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# The Impact of Reader's Workshop on Reading Engagement

An Action Research Report

By Erin Streefland and LeeAnn Eischens

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St. Catherine University  
St. Paul, Minnesota

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

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## Abstract

The objective of our research was to identify whether reader's workshop had an impact in student engagement in reading activities. The research was conducted in two third grade classrooms in a rural public elementary school over the course of four weeks. This study was conducted during our reading block which consisted of 90 minutes daily. We gathered data based on the main components of reader's workshop. These included a pre- and post-assessment of student reading habits, an observation checklist of reading behaviors, reader's response rubric, and documentation of reader's conferencing. The data gathered revealed that student reading habits improved through the use of reader's workshop. Their comprehension and fluency were enhanced due to implementation of sustained independent reading and conferencing with their teacher on a weekly basis. Based on the results, we will continue to implement reader's workshop to foster positive reading practices in our classrooms.

For years reading has existed as whole group instruction with students following along in a grade level anthology as they learn to apply the weekly reading strategies to a text which are composed of text that is meant for grade level readers. These stories also lack significant opportunities for students to use background knowledge about a topic that interests them. Motivating these students to become engaged readers is a challenge. With this type of reading instruction, students' attitudes toward reading in the classroom are greatly affected. The lack of creativity and ability to choose material to read impacts students' growth as independent readers and limits connections they make.

The goal of many teachers is to teach students how to apply reading strategies correctly while integrating texts that students are engaged in and enjoy. Readers' workshop is an approach to reading instruction that moves away from a focus on reading anthology instruction and is hypothesized that reluctant and bored readers are more motivated and engaged in reading when elements of readers' workshop are integrated into classrooms. In the article by Foster (1995), the readers' workshop allows students to be in control of their reading experiences through self-selected texts, discussions with classmates and educators, as well as direct instruction of reading strategies through mini-lessons based on their individual learning needs.

The Readers' Workshop model supports student-focused reading instruction. This model supports student selection of text and show more ownership of their growth and attitudes as a reader.

In a research article by Taylor and Nesheim (2001):

Readers' workshop, a learner-centered approach to teaching reading, was implemented in order to encourage students to share their reactions to readings,

make connections between the readings and their life experiences, make their own reading selections, and participate in setting goals for their future reading. (Taylor and Nesheim, 2001).

The reading workshop encourages the use of time spent on reading, participating in discussions, and reflecting on what kids are learning. Authors Taylor and Nesheim (2001) developed four goals to implement a successful readers' workshop which included, "Providing motivation for reading children's literature and activating memories of early reading, modeling different techniques for sharing reading with children in their lives, presenting children's literature as viable and enjoyable reading material for readers of all ages, and creating a model of reading as a valued activity that is entertaining and enjoyable." They also note that during the first week of readers' workshop, educators should have students complete a reading survey in which the child identifies their early literacy experiences, their current activities with reading, and their values/feelings about what reading is (Taylor and Nesheim, 2001). Through our research, we found many studies that support reading instruction using a workshop model.

After the third grade, some readers disengage from reading and stop enjoying it because reading seems to be done only through academic work (Lause, 2004). To promote student engagement in reading, educators need to recognize that students need time to read, worksheets need to be minimized and replaced with time to reflect, and finally opportunities for students to discuss experiences about what they read (Reutzel, 1991). A reflective reader is continually predicting upcoming events, thinking and asking questions about characters and events they read about, and thinking about how events in the story build upon each other (Baker, 2002). Taking the time to allow students to read

and discuss books in school gives all students an opportunity to be exposed to reading for pleasure. As Donalyn Miller shares in her book *Reading in the Wild*, “We cannot tell children they need to read more and refuse to offer any time for them to read during the school day” (Miller, 2014). In our daily schedule it seems impossible to find uninterrupted time for students to read, but by encouraging time to read and converse about books we open up the world of reading to our students. Encouraging students to find a comfortable spot to read and become thoroughly engaged in what they are reading is an important aspect of reader’s workshop. “I believe that a pleasant, physical environment goes a long way in helping students see reading as an enjoyable activity,” (Williams, 2001). The environment of readers’ workshop revolves around reading, therefore it is a calming and personal time for students to enjoy books they have selected.

The readers’ workshop model encourages teachers to have a classroom library that reflects a wide variety of student interests, genres, and ability levels (Feinberg, 2007). “Since reading for meaning is what reflective readers do, it is pointless to read a book that is too difficult. By teaching my students to reflect on the type of reading material they choose to read, I allow my students to grow at their own pace and by their own decisions” (Baker, 2002). Guiding students to use book choosing strategies such as the Five Finger Rule in which students monitor the number of words they misread or struggle with on a single page. If students miss more than one three words on a single page, they know the book is not a good fit. This allows them to self-select appropriate books (Baker, 2002). Students are taught to choose books that reflect their reading ability and interest. Stantman (2002), emphasizes the value in offering a variety in books including genre studies, poetry books, biographies as well as history and science books

that support non-fiction reading. Teachers provide students with in-class time to select these texts and ample amount of time to read independently. According to Williams (2001), "It seemed to make sense that if my students had opportunities to read during school hours as well as time to share their reading with others; their reading might improve along with their motivation." Allowing students the time to read and reflect promotes engagement. Although ideally students are choosing their own books to read, it is still important that teachers are supporting students and leading them towards books and genres they might not otherwise choose (Miller, 2014).

Conferencing helps teachers to develop relationships with their readers through conversations about books they have chosen and their feelings about their progress (Lause, 2004). Conferencing is done one-on-one while readers' workshop is in progress. It gives the teacher insight into a student's progress (Williams, 2001). Morgan et al. (2013) describe conferencing as a way, "to better understand students' reading experiences, to explore students' book selections, and to help students find books that capture their interest and are at an appropriate level." It allows teachers time to give one-on-one feedback to address what needs to be improved as well as what is being done well. They allow time for differentiation as well as opportunities to work one-on-one with students. Conferencing not only provides opportunities for struggling students, but it also is effective for higher-level students. Morgan et al. (2013) further described that they "Become an avenue for challenging students' thinking and nudging them toward more complex text."

Teachers can observe their class and jot down specific observations to record a student's reading habits. Observations can be as simple as watching students' behavior



and body language as they read. These observations can provide teachers with the knowledge of what students are capable of during independent reading time, and what skills they may still need support in developing (Lause, 2004).

Mini-lessons serve as a source of instruction with a focus on literacy standards that are mandated by the state and local school districts (Ruetzel, 1991). Mini-lessons showcase direct and explicit instruction that focus on specific strategies. The purpose of the mini-lesson is to focus on a reading strategy that can be explicitly taught in a condensed amount of time. Williams (2001) states, "Lessons broken down into smaller, more meaningful parts make it easier for students to process and remember new information." According to author Meyer (2010), "The teachers think aloud while reading the text, making their thinking visible for the students as they predict, ask questions, clarify, make connections, and comment about the text."

Mini-lessons also serve as an opportunity to inform students of reading routines and expectations. A mini-lesson is based on a focus statement which drives instruction and informs students why the reading strategy is important to their success as a reader (Williams, 2001). These offer an opportunity to draw attention to the particular needs of a group of students through re-teaching and extensions of strategies that have been taught. Mini-lessons focused on building reading stamina, discussing the best times to read, using a bookmark, and sharing stories through book talks at the beginning of the year are a good place to start (Stantman, 2002). Authors Taylor and Nesheim (2001) suggest that mini-lessons fall into three different categories including procedural, literary, or strategy and skill. Whatever the topic of the mini-lesson, the most important thing is

to help students make connections to their reading and apply their learning to situations in daily reading.

Sharing provides a time for teachers and students to voice these discoveries through the literature they have been reading. Sharing time can be flexible throughout the reading workshop block of time either at the beginning or end of the workshop. There does not need to be a specific time for sharing. Students can take the time to share about books they have enjoyed, offer suggestions about what to read next, and confer about anything related to reading. Miller (2014) states, "Students develop confidence and self-efficacy as readers through their relationships with other readers in reading communities that include both their peers and teacher" (p. xxvii). Teachers need to keep in mind that students will want to share their findings and ideas, therefore, enforcing a time limit is beneficial (Ruetzel, 1991).

Educators who implement readers' workshop into classrooms create a reading environment that combines student engagement, learning, collaboration, and independence. Students who have a choice in selecting texts that spark their interest tend to have a longer reading stamina and are more engaged in discussions about books with their peers and teacher. Students develop a positive attitude about reading when they have a calm reading environment, good books that interest them, and time to read independently. The readers' workshop integrates elements of sharing, mini-lessons, and conferencing to engage and motivate students to build relationships and make discoveries within their stories.

Research was conducted in a school district that served students from several rural communities. The information gathered about students came from two classrooms

consisting of 45 kids. The group of students involved 23 girls and 21 boys. Of these forty-five kids, five were significantly below grade level, nine were in the gifted and talented program, and the rest of the students were at grade level. The classrooms were located in a K-5 elementary building.

The goal of this action research study is to find out what effects the elements of readers' workshop have on student engagement in reading activities in a third grade classroom. Through the use observations, student conferencing, and assessments we will determine the effectiveness of the workshop model.

#### Description of the Research Process

Our research process began on September 9, 2014 and continued through October 3, 2014. We prepared our students for the expectations of reader's workshop through the use of our reader's workshop contract. This contract focused on behaviors that were expected and necessary for a classroom of readers with different tasks throughout the workshop time. Our data collection began with a student pre-assessment of reading attitudes, habits, and interests. Following the results of the assessment, we implemented our observation checklist of reading behaviors while students learned the routines involved in reader's workshop. When students showed success in sustaining uninterrupted reading, we felt comfortable implementing the reader's reflection component to show understanding of the reading strategies taught throughout each mini-lesson. Finally, we began meeting with students to conference about their experiences with reading in our classroom.

During the week of September 9, 2014, we distributed the student pre-assessment of reading (see Appendix B). This informal assessment offered students the opportunity

to share their comfort level with reading genres, their independent reading habits in and out of school, book titles they have enjoyed in the past, and opportunities to share their needs as part of a reading community in the classroom. The assessment was ten questions in length and was discussed at school but completed at home. This assessment gave us background knowledge on each student individually and helped us provide them with appropriate text based on their likes and dislikes. It also gave us suggestions of individual behaviors to look for during our observations at independent reading time, as well as ideas to conference about with students individually. We also used students' Lexile range based off of our fall NWEA reading assessment to determine appropriate books within their level. A student's Lexile is a reading range determined by their RIT score on the NWEA reading assessment.

Within the first week of study, we discussed as a class what reading expectations needed to be followed for our reader's workshop to be successful for everyone. Together we established a classroom reader's contract (see Appendix A) which featured six promises to each other. These promises included reading every day, never wasting time, staying in one reading spot, trying to decode words independently, when necessary making good partner choices, and never interrupting others while reading. Using the components of the contract, we were able to implement independent reading. The observation checklist (see Appendix C) was used to monitor students during independent reading until all students were able to read uninterrupted for 30 minutes.

During the second week of the study, we continued to monitor student behaviors during independent reading while also making adjustments through re-teaching the readers workshop routines based on our observations. The observation checklist (see

Appendix C) was used to observe our entire class at the same time and featured on and off task behaviors that students demonstrated. We documented these behaviors through the use of tallies. Before observing our students, we taught them about the items on the checklist, identifying the on and off task behaviors. This was explicitly taught, modeled, and practiced for several days. On task behaviors that were observed included eyes on text, appropriate progression, appropriate location, and reactions to text. Off task behaviors were comprised of eyes off text, stagnate progression, wandering, side talking, and lack of interest. Each time a behavior was observed in an individual student, a tally was given. We continued to observe our students each week to compare their reading habits and growth from week to week.

Toward the end of the second week of our research, we began developing the location where students shared their response to reading. We implemented the use of a reader's website to capture student understanding while exposing them to a digital format for sharing their connections to text. During the development of each student's website, students were expected to have four pages accessible through their website. These pages featured meet the reader, reader's response, daily reading blog, and a place to record books they've read to date. Students had the freedom to design their website based on their interests, but the four components were required. Once students' websites were functional, we encouraged responses from daily reading to be posted to their blog. Required responses were assigned weekly based on the reading strategies taught within mini-lessons. We used the students' responses and postings as a way to monitor their comprehension and use of skills and strategies. The reader's response rubric (see Appendix D) was used to guide us as we assessed students' knowledge of specific

strategies based on application from their independent text. The website also offered content to be discussed during conferencing with individual students. Students were expected to post one blog which showcased connections with the reading strategy and their independent reading book.

During the third week of study, we began conferencing with our students. In order to get used to the routine of conferencing with students individually, we developed a rotational schedule that involved us meeting with five students each day of the week. The conferences were held in the hallway during independent reading time in order to respect the quiet reading environment in the classroom. Each student brought their book box and their reading log. We provided a netbook for students to log in to their reader's website as another source for evidence of their reading habits. The majority of conference time was student led based on prompts that we gave such as "tell me about the book you're reading and why you chose it". In order to document goals and progress for each child, we used the reader's conference form (see Appendix E). The conferencing checklist monitored reading level, text selection level, engagement in reading at school and home, record of their reading list, commitment to reading list, and genre variety.

When a conference began, we asked the child about the current book they were reading, their thoughts and feelings about the book, and tied in conversation about the weekly reading strategy. Another component of conferencing involved looking through their reading log to check for signs of stagnate reading or a need for selecting more appropriate leveled books. After discussing their book bin books and progress with them, students were asked to read aloud from their independent reading book to model fluency.

This also provided topics for discussion. The conference information also provided us with the knowledge necessary to use flexible grouping in our guided reading groups.

During the final week of our research, we provided students with the post assessment which featured questions from the pre-assessment that was taken during the first week of research. The post assessment (see Appendix F) gave us further information about how a child's reading habits and attitudes had changed over the past four weeks. The assessment allowed us to see if students' interests in various genres had grown or stayed the same. Finally, we were able to look at how much time students spent reading in and out of school, and how their feelings about independent reading may have changed.

By the end of our research, we collected data using four sources. These sources included a pre-assessment of student reading interests, observation checklist, reader's website rubric, and a conferencing checklist. In the next section, we will elaborate on these data sources to determine the effectiveness of reader's workshop and its impact on student learning and reading habits.

### Analysis of Data

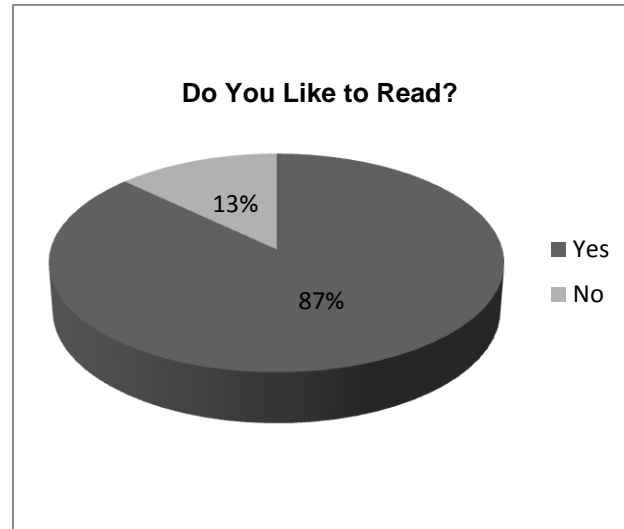
Once we finalized our data collection, we began the process of analyzing the results. The data sources that we analyzed included our student pre and post assessment of reading attitudes, habits, and interests, an observation checklist of reading behaviors, readers response rubric, and documentation of readers conferencing. We began with the student pre-assessment (see Appendix B) to gain more knowledge about our student interests and habits regarding reading. This qualitative data allowed us to learn about each child's reading attitude and help them find appropriate text for independent reading.

Once students successfully chose good fit books with our assistance, we began observing their independent reading behaviors using our observation checklist (see Appendix C). The observations that we gathered as teachers provided us with qualitative data of the whole class as well as individual readers in our reading community. Throughout the course of our data collection, students responded to strategies that had been taught throughout two weeks of reading instruction. These responses were recorded on their reader's websites and assessed using our reader's response rubric (see Appendix D). Based on their results according to the rubric, we assessed them using our district wide grading scale. This quantitative data provided us with information to compare growth from one week to the next based on their responses. We used the reader's conferencing form to guide our conferences with each student and set goals for future conference opportunities (see Appendix E). This served as another form of qualitative data as we made observations based on the discussions that occurred during the student conferences. Finally, we administered a post assessment to compare student growth and changes in reading attitudes and habits from the beginning of our research to the end (see Appendix F).

While analyzing the student pre-assessment results, we started by looking at the third question which asked if students liked reading and why or why not. We found that 87% of our students replied that they enjoyed reading while the remaining 13% of our students said that reading was not enjoyable. Figure 1 shows these results based on the third question from the pre-assessment. The results gave us baseline data for what to expect of students during independent reading time in our classroom. Based on this



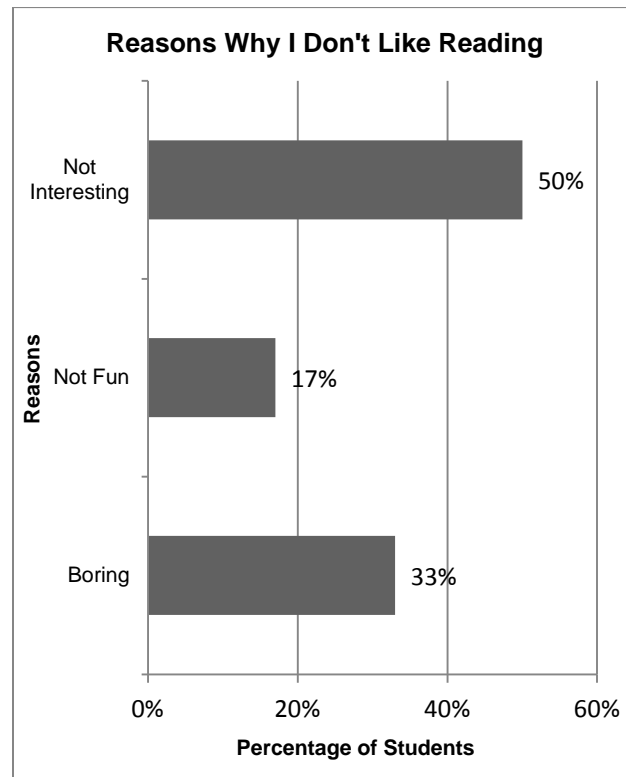
information, we were aware of students who required more encouragement when building reading stamina and choosing appropriate texts for reading independently.



*Figure 1.* Students' responses to pre-assessment question 3. This graph represents the number of students that enjoy reading and those that do not show interest at the beginning of third grade.

The students who responded that they enjoyed reading continued to build on their love of reading with our help in picking books that interested them. For the students who responded that they did not enjoy reading, we further investigated their pre-assessment results to find out why they were not interested in reading. Figure 2 shows that students who didn't enjoy reading felt that reading independently was not interesting, not fun, or was boring. Our classroom data revealed that 50% of the students felt that reading was not interesting, 17% identified it wasn't fun, and 33% reported that it was boring. Using this specific information about why reading wasn't enjoyable, we were able to suggest better book options that included topics that would keep them engaged, but were also at their independent reading level. After helping them successfully choose a better fit book,

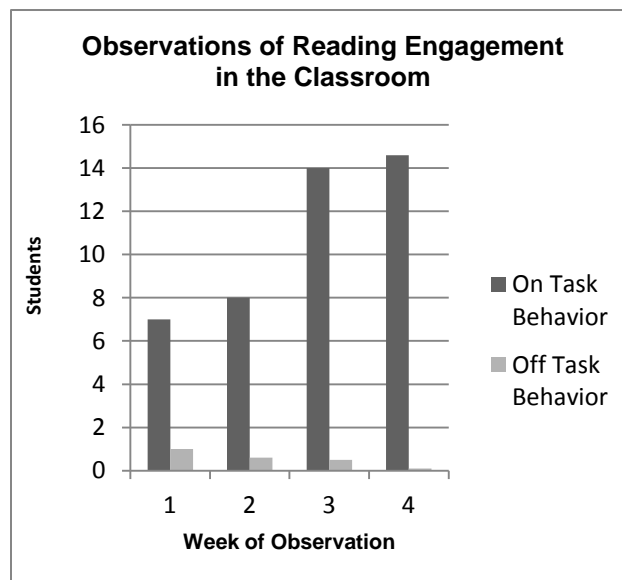
we noticed that these reluctant readers were focused and engaged during independent reading.



*Figure 2.* Reasons why students don't like reading. This graph represents student responses about why they aren't engaged in independent reading.

We then began the process of implementing independent reading time in our classroom. Through the use of our observation checklist (see Appendix C), we were able to monitor on and off task behaviors. During week 1, we noticed some off task behaviors including eyes off text, wandering, and side talking. However, several students from the beginning showed positive signs of on task behaviors including eyes on text, appropriate location, as well as appropriate progression through their text. Throughout the course of

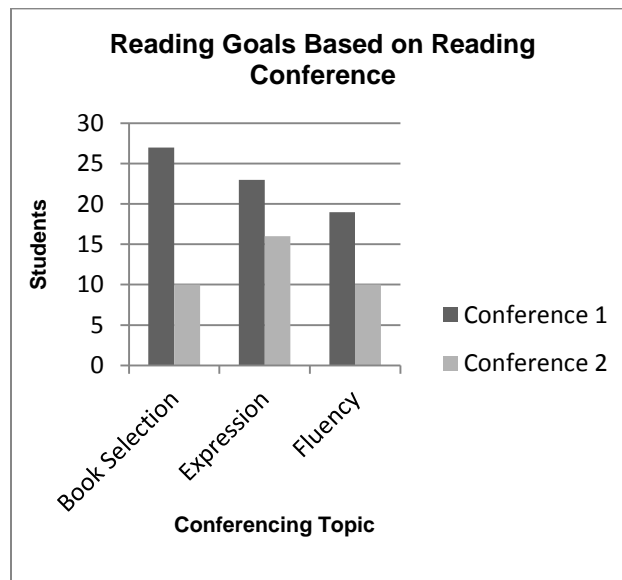
the four weeks, we noticed that in week two on task behaviors became more prevalent than off task behaviors. This trend continued throughout the course of the next two weeks. Our analysis of this progression was due to student behaviors addressed in the readers workshop contract (see Appendix A), and the time we spent practicing independent reading expectations and routines. Another component to success between week two and week three we believe was due to students completing the NWEA reading assessment which provided students with a Lexile range to guide their book choices. Knowing this Lexile range provides students with the ability to select books that will be at their reading level in fluency and understanding of text.



*Figure 3.* Observations of reading engagement in the classroom. This graph represents on and off task behaviors recorded during independent reading.

During weeks 3 and 4 we began to meet with students to discuss book choices, progression through their current book, as well as reading strengths and goals. To begin the conference, we asked students to share books they were reading from their book bins

and cross-checked their choices with their Lexile number to be sure they were reading within their appropriate range. We documented this information using the readers conferencing form (see Appendix D). If students were reading a book that wasn't a good fit, we would suggest other titles that were a better option. If the books were in their level, we discussed the events from a book they were currently reading as well as listened to them read aloud to check oral reading fluency. From these conversation points, we were able to set a reachable goal for the next conference together. These goals ranged from rate of fluency, appropriate book selection, and expression.

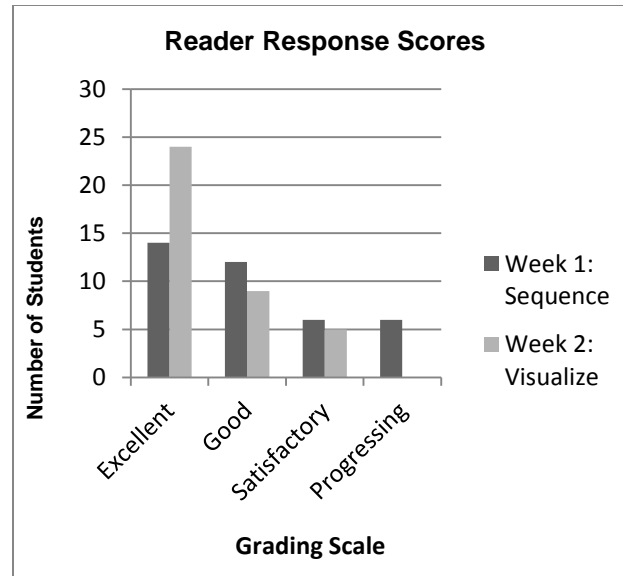


*Figure 4.* Reading goals based on reading conferences. This graph represents student goals based on needs identified in conferences.

Figure 4 shows a decrease in need for a specific goal from one week to the next. Students that had a high need for improvement in reading fluency at the first conference were challenged to work on their reading fluency for a week. After the course of one week, we noticed an increase in their rate as well as their accuracy when reading aloud.

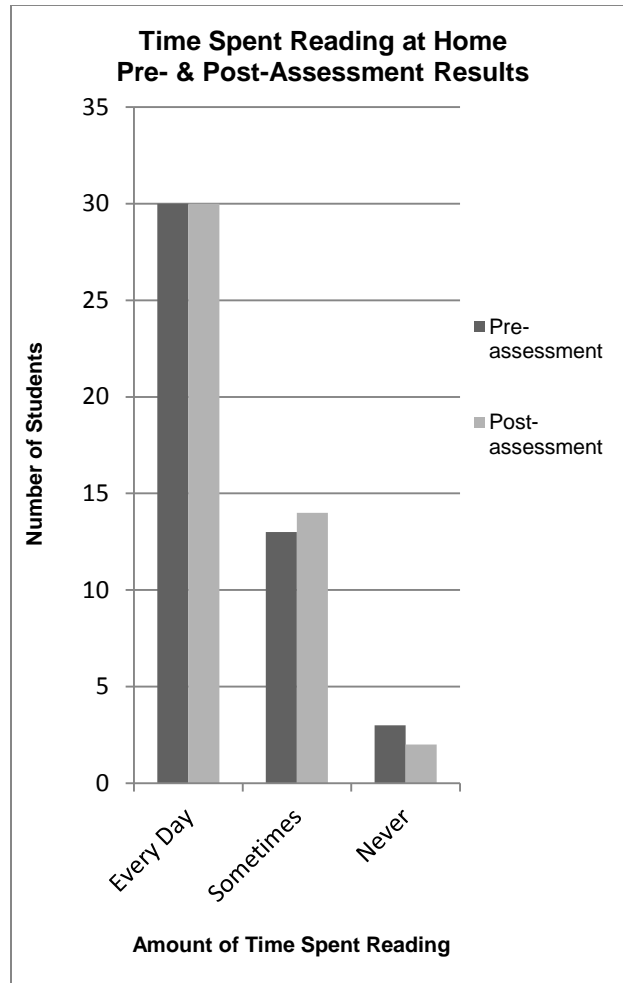
Students that had the goal of choosing books in their Lexile for independent reading also showed success with this goal; therefore the graph shows a decrease in a need for focusing on this goal beyond conference two. Students that demonstrated lack of expression while reading aloud were asked to read aloud in conference two to demonstrate their growth over the week and as the Figure 4 shows, some of these students showed success while the majority needed more time to reach their objective.

In week 1 we integrated the reader's website for student reflection on the weekly reading strategies. After modeling and practicing the strategies through the mini-lesson, students were asked to apply this strategy to their independent reading text and record this evidence as it related to their choice of text. The rubric that we assessed student responses with included three categories which were on a 3-2-1 scale. These categories included use of the strategy in their writing, evidence from their text to support the strategy, and effort in overall quality of work. The data collected from this rubric analysis was rated based on our grading scale. Students that earned a three in all areas performed at a level of excellent which is equivalent to 95-100% on our district wide grading scale. Students that earned a performance level of good scored between 85-94%. Students who scored a satisfactory rating earned a 78-84%. And those in the progressing range performed at a 77% or below. We used the reader's response rubric (see Appendix E) as a guide to assess all three areas. Figure 5 shows the results from the first week of reader's responses to the second week. The amount of students earning an excellent score increased dramatically which decreased those students who were previously performing at a progressive range.



*Figure 5.* Readers response scores. This graph represents growth students made from the first week of readers response to the second week.

As we neared the end of our research, we were anxious to see if student response to their feelings about reading had improved or stayed the same. Through the use of our post assessment, we were able to see these results. Like our pre-assessment results, the majority of our students identified that they enjoyed reading every day. As Figure 6 shows the number of students who transitioned from never reading for enjoyment to sometimes reading increased, making the number of students who never read for enjoyment minimal.



*Figure 6.* Time spent reading at home pre- and post-assessment results. This graph represents student's feelings about reading before and after the implementation of reader's workshop.

The reader's workshop model provided us with insight regarding the impact of student's ownership of their own reading habits when given the opportunity to reflect, conference, and choose books that interest them within their reading level. Although the pre- and post-assessment showed student improvement in their love for reading, the observations we've made of our students as readers has been dramatically improved from previous years of reading instruction. Reader's workshop has motivated students to think

about reading as a hobby rather than a chore. Their ability to discuss strategies is more meaningful after having daily time dedicated to reading and reflecting using their very own website. We will describe how we will continue to use reader's workshop in our classrooms in the future as well as any changes that we will make to improve the quality of instruction and work from students.

### Action Plan

Our research revealed that the components of reader's workshop were a beneficial addition to our classroom instruction. In comparison to previous years in teaching with the scripted curriculum, our students lacked motivation and interest in reading. With reader's workshop, from the moment we implemented it, we could see that it would be something students would embrace. Students expressed interest in the reader's workshop components especially conferencing and choosing books from our classroom libraries on their own to apply the weekly strategies taught each week. As teachers, the mini-lessons were focused and brief keeping students engaged in what was being taught with the mindset that students are responsible for their own learning and application of what we've taught. Students were actively involved in each mini-lesson as they participated in discussions and brought experiences as well as prior knowledge that connected back to their independent reading texts. Not only did this keep learning fun and student led, but students also had the opportunity to hear about books their classmates felt passionate about.

Using our observation form to assess student behaviors during independent reading was very valuable. It provided us with evidence to show students their on and off



task behaviors during independent reading, as well as suggest ways to use their time wisely in order to impact their reading success. As a teacher, if we noticed a trend from the whole class, we knew that was an area needing re-teaching with additional modeling and practicing.

Another component of the reader's workshop that impacted student excitement about what they were learning was integrating technology to share their thoughts about reading. By creating their own reader's website, students developed a feeling of ownership and pride in their work. This format made it easy for us to differentiate in our classroom of readers by customizing expectations based on where students were at with their website design. Students showed eagerness to continue working at home on their websites which was a sign of passion in what they were doing. As teachers, assessing student work became a lot easier, since we didn't have to lug home reader's notebooks, instead, logging onto our classroom website roster and assessing students from our home computers proved to be more manageable.

The benefits of conferencing with our students were very favorable to us as teachers as well as our students. Having the opportunity to discuss books and strategies individually with students opened up a line of communication, trust, and accountability as readers. For students who needed more support, conferencing offered us the opportunity to listen to them read and really get to the root of their reading struggles. By suggesting titles in a one on one setting we were able to respect their pride, yet still meet their reading needs on a weekly basis. For our higher level students, conferences were still beneficial because we found that their book selection was too easy and not challenging them to reach their full potential. Using our conference form, we were able to record

evidence from the conference which was a powerful tool when preparing for conferences with parents.

Using the pre-assessment to kick off our reader's workshop was necessary. It opened our eyes to the truth about each student's feelings and habits as a reader. Without this valuable tool, we would've needed time to observe each student for a long period of time to gain the same information. The post-assessment allowed us to see the change in student reading behaviors and attitudes. This provided us with instructional goals to make the reader's workshop more engaging in areas where students didn't show much interest or growth, as well as a chance to celebrate elements of the workshop that had improved.

Areas that we would like to focus on in the future to improve reader's workshop, based on our research, include:

- When students picked their own independent reading books, initially, they did not have the Lexile to guide them, therefore their selections were not a good fit. Going forward, we will access Lexile ranges from the end of their second grade year to use as a starting point at the beginning of the year before the NWEA reading assessment begins.
- We liked the format of our observation checklist, and plan to use it in the future, however due to the timeline of our research; we learned that waiting to observe students until all reading routines

are in place is necessary for an accurate snapshot of individual student reading habits.

- The reader's websites were a valuable tool, but with all technology, we learned a few tricks for introducing websites next year. Offering an abundance of time as a whole group initially is necessary for third grade students to feel comfortable navigating their website. Also having students write their reflection in a reader's notebook prior to posting to their website offers a chance for revisions and higher quality work.
- Conferencing was very successful. The only thing that we would add to our form would be a list of strategies and prompts that would fit specific needs of readers. For example, suggestions for fluency practice or topics for discussion during a conference.
- The pre- and post-assessment was a great tool to capture our student's attitudes about reading. We plan to give the post-assessment at the end of the year to see what changes might occur given more time.

Due to this research we found that reader's workshop and its components impact student learning and instill a love for reading that otherwise has not been accomplished. Our passion for teaching reading has also flourished as we have watched our students grab onto any book or suggestion we give them. It is our

plan to continue to use the reader's workshop model in our classrooms and encourage our colleagues to do the same.

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Appendix A

# Reader's Workshop Contract

## **We Promise To:**

- **Read every day in a quiet way.**
- **Never waste our precious reading time.**
- **Stay in our reading spot.**
- **Try our best to read tricky words.**
- **Make good choices with our partners.**
- **Never interrupt others reading.**

Sign Here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a signature or stamp.

## Appendix B



# Pre-Assessment



1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your favorite book?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you like to read? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Did you read a lot over the summer? \_\_\_\_\_ What kinds of things did

you read? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How often do you read at home? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you do when you have trouble reading something or something doesn't make sense? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How do you feel about reading out loud? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What kinds of things do you like to read? (circle all that apply)

fiction picture books      chapter books      magazines

Nonfiction books      poetry      mysteries      sports books

9. Do you think reading is hard or easy for you? \_\_\_\_\_ Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Anything else I should know about you and reading?

\_\_\_\_\_



Appendix C

**Observation Checklist**

**Weekly Engagement in Independent Reading**

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

#	On Task Behavior Observations			Off Task Behavior Observations					
	Eyes on Text	Appropriate Progression	Appropriate Location	Reactions to Text	Eyes off Text	Stagnate Progression	Wandering	Side Talking	Lack of Interest
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									
16									
17									
18									
19									
20									
21									
22									
23									

**Additional Notes:**



Appendix E

Conferencing Checklist

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Schedule: Mon / Tue / Wed / Thur / Fri Reading Level:

Strengths:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Goal:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Targeted Reading Strategy:

- Comprehension     
  Accuracy     
  Fluency     
  Expand Vocabulary

<i><b>Date:</b></i>	<i><b>Observations</b></i>	<i><b>Goal/Strategy</b></i>
<b>Check-in:</b> _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Next Scheduled Check-in:</b> _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
_____	TEXT: _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

<b>Check-in:</b> _____	 _____ _____	 _____ _____
<b>Next</b>	 _____ _____	 _____ _____

<b>Scheduled Check-in:</b>  _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	TEXT: _____	_____

Targeted Reading Strategy:

- Comprehension     
  Accuracy     
  Fluency     
  Expand Vocabulary

<i><b>Date:</b></i>	<i><b>Observations</b></i>	<i><b>Goal/Strategy</b></i>
<b>Check-in:</b> _____  <b>Next Scheduled Check-in:</b>  _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	TEXT: _____	_____

<b>Check-in:</b> _____  <b>Next Scheduled Check-in:</b>  _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	TEXT: _____	_____

## Appendix F



# Post-Assessment



1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your favorite book?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you like to read? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Did you read a lot over the summer? \_\_\_\_\_ What kinds of things did you read? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How often do you read at home? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you do when you have trouble reading something or something doesn't make sense? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How do you feel about reading out loud? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What kinds of things do you like to read? (circle all that apply)

fiction picture books      chapter books      magazines

Nonfiction books      poetry      mysteries      sports books

9. Do you think reading is hard or easy for you? \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Anything else I should know about you and reading?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G

Dear Parents,

As you may know, we are St. Catherine University students pursuing a Masters of Education degree. An important part of our program is the Action Research project.

As the teachers of your child at Falcon Ridge Elementary, we have chosen to learn about reader's workshop because we want to learn more about ways to engage our students in reading. We are working with a faculty member at St. Kate's and an advisor to complete this particular project.

We will be writing about the results that we get from this research, however none of the writing that we do will include the name of this school, the names of any students, or any references that would make it possible to identify outcomes connected to a particular student. Other people will not know if your child is in our study.

When we are done, our work will be electronically available online at the St. Kate's library in a system called Sophia, which holds published reports written by faculty and graduate students at St. Kate's. The goal of sharing our final research study report is to help other teachers who are also trying to improve the effectiveness of their teaching.

Risks are minimal for involvement in this study. However, your child may feel a sense of accountability in setting reading goals that may require additional focus or effort to be attained. It is our hope that through your child's participation in this study, we will learn how to improve student engagement in reading. Participants are not expected to experience significant personal benefits from participating, however lifelong reading habits will be a byproduct of this study.

If you decide your child's data such as observations, reading surveys, and journal entries or the input from your parent survey can be included in our study, you don't need to do anything at this point.

If you decide you do NOT want your child's data or input from your parent survey included in our study, please note that on this form and return it by Friday, September 5, 2014. There is no penalty for not having your child involved in the study, we will simply delete his or her responses from our data set. All children will receive the same treatment in our class, regardless of your decision on this matter. If at any time you decide you do not want your child's data to be included in the study, we will remove included data to the best of our ability.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mrs. Streefland at [estreefland@np.k12.mn.us](mailto:estreefland@np.k12.mn.us) or Mrs. Eischens at [leischens@np.k12.mn.us](mailto:leischens@np.k12.mn.us) or either by phone at 952-758-1600. You may ask questions now, or if you have any additional questions later, you can ask us or our advisor Amy Adams at [aadams@stkate.edu](mailto:aadams@stkate.edu) who will be happy to answer them. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researchers, you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at [\(651\) 690-7739](tel:6516907739).

You may keep a copy of this form for your records.

**Opt Out**

I do NOT want my child's data and input from my survey included in this study. Please respond by Friday, September 5, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher 1

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher 2

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date