest in and enthusiasm toward a topic, "thinking like an author," using writing strategies, and sharing writing with students are all aspects of teaching they need to consider. Learning about the number of revisions Jody completed on her first publication showed the teacher candidates that it is not a matter of sitting down and writing one draft, but that a good piece of writing requires revisiting and rewriting multiple times.

Not only did the teacher candidates acknowledge that writing is hard work, they also recognized that not every piece of writing gets published. This is true for classroom practice as well. In a writer's workshop approach, not every piece can or should go to final draft. Writers spend time exploring and experimenting with ideas that may be useful in another piece of writing, not necessarily the one

currently being written. As readers sometimes abandon a book because it is not interesting, writers do the same.

Through this interview, the teacher candidates were reminded of the importance of familiarity with books. As teachers they agreed that knowing about a variety of books will more successfully enable them to "match readers to texts." Likewise, they acknowledged they needed to encourage students not to judge a book by its cover. Some of the teacher candidates were not inspired by the covers of *The Gollywhopper Games* or *The Seventh Level*, yet they enjoyed reading them. This experience is a helpful insight when assisting students select books for themselves.

Implications for Teacher Educators

The use of Skype was viewed as a novel approach to teaching and was appreciated by the teacher candidates. The use of this medium expanded the scope of the course experience and brought in a speaker from more than 2,000 miles away. Skype could be used to bring in speakers from the community-at-large in any subject area. Secondly, because of a connection to an outside speaker, the teacher candidates expressed that they did think differently about the use of children's literature in the classroom. Having an outside professional support the course concepts and the teacher educator's instruction appeared to add credence to the content learned. Finally, the teacher candidates voiced their perceptions on the various response activities presented in conjunction with the reading of the novels. In one particular case (the use of games in the classroom), it appeared that the teacher educator did not make a clear connection or purpose for the use of games in the classroom. This feedback provided the teacher educator with critical feedback about her teaching.

Implications for Children's Authors

Children's authors are known for visiting schools where they discuss their books and writing processes. However, the Skype visit to a college course filled with pre-service teachers appears to be a novel idea. When making this type of visit, the children's author needs to somewhat change the focus of the visit. While still being able to present information about the books and the writing process, the children's author needs to be aware that the audience is composed of pre-service teachers. They are not beginning college students, nor are they yet practicing teachers. Learning to connect and build a relationship with these pre-professionals requires a different tactic than meeting with schoolchildren or with a group of practicing teachers.

It is also important for children's authors to adjust the format of the presentation to fit the context of the course of study. Setting the purpose of the interview provides relevance for the teacher candidates. Once this baseline is established, it is easier for the teacher candidates to make connections. When the content and personal connections are made through the interview, the teacher candidates become less intimidated about asking questions of the author. As a result, the interview progresses quite smoothly

with few awkward moments of silence.

Conclusion

The use of Skype in order to interview a children's author was viewed positively by teacher candidates. The teacher candidates suggested that the use of this medium could enhance the teaching of other college courses. In these interviews, the teacher candidates were able to converse with a children's author, thus gaining a deeper understanding of the use of children's literature, author's visits, and technology in their own teaching. It is suggested that further research on such aspects of teacher education may provide increased understanding of teacher candidates' perceptions of these components.

Sharryn Larsen Walker is an assistant professor in the Department of Language, Literacy, and Special Education at Central Washington University. She primarily teaches courses in children's literature and literacy methods.

Jody Feldman is the award-winning author of *The Gollywopper Games* series and *The Seventh Level* (both, Greenwillow/HarperCollins). She holds a Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri and worked in advertising before she became a full-time author.

Correspondence may be sent to Sharryn Larsen Walker, 400 E. University Way, MS 7406, Ellensburg, WA 98926 or emailed to swalker@cwu.edu

References

- Beck, I. L. & McKeown, M. G. (2002). Questioning the author: Making sense of social studies. *Educational Leadership, 60*(3), 44-47.
- Coffey, A. & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Daniels, H. (1994). *Literature circles: Voice and choice in the student-led classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Stenhouse.
- Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Harvey, C. A. (2005). Bringing authors to students. *School Library Media Activities Monthly, 22*(4), 28-30.
- Lorenzi, N. (2009, September/October). Meet your favorite authors. *Instructor, 119*(2), 64.
- McKeown, M. G., Beck, I. L., & Worthy, M. J. (1993). Grappling with text ideas: Questioning the author. *The Reading Teacher, 46*, (7), 560-566.
- Messner, K. (2009). Met any good authors lately? *School Library Journal, 55*(8), 36-38.
- Messner, K. (2010). An author in every classroom. *School Library Journal, 56*(9), 42-44.
- Micklos, Jr., J. (2012, June/July). Authors who Skype: A new way to stimulate reading. *Reading Today, 29*(6), 22-23.
- Naslund, J. & Jobe, R. (2006). Not just an author's visit: A

literacy event. *School Libraries in Canada, 24*, 71-77.

Rubin, E. (2007). Authors in your school: Connecting live authors, students, and the love of reading. *Knowledge Quest, 35*(4), 66-69.

Ruurs, M. (2005, April/May). Optimizing author visits. *Reading Today, 22*(5), 20-21.

Zipke, M. (2008). Teaching metalinguistic awareness and reading comprehension with riddles. *The Reading Teacher, 62*(2), 128-137.

Children's Literature References

Dahl, R. (1964). *Charlie and the chocolate factory*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Feldman, J. (2008). *The Gollywopper games*. New York: Greenwillow/HarperCollins.

Feldman, J. (2010). *The seventh level*. New York: Greenwillow/HarperCollins.

BOOK REVIEW

Making assessment matter: Using test results to differentiate reading instruction. (2012)

Authors: Lesaux, N. K. & Marietta, S.H

Publisher: New York, NY: Guilford Press. ISBN 1462502466

Reviewer: Tarie Lewis

Data, Data Everywhere!

Given the current accountability-driven climate of education, schools are generating large amounts of student data. As a result of Response to Intervention (RTI) and Race to the Top initiatives, teachers are regularly being asked to administer more assessments. Many literacy leaders are struggling to manage, analyze, and utilize their school-wide assessment data to improve instruction. In *Making Assessment Matter: Using Test Results to Differentiate Reading Instruction* (2012), Nonie Lesaux and Sky Marietta offer a framework for more purposeful use of student literacy data.

This book is a primer on types and uses of assessment, as well as a blueprint for supporting school-wide implementation of purposeful data analysis. Lesaux and Marietta provide educators with clearly-articulated steps for implementing a robust RTI program. The authors weave together current research on effective instruction and assessment with narrative accounts of the researchers' work with teachers and students at Rosa Parks Elementary School: a school in which teachers work hard to meet the needs of their students, many of whom are English learners (ELs), and half of whom qualify for free or reduced lunch. The authors' discussion of assessment focuses on the experiences of four focal students. Each of these learners is experiencing reading or writing difficulties, and all four are varied in their literacy-learning trajectories. The authors walk readers through the steps that the Rosa Parks' staff took to understand, modify, and use assessment. Worksheets are included, so that readers can also analyze and evaluate their own assessment protocols. The content of this book is directed at district- or school-level leaders and literacy coaches. Thus, for teacher educators of literacy specialist candidates, this book is a valuable resource.

Different Assessments Serve Different Purposes

Lesaux and Marietta emphasize that, in order to have an effective assessment plan, there must be balance in terms of purpose of assessment as well as balance between code-based and meaning-based domains. Accordingly, a comprehensive assessment battery equips literacy leaders with (1) diagnostic assessments to document performance on authentic reading and writing tasks (2) screening assessments that identify the potential for risk of literacy problems (3) progress monitoring assessments to determine growth over time and (4) outcome assessments to analyze grade- and school-wide performance (pp. 33-34). Explanations of the distinct features of, and rationale for, each of these types of testing are supplemented with descriptive charts and useful sidebars which address key terminology and concepts. Of particular value is the authors' discussion

of the overuse of diagnostic assessments and the misapplication of screening measures -- two conventional assessment practices that result in inaccurate evaluation and misguided instruction.

Understanding the Needs of English Learners

Given Lesaux's extensive research in the fields of vocabulary acquisition and instruction for English Learners, it is not surprising that a strength of this book is the way in which the needs of English learners (ELs) are front-loaded. The authors share important research about ELs' literacy acquisition, like the finding that most ELs acquire word reading skills at rates comparable to those of native English speakers. This fact has important implications: teachers should not assume that ELs who struggle with early code-based literacy tasks are doing so as a result of language development. Instead, the authors advise that such difficulty indicates the need for intervention. However, Lesaux and Marietta emphasize that this same principle does not hold true for meaning-based difficulties among ELs. In fact, the authors caution that fluency measures for ELs can be misleading, so it is crucial to supplement such measures with vocabulary and comprehension assessments.

A Blueprint for School-Wide Implementation

The final chapter of this text addresses specific information literacy leaders need to consider in order to facilitate the transition to the types of data-driven instruction advocated for in this book. The authors address common obstacles that leaders face as they develop an in-house assessment leadership team, establish a new assessment strategy, and manage the logistics of adopting and utilizing new measures. This chapter provides helpful resources, such as sample calendars and rubrics for self-evaluation that will complement coursework focusing on literacy coaching.

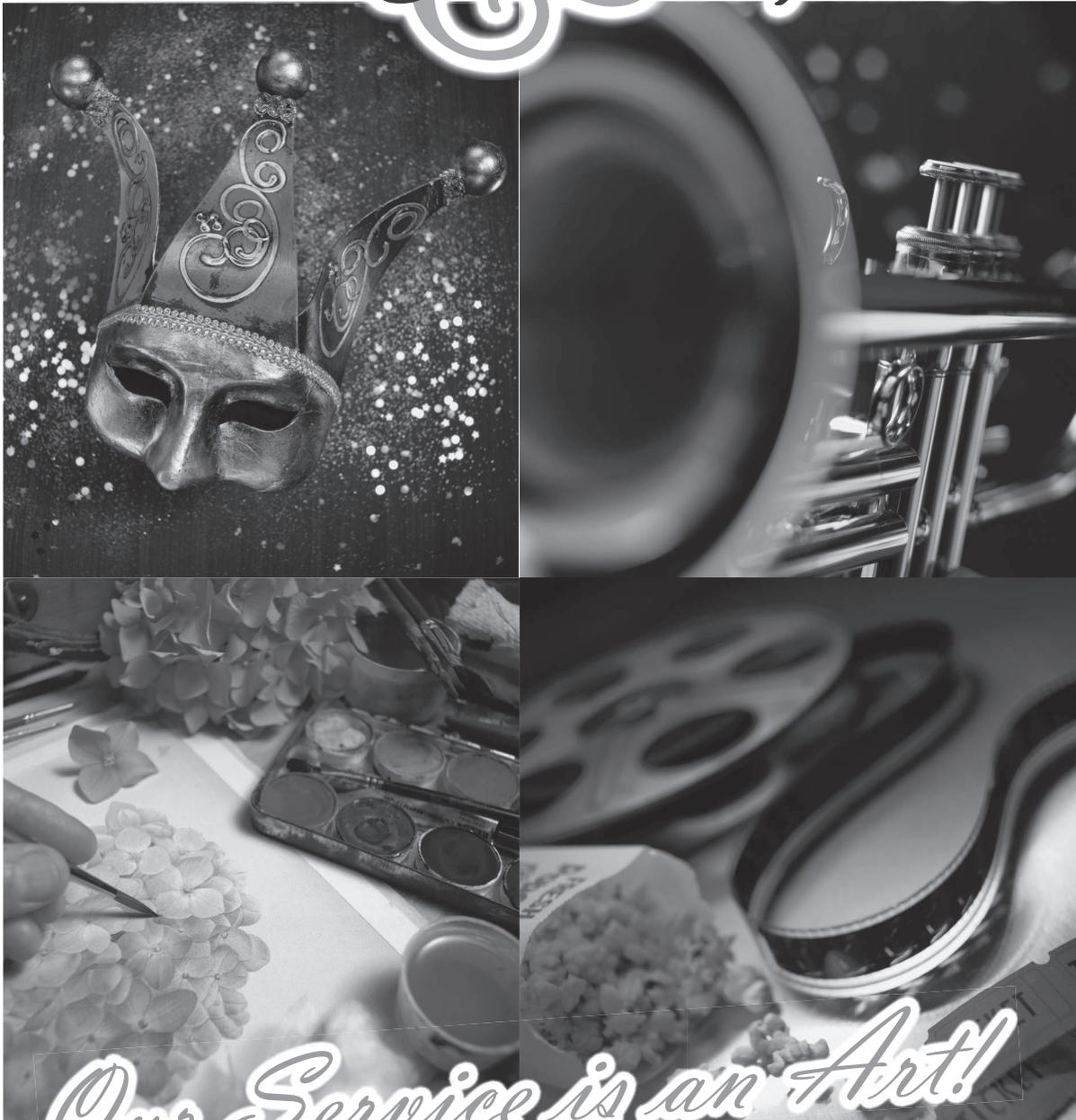
To truly implement data-driven instruction, teachers and schools need to know more about the types and purposes of assessment, the specific needs of ELs, and the process of translating results into effective and meaningful instruction. *Making Assessment Matter* provides the information literacy leaders need to accomplish this task in an accessible and engaging format.

Tarie Lewis is the Coordinator of Literacy Programs and a Lecturer at the State University of New York, New Paltz, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in literacy education. She is currently a doctoral candidate in Reading at the University at Albany, SUNY. Her research interests include approaches that support English learners' literacy development and morphological awareness instruction. She can be contacted at lewist@newpaltz.edu.

Dunbar

Established 1958

Printing & Graphics llc



Our Service is an Art!

Dunbar, WV 25064

304.768.1281



Professors of Reading
Teacher Educators
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP OF IRA

Dr. Terrence Stange, Editor
The Reading Professor
Marshall University
Graduate College
100 Angus E. Peyton Drive
S Charleston, WV 25303-1600 USA

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Charleston, WV
Permit No. 1093

