Scaffolded Silent Reading: More Effective than Sustained Silent Reading?

by

Elizabeth Proepper

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A Thesis Proposal Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirement for a

Masters of Science in Education - Reading

University of Wisconsin - Superior

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to measure the effect of Scaffolded Silent Reading on third grade students' reading comprehension and fluency. During Scaffolded Silent Reading participants read independently and silently for twenty minutes after a brief lesson on fluency or a comprehension strategy. As the students read, the researcher held Individual Monitoring Conferences (IMC) with four to five students; first taking a running record and then initiating a discussion about the book while monitoring students' comprehension. Finally, the researcher helped each student to set a goal for completing the book and to choose a book response project. The study was conducted in a third grade classroom with twenty-three students. Measures included easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency (2006) and Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension (2006) assessments (Appendix C. Measurement Instruments).

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Chapter One: Introduction

The best instructional practices for reading are always evolving and it is important for educators to remain current with the research so they can provide the best possible instruction. The passage of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (2001) pushed schools to focus on improving test scores making effective instruction even more important. Additionally the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (CCSS, 2010) increased the rigor required in literacy instruction, challenging educators and students alike. As a result, districts and their decision makers have been evaluating instructional practices to determine what are the most effective. The Report of the National Reading Panel is often looked to as a source for research-based strategies and best practices in reading instruction (NRP; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHDI, 2000).

One instructional practice that has long been a standard in classrooms is Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). Many studies have documented the strong positive correlation between the amount of time spent reading and reading achievement (Armbruster, Lehr, Osborn, & Adler, 2001). For years this correlation was enough that educators felt confident devoting time daily to independent reading practice. Then in 2000 the NRP reported that the practice of SSR was minimally effective in improving reading outcomes (NICHDI, 2000) and in response classrooms around the country ended the practice of silent reading in school. This finding by the NRP that SSR was not effective and the subsequent removal of SSR from the classroom baffling to many educators (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2010). It should be noted the NRP's finding on SSR was based on the available research, but there was simply not a large body of research and the results of the available studies were inconclusive (Goodin & Pearson, 2010).

Although the NRP placed little value on SSR it is clear that successful adult and adolescent readers are expected to read independently and silently. Additionally, the nearly universally adopted Common Core State Standards (2010) require that at the end of each grade level students must read and comprehend literary and informational texts independently. However in today's environment of high-stakes testing educators are hesitant to devote precious classroom time to any practice that may not be the most effective. Additionally SSR is often criticized as providing students with no teacher guidance in book selection, little feedback from teacher to students, no accountability for student's reading, and the time is generally poorly controlled (Fawson, Jones, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

There is a need to devote time in the classroom to teach students to read independently and silently. This skill is necessary for a successful transition to college or the workforce as stated in the CCSS (2010) students will need to "read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently". Yet educators are hesitant to institute daily silent reading practice due to a lack of accountability for whether or not students are actually reading during SSR time (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2010). Consequently, the type of reading instruction prevalent in many elementary classrooms today is at odds with the way successful adults read - independently and silently (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010). Independent reading is an essential skill students must develop to be workforce and college ready, but for many students proficiency in silent reading does not develop naturally (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010).

Background and Need

The finding of the NRP that SSR was not an effective practice was surprising to many educators and researchers, especially due to the strong positive correlation between the amount

of time spent reading and reading achievement (Armbruster, Lehr, Osborn, & Adler, 2001). Although many teachers abandoned the practice, other educators and researchers developed new independent reading programs that attempted to remedy the common criticisms of SSR: that it provided students with no teacher guidance in book selection, teachers did not interact with students and provided little feedback to students, students were not held accountable for their reading, and the time spent reading during SSR are poorly controlled (Fawson, Jones, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008). Clausen & Kelley (2006) developed a program called R^5(read, relax, reflect, respond, and rap) which adds daily reflective response to text through writing and conversations with peers. Additionally in R^5 the teacher has a more active role, conferring with students, guiding book choice, and providing lessons on effective reading (Clausen & Kelley, 2006). Yet another revision on SSR is Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) which is intended to give students guidance, support, structure, accountability, and monitoring so that they can become successful independent readers (Fawson, Jones, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008). Like R^5 , ScSR requires the teacher to take a more active role than in traditional SSR, engaging daily with students through individual conferences, guiding students' book choice, and helping students to set and achieve goals (Fawson, Jones, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008). Although there has been an attempt to develop new ways to teach independent reading these practices have not become widely accepted due to the lack of research. This study has added to the research about ScSR and its effectiveness as an instructional tool.

Purpose for the Study

The purpose for this study was to use Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) to improve reading fluency and comprehension. Many students will not become successful independent readers without explicit instruction in silent independent reading (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010). This study was needed to drive effective instruction in how to develop independent readers that can

function in the educational system and the workplace. This study added to the body of research about ScSR and the effectiveness of having students read independently and silently. It is also important to educate teachers about how to make the most of their instructional time while differentiating for all learners. ScSR is an alternative to SSR which provides a framework to guide a student's self-selected reading to ensure that time spent reading is effective (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2010). ScSR provides a structure in which students confer with the teacher and receive instruction and guidance in choosing texts from a variety of genres that are at their independent-level. Additionally, the teacher is involved in monitoring of comprehension and fluency, and students are held accountable through goal setting and books response activities (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2010). As a result of the use of ScSR students are expected to increase their reading fluency and reading comprehension.

Research Questions

What are the effects of ScSR on reading fluency and comprehension? Is ScSR more effective than traditional SSR in improving students' fluency and comprehension?

Significance to the Field

Independent silent reading has been shifted out of the classroom in favor of other instructional practices. Yet later in life students are expected to read silently and independently. This study evaluated if a modified version of SSR, ScSR, was effective in improving students' reading fluency and comprehension.

Nature of the Study

This particular study was a quantitative study. As Bui (2014) states, in quantitative research, the researcher tries to understand something through numbers. This study did just that, as the pre-and post-tests gave a number score. Additionally, a quantitative study identifies one to a few variables, and in the study, those variables

were SSR and ScSR. Furthermore, this study was very structured within a relatively short time span, which Bui (2014) states is also common to a quantitative study. The study took place at a northern Minnesota elementary school in a third grade classroom. The implementation of the SSR instructional strategy was used for the six weeks following winter break, and then the teacher switched to ScSR for the next six weeks. Because the researcher was trying to determine which strategy would have a greater impact on students' comprehension and fluency, pre-and post-tests were administered to determine the students' growth between each six week session.

Definition of Terms

Reading Fluency. Fluent readers can read text with speed, accuracy, and proper expression (NICHDI, 2000).

Reading Comprehension. Reading comprehension is intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader. Readers understand a text when they engage in intentional, problem solving thinking processes (NICHDI, 2000).

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). SSR is the practice of having students read independently and silently from self-selected texts. Typically the teacher also reads during this time. This practice is also referred to as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Super Quiet Reading Time (SQUIRT), Wonderfully Exciting Books (WEB), and Daily Independent Reading Time (DIRT) (Jones, Newman, & Reutzel, 2010).

Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR). In ScSR students read independently and silently with more teacher guidance. Teachers guide students in choosing independent-level texts from a variety of genres and confer with individual students to periodically monitor student reading progress. Additionally students are held accountable for their reading through book response projects (Jones, Newman, & Reutzel, 2010).

Independent-Level Text. These are texts that students can read with ninety-five percent accuracy or higher (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2010).

Wide Reading. To read a variety of texts and genres (Jones, Newman, & Reutzel, 2010).

Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations

Many assumptions were made in the study. For example, it was assumed that the teacher followed each instructional practice the way it was designed. Furthermore it was assumed that the teacher was competent to teach reading. It was also assumed that the participants were capable of mastering the reading strategies. Finally it was assumed that all assessments were administered following the correct protocols and scored accurately. Additionally there were several delimitations to the study. There was no control group with no treatment given and only a small number of students were involved in the research. Student absence was also a possible limitation, since any absent student missed instruction.

Ethical Considerations

This study took place at a northern Minnesota elementary school in one third-grade classroom. Participants included children, but the researcher only collected data on individuals whose parents signed the informed consent paperwork. Additionally the procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Wisconsin-Superior (Appendix A. Institutional Review Board).

Conclusion

This study focused on which instructional strategy resulted in greater student growth in fluency and comprehension: Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) or Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR). A comparison of data from pre- and post- tests was used to determine which strategy was most successful. The outcomes of this study were not conclusive in supporting the use of either SSR and/or ScSR. The data from this study can still be used to influence future research

and to help teachers and administrators make more informed decisions as to which type of reading instruction will most benefit students.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Students must be taught to read independently and silently, yet educators are hesitant to implement daily silent reading practice due to a lack of accountability, guidance, and feedback in traditional Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) programs (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2010). Consequently, the type of reading instruction prevalent in many elementary classrooms today is at odds with the way successful adults read, independently and silently (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010). Independent reading is an essential skill students must develop to be workforce and college ready, but for many students proficiency in silent reading does not develop naturally (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010).

The literature review addresses three areas of research related to silent independent reading in the classroom. The first section covers best practices and recent trends in reading instruction. The second section focuses on research studies about Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). Finally, the third section discusses research related to programs that enhance SSR, including Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR).

Best Practices and Recent Trends in Reading Instruction

A great deal of what educators currently know about best practices in reading instruction is a direct result of the National Reading Panel's (NRP) report titled *Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence Based Assessment of the Scientific Literature on Reading and Its Implication for Reading Instruction* (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD), 2000). The Panel was created in 1997 when Congress requested its formation to assess the status of research-based knowledge about the various approaches of teaching children to read. Once created, the Panel settled on the following topics for intensive study: alphabetics (phonemic awareness and phonics), fluency, comprehension, teacher education and reading

instruction, and computer technology and reading instruction (NICHHD, 2000). The members of the Panel adopted a set of rigorous research methodological standards that guided the screening of the research literature, standards that are typically used in studies in the fields of psychology and medical research (NICHHD, 2000). As a result only a small fraction of the total reading research available at the time was able to meet the Panel's standards and be used in the analysis.

When reviewing independent silent reading, the Panel acknowledged the widespread agreement that encouraging students to read independently and silently increases reading achievement but noted this is only a correlational relationship. Attempting to address this issue the Panel went on to look at the specific impact silent reading has on fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension (NICHHD, 2000). The studies examined emphasized student reading with little or no feedback and assessed only vocabulary and/or comprehension, rather than fluency. Also, only fourteen studies met the NRP criteria and were examined to identify trends and findings.

In conclusion, the NRP was unable to find a positive relationship between large amounts of silent reading and reading achievement (NICHHD, 2000). It should be noted however the NRP did not recommend the ending of this practice but rather suggested additional research be conducted. In fact, the Panel was sure to make clear that the findings do not negate the positive influence that wide independent reading may have on fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension and/or motivation. Rather they emphasized there was simply not enough data from studies which met their criteria and this type of methodologically rigorous research on silent reading has not yet been conducted (NICHHD, 2000).

Continuing the work of the NRP, to help educators use the best research-based practices when teaching reading, the National Institute for Literacy developed guides for

teachers focused on “what works” in reading instruction titled *Put Reading First* (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001). The guides are designed for teachers and summarize the findings of the NRP suggesting implications for classroom instruction. Like the NRP’s report, this publication focuses on the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The guide defines the skill, reviews evidence from the research, describes proven strategies for teaching the reading skill, and addresses educators’ frequently asked questions (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001).

When addressing silent independent reading Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn (2001) restate the findings of the NRP that the current research available on independent silent reading is not enough to confirm time spent on this practice is effective in raising reaching achievement. However the authors go further than the NRP and state “Rather than allocating instructional time for independent reading in the classroom, encourage your students to read more outside of school.” (p. 26). When summarizing the research the authors state that the best way to develop fluency is having students engage in repeated oral readings, a practice which is now the standard in many elementary classrooms (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010).

In 2010, the Common Core State Standards Institute (CCSSI) took the research-based trend a step further and published the “Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects”. The Institute asserts their standards are an important advance in standards-related work as they are “rigorous, research-based, align with college and work expectations, and internationally benchmarked” (CCSSI, 2010). The goal of the organization was to develop standards that states could adopt to ensure that all students were college or career ready by the end of high school. The standards describe what it means to be a literate person in the 21st century as an individual who: reads attentively and closely to understand and enjoy literature, sorts through

the large amount of information available digitally and in print, seeks thoughtful engagement with texts, and demonstrates reasoning necessary to becoming a responsible citizen (CSSI, 2010). Defining the essential skills and understandings students should have at the end of each grade level not how teachers should teach, the standards demand that students demonstrate independence, becoming self-directed learners who seek out knowledge and resources (CCSSI, 2010). At the end of each grade level, the standards require that students "read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently" (CCSSI, 2010) (p. 10). In conclusion, these generally accepted standards require that students are able to read independently but do not set out any strategy for a teacher to teach this independent reading.

The research literature about best practices in reading instruction continues to send educators mixed messages about the role of silent independent reading in the classroom. Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn (2001) clearly state in *Put Reading First* that SSR is not an effective practice and teachers would best use class time having students read orally. The NRP takes a more moderate approach, recognizing there is a great deal of correlational data supporting SSR but still stating that the research does not support it as a classroom practice. The limitations of both of these documents are that the number of studies able to meet the stringent requirements for inclusion in the review was quite low. Following the publication of these reports many classrooms began to end the practice of independent silent reading (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). While just a few years later in 2010, the Common Core State Standards Institute makes clear that to be college and career ready students must be able to read and comprehend text independently. Since not all students are able to transfer oral reading skills to silent reading (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010), it is necessary for some instruction in silent independent reading in the classroom.

Sustained Silent Reading

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is the practice of having students read silently and independently with little guidance from the teacher, who is also typically engaged in silent reading at the same time as the students. In their literature review Goodin & Pearson (2010) attempt to trace the development of the silent reading instruction through history. The authors examined documents that traced the educational and cultural history of reading and literacy looking for references to silent reading. When the authors had gathered a sufficient amount of evidence it was sorted and analyzed, focusing on the following time periods: Ancient and Medieval times, Colonial America, U.S. Expansion 1800-1900, U.S. at War, and Contemporary America (Goodin & Pearson, 2010).

Oral reading was dominant in the early history of reading and individuals that practiced silent reading were anomalies (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). In ancient and medieval times, reading instruction was tightly bound to religious instruction and silent reading was suspect because it was not subject to outside monitoring. The authors did not study early reading pedagogy in depth as this was before written English came to the Americas, but it is important to understand the medieval and ancient practices that have an impact on oral and silent reading practices throughout history (Goodin & Pearson, 2010).

Goodin and Pearson (2010) looked more deeply at pedagogy once the reading of English came to America beginning with colonial times. At this time, reading was still primarily oral, as books were scarce and reading remained closely tied to religion. This era also saw the development of the first “formal” set of books meant for reading instruction called the “Ordinary Road” by John Locke and included: the Horn Book, Primer, Psalter, Testament, and Bible (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). The mid-1700’s also saw the first mention of round robin reading, or the practice of taking turns to read aloud (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). After the American

Revolution, Goodin and Pearson (2010) noted that several cultural changes were taking place that would lay the groundwork for more silent reading in the future, namely the improving access to books and changing understandings about the purpose for reading.

During the U.S. expansion (the 1800s through the early 1900s), there was increased access to all kinds of publications; this and the development of public libraries allowed reading to become possible for a large number of people (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). Additionally the First Amendment protected the right to publish and a greater amount of fiction entered the market by the end of the century. By the early 1900's silent reading instruction began to be supported over oral reading, as a greater diversity of reading materials were available and a greater concern for comprehension was present at the time (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). Although the research of the time stated that silent reading was preferable to oral reading for speed and comprehension, Goodin and Pearson (2010) found that "practice lagged behind research" and "oral reading skills were still paramount in the schools" (p.12).

Both World War I (WWI) and World War II (WWII) had implications for the educational community as society discovered the reading comprehension ability of troops was not adequate this prompted calls for improved reading instruction (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). At the same time, children's reading began moving outside of school as public libraries developed children's collections and reading materials became even more abundant (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). This period also saw the development of the individualized reading approach, which operates on the premise that no class or small group can ever meet the needs of all readers. Therefore, each child deserves their own individualized reading plan (IRP) and schools often devoted 20-60 minutes to silent reading to accomplish these IRPs (Goodin & Pearson 2010). Goodin and Pearson (2010) note that this movement reached its peak in the 1960s when the practice of Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) was introduced.

All of these historical practices have had an impact on contemporary U.S. reading instruction but the most notable include the direct federal funding of school library material and the explosion in juvenile book publishing (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). At the beginning of the contemporary period, silent reading was a great fit for classroom pedagogies including differentiated instruction and the literature-based reading movement (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). Although in more recent history silent reading has fallen from favor with the rise of research-based instruction and a lack of consistent research on silent reading.

In conclusion, Goodin & Pearson (2010) acknowledge that silent reading is a cultural practice that developed over a long period of time and was affected not only by trends in education but social trends as well. Goodin and Pearson (2010) hope that the results of their review will increase the focus on practices that help students read and think on their own.

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) has been disappearing from American classrooms since the National Reading Panel reported that there was no evidence to support SSR as means to improve reading achievement (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). The Panel did not encourage this abandonment but rather encouraged more research on the topic on silent reading (NICHHD, 2000). In 2010 Lewis, Lewis, & Manning reviewed the currently available research for the book *Revisiting Silent Reading: New Directions for Teachers and Researchers* in their chapter titled "Sustained Silent Reading: An Update of the Research". The authors looked at eleven literature reviews and twenty-nine studies that came from journals, unpublished dissertations, and other documents that examined SSR or an equivalent program and its effect on reading achievement (Lewis, Lewis, & Manning, 2010).

In the eleven literature reviews that the authors examined it was found that most of the reviewers agreed that reading is a skill which improves with practice and time spent reading is positive and effective practice (Lewis, Lewis, & Manning, 2010). Studies that lasted longer also

showed more positive results in student achievement. The twenty-nine studies showed inconsistent results: high-level and heterogeneous groups of students showed little difference in outcomes while lower level readers and English Language Learners (ELL) showed significant positive outcomes (Lewis, Lewis, & Manning, 2010).

The limitations of this literature review are that the research covers a broad span of time from 1975 until 2004, and very little of the research was conducted in the last ten years. The studies that have been published in the last ten years have also focused primarily on specialized populations, such as students enrolled in special education or ELL programs. The authors note that since the publishing of the NRP there have been few studies conducted on SSR. After reviewing the literature Lewis, Lewis, & Manning (2010) concluded that although there was a positive relationship between time spent reading and reading achievement this finding was not significant. The authors repeat the call of the NRP for more research on SSR and longer-term studies (Lewis, Lewis, & Manning, 2010).

One recent study on SSR was conducted by Chua (2008) and focused on students' habits and attitudes about reading books during SSR and for leisure. The research was conducted on students in a secondary school and used time-series design, assessing students' attitudes three times in a twelve-month period from October 2002 to October 2003. All students, teachers, and staff participated in SSR for 20 minutes a day during the first period of the school day, students were free to choose their own books and encouraged to write notes and reflections in their reading journals (Chua, 2008). The first measure was taken one week into the SSR procedures and was used to set a baseline. At a school assembly questionnaires were distributed to students asking about their reading habits and their perceptions of their peers' reading habits. Two additional measures were taken in February and October 2003.

Chua (2008) found that the results supported the hypothesis. The percentage of students reporting that they always or sometimes read books during the SSR period increased from 76.85 percent to 88.74 percent. Students also reported an increase in the percentage of their classmates who were actively reading during SSR from 62.44 percent to 80.54 percent (Chua, 2008). There was also a decrease off-task behavior from 65.16 percent to 23.42 percent for chatting with classmates and from 44.09 percent to 16.29 percent for students doing unrelated class work (Chua, 2008). When examining student attitudes about reading Chua (2008) also saw significant increase in the percentage of students reporting that they found reading enjoyable from 49.99 percent to 59.64 percent. The author's hypothesis that there would be an increase in time spent reading outside the school day was unsupported by the results.

The conclusions drawn by Chua (2008) are that SSR had a positive effect on students' reading habits during the SSR period and their positive feelings about reading, however the effects of the program did not extend to reading outside the school day. The study had some limitations including possible reporting or estimating bias when assessing peer behavior, and confounding variables such as historical events and maturation (Chua, 2008). Planning for future studies, Chua (2008) suggests including other measurements to improve validity.

The research shows that SSR has been in classrooms in some form for decades, with the first mention of silent reading in the classroom coming in the 1900s (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). It is also clear that educators and policy makers have been hesitant to embrace silent reading throughout history. This may be due to the fact that studies have had inconsistent results and researchers have not been able to come to consensus about SSR. The limitations are that all of these documents call for additional research to be completed to determine the

effectiveness of SSR. Yet since the publication of the NRP's report in 2000 there has been very little research done on SSR (NICHIC, 2000 & Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001).

Enhanced Sustained Silent Reading

R^5(Read, Relax, Reflect, Respond, and Rap)

On the surface, Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) looks like it is going well but dig a little deeper, look a little longer and you will see disengaged readers: students moving about the room, and others who are flipping pages in the book but not making any real meaning about what they are reading (Clausen-Grace & Kelly, 2006). The classroom scene described by Clausen-Grace & Kelley (2006) echoes common criticisms of SSR: that it provides students with no teacher guidance in book selection, teachers do not interact with or provide feedback to students, students are not held accountable for their reading, and the time spent reading during SSR is poorly controlled (Fawson, Jones, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008). To attend to these criticisms and classroom observations, Clausen & Kelley retooled SSR creating a program called R^5(read, relax, reflect, respond, and rap).

The purpose of the study was to determine if implementation of the R^5 strategy could improve students' engagement with reading and their comprehension of grade level texts. The study took place in Clausen-Grace's third-grade classroom and looked particularly at two groups of students: those performing well above grade level and disengaged or "fake" readers (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006). The study had an initial duration of four moths but was continued for an additional three months.

The R^5 intervention was conducted three days a week for thirty to forty minutes. Students spent ten to twenty-five minutes reading from their self-selected text while the teacher took a status of the class (recording the titles of books students were reading and the page) and conferenced individually with one or two students (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006). After

reading, students took about five minutes to reflect and record, noting the date, title, author, genre, and a reflective response to the text read that day. While reflecting the students may respond to a selection of prompts or connect their reflection to the comprehension strategy currently being taught (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006). Finally students shared their reflections and responses with a peer and then with the whole class (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006).

Clausen-Grace & Kelley (2006) were focused on assessing student engagement and comprehension. To this end, they used the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) for grades 4-8 which provides information on engagement using a Student Reading Survey. After completed by the students the teacher uses a rubric to determine if the student is at one of four levels: intervention, instructional, independent, or advanced (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006). The comprehension assessment focused on both fiction and nonfiction and the skills of prediction, summarization, literal comprehension, interpretation, reflection, and metacognitive awareness, the scores from these areas were totaled to give an overall comprehension score (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006). The full assessment was given at the beginning of the study and again after seven months.

After seven months, positive outcomes were shown on the DRA Student Reading Survey. Most notably, 100% of students scored at the independent level on two areas of the engagement survey, up from 33% initially (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006). Comprehension also improved, all areas assessed saw growth with metacognitive awareness showing the greatest increase from 89% scoring at the intervention or instructional level, to only 5% scoring at the instructional level and no students at the intervention level (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006). Although the study showed positive outcomes there were limitations: only a small number of students were involved and there was no control group for comparison. It is then hard

to determine if the positive outcomes are a result of engagement in R^5 or other factors such as additional reading instruction or student maturation.

Clausen-Grace and Kelley (2006) conclude that it is not about tossing out a practice that doesn't work but rather adjusting it to be more effective. Their thoughtful modification of SSR paired with traditional reading instruction saw gains on formal reading assessments. The most exciting outcome for the authors was the motivation that students got from sharing with their peers, a practice that was especially effective for disengaged or "fake" readers (Clausen-Grace & Kelley, 2006).

Culmo Independent Reading

Allowing students time to read independently during the school day and a choice of a variety of reading materials are strategies that some school districts consider to improve student motivation to read and reading achievement. Culmo (2009) attempted to determine if the perceptions of second grade students about reading, themselves as readers, motivation to read, and reading achievement could be improved by providing daily independent reading time in the classroom. The study was conducted in a suburban elementary school in two second grade classrooms: one acting as a control and the other as the intervention group. The intervention began in January 2009 and ran for a total of twelve weeks.

The intervention included focused pre-reading instruction, increasing independent reading time, and follow-up activities. The researcher began by modeling various independent reading strategies including choosing just right books, encouraging wide reading through book talks, and side-by-side conferencing (Culmo, 2009). Students then read independently out of books they chose themselves. At the beginning of the intervention students were expected to read for five to seven minutes slowly increasing to thirty minutes. The teacher documented the

amount of time students were asked to read each day. After reading, participants then wrote a reflection in a journal or discussed what was read with a peer or teacher.

Data was collected using the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) which consists of word lists and passages that measure fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Culmo (2009) also administered a Motivation to Read Profile (MRP), a survey that assesses self concepts as a reader and perceptions about the value of reading. After the twelve week intervention the researcher found that there was no statistically significant difference in motivation to read or reading achievement between students in the control and the intervention groups (Culmo, 2009). Although there was no significant improvement in achievement or motivation, Culmo (2009) was able to conclude that students in the intervention group were more likely to be engaged and on task during independent reading. This conclusion suggests that daily independent reading is a practice worth encouraging in the classroom.

The study had several limitations. It lasted for only twelve weeks and longitudinal studies should be conducted over a much greater amount of time. Culmo (2009) also mentioned the small sample size as a limitation of the study. The TPRI was also noted as not being valid or reliable as students hit a ceiling and it did not provide an accurate picture of all students' reading achievement (Culmo, 2009).

Carey, Howard, and Leftwich Independent Reading

Teachers are often hesitant to use SSR in their classrooms because of a lack of accountability, guidance, and feedback (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2010). Carey, Howard, and Leftwich (2013) saw these same limitations in their classroom and noted that students were engaged in off task behaviors during independent reading time such as changing reading materials, going to the bathroom, browsing bookshelves, or doing other work. The purpose of their research project was to increase student engagement during independent

reading time. Participants in the study were split between two sites, elementary and intermediate schools in a northern suburb of Chicago, Illinois. Thirty-two of the participants were fourth-grade students and twenty-six were seventh-grade students.

Carey, Howard, and Leftwich (2013) designed an intervention that consisted of teacher conferencing, modeling, and allowing students choice in reading material. The researchers implemented the intervention from August through December 2012. Prior to the study the teacher researchers had set up organized classroom libraries and reading areas within the classrooms. They also designated a consistent time block for students to read independently and developed lesson plans for guiding students' book choices and appropriate reading behaviors (Carey, Howard, and Leftwich, 2013). Once the intervention started the teacher researchers conferenced individually with students weekly, modeled appropriate reading behaviors in lessons and conferences, and allowed students choice in reading materials. Carey, Howard, and Leftwich (2013) also had students respond to their independent reading through peer conferencing or journaling.

A student questionnaire and disengagement checklist was used to gather information about engagement during independent reading and problem behaviors. The pre- and post-tests were compared to note any changes in students' interests, attitudes, and reading behaviors (Carey, Howard, and Leftwich, 2013). At the conclusion of the study the data revealed that students' attitudes toward independent reading at school improved as well as students' attitudes about themselves as a reader (Carey, Howard, and Leftwich, 2013). The researchers also saw a reduction in problem behaviors during independent reading time, especially students flipping though pages without reading, which dropped from 33% to 15% (Carey, Howard, and Leftwich, 2013).

In conclusion Carey, Howard, and Leftwich (2013) found that after the intervention more students loved to read and exhibited fewer problem behaviors than before the intervention. It is clear that structured independent reading improves student attitudes about reading and also more time spent reading improves the quality of reading. In addition to a small sample size this study was also limited because it was not determined if this improvement in students attitude would transfer to increased reading achievement.

Scaffolded Silent Reading

Teachers often struggle to devote time to independent reading in their classroom. One reason is the National Reading Panel's finding that Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is not an effective research-based strategy (National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD),2000). Additional criticism of SSR is that it provides students with no teacher guidance in book selection, teachers do not interact with students and provide little feedback to students, students are not held accountable for their reading, and the time spent reading is poorly controlled (Fawson, Jones, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008). A solution proposed by Fawson, Jones, Reutzel, & Smith (2008) is Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR), an approach that was systematically designed to address the acknowledged concerns surrounding past implementation of SSR. ScSR is intended to give students guidance, support, structure, accountability, and monitoring so that they can become successful independent readers.

The purpose of the study conducted by Fawson, Jones, Reutzel and Smith (2008) was to examine the effectiveness of ScSR by comparing it with the National Reading Panel's recommended practice of Guided Repeated Oral Reading with Feedback (GROR). The study took place in two high poverty, low-performing schools and involved four third grade teachers and seventy-two students in two elementary schools. In some classrooms, teachers implemented the ScSR procedures while in the other students engaged in GROR. In the ScSR

classrooms, students read independently and silently for twenty minutes after a brief lesson on an element of fluent reading or a comprehension strategy. As the students read, the teacher individually conferenced with four to five students; first taking a running record and then initiating a discussion about the book while monitoring students comprehension. Finally, the teacher helped the students to set a goal for completing the book and to choose a book response project.

The intervention lasted for an entire school year with all four teachers rotating through teaching ScSR and GROR while students were assigned to either the ScSR or GROR group. The variables that were measured in the students' reading included: accuracy, rate, expression, and comprehension. The variables were analyzed by looking at gain scores between two pre-test passages and two post-test passages. The passages were taken from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) oral reading fluency tests, which use a one-minute passage to assess accuracy and rate. Expression was evaluated using the Multidimensional Fluency Scale (MFS) while comprehension was measured using oral retellings scored on a protocol based on the Developmental Reading Assessment.

After analysis of the data, it was clear that ScSR was just as effective as GROR when looking at students' accuracy, rate, and comprehension. ScSR and GROR both showed 21% reduction in reading errors, a 27% increase in words read correctly, and a 20% increase in expressive reading qualities. In conclusion, it can be said that ScSR provides third-grade teachers with an alternative for practicing reading that is just as effective as GROR. The limitations of this study were the small group of students involved. An additional weakness is that the research was only completed at one grade level.

The past research has suggested that classrooms should not spend time having students practice independent silent reading (NICHHD, 2000). This study by Faswon, Jones,

Reutzel, & Smith (2008) demonstrates that ScSR can be an effective way to improve students' reading comprehension who providing them practice with independent and silent reading with teacher guidance and support.

The research literature indicates with enhancements SSR can be an effective classroom practice to improve student motivation to read, attitudes about reading, and reading comprehension. As Clausen-Grace and Kelley (2006) assert in their article it is not about tossing out a practice that doesn't work but rather adjusting it to be more effective. Programs such as ScSR, R5, and Independent Reading abandon the traditional SSR model where the students and teacher both read silently with little to no interaction and instead create environments where students receive guidance, support, structure, accountability, and monitoring so that they can become successful independent readers. Limitations of the above studies are the limited sample sizes and the fact that they have not been repeated for validity.

Summary of the Literature Review

To ensure that all students are career and college ready it is important that they are able to read and comprehend text independently. Yet the recent literature on best practices in reading instruction send educators mixed messages about the role of silent independent reading in the classroom. The CCSS state that students must be able to read and comprehend text independently while the NRP and *Put Reading First* suggest the removal of SSR from the classroom as there is little research supporting it as an effective practice. The research on SSR has shown that it has been a part of American schools for decades (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). It developed as a classroom practice in the 1900's as a greater concern for comprehension was present at the time. The practice of having students read independently and silently cycled in and out of popularity over the following decades most recently falling out of favor after the NRP's report. Yet educators know it is not about throwing out a practice that doesn't work but adjusting

it to become more effective. There have been several enhancements proposed to traditional SSR, including ScSR, R^5 , and Independent Reading. These programs are slightly different from each other but all offer students more guidance, support, structure, accountability, and monitoring than traditional SSR.

Chapter Three: Methods

Introduction

After being a staple in classrooms since World War II, Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) has been disappearing for the last decade (Goodin & Pearson, 2010). This is due in part to the National Reading Panel's report, which found that there was little research to back up the practice of SSR (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD), 2000). Subsequently in 2010 the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were adopted in many states and greatly increased the rigor in many reading curriculums to ensure that students are career and college ready (Common Core State Standards Institute (CCSSI), 2010). Teachers and other school staff have been pressured to make sure that reading instruction is research based, effective, and meaningful. Consequently, the type of reading instruction prevalent in many elementary classrooms today is at odds with the way successful adults read - independently and silently (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010). The CCSS recognize the need for this type of reading, requiring that by the end of each grade level students are able to independently read and comprehend appropriate grade level text, but for many students proficiency in silent reading does not develop naturally (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010). In the classroom there is a need for students to develop and master independent reading skills but students need guidance, support, structure, accountability, and monitoring so that they can become successful. The purpose of this study was to further the research about the effects of Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) on third grade students' reading fluency and comprehension. Additionally the researcher wanted to discover if ScSR is more effective than traditional Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) in improving students' fluency and comprehension.

Setting

This study took place in an elementary school in Northern Minnesota. Thirty-nine percent of the students at this school qualified for free or reduced priced lunch and eighteen percent received special education services. Of the total population of 570 students, ninety-six percent identified as White, not Hispanic, two percent as Hispanic, one percent as American Indian/Alaskan Native, and less that one percent as Black, not Hispanic, or Asian. The school also had less that one percent of students classified as English language learners.

The intervention was conducted in a third grade general education classroom, during the regular school day. The classroom had a ninety minute English Language Arts block which is when this study was conducted. The physical setting of the classroom was flexible, the desks and tables were moved every four weeks but there were several important areas that were consistent throughout the study. At the front of the room was a rug, which served as a gathering space for lessons involving the Smartboard, read-alouds, and other instructional purposes. At the back of the room was another rug near a large bookshelf that held the classroom library.

During independent reading time students were encouraged to sit in any area of the room where they would be successful and comfortable. Reading spots were located throughout the room and included in desks, under desks, at either of the large classroom rugs, elsewhere on the floor, or in one of several beanbag chairs. There was a variety of lighting sources in the classroom that were used to provide both dim and brightly lit reading spaces. The rear was lit only with natural light from the windows, while in the front the overhead lights were used to provide a brighter reading environment.

Participants

The sampling procedure used by the researcher was a convenience sample. Participants in this study were chosen from the researcher's third grade classroom in the Northern Minnesota elementary school. The participants for this study had parental consent.

This population was convenient to the researcher and appropriate to the research. Convenient as it allowed the researcher to observe and implement the intervention daily and appropriate because all students were able to read independently at some level. Although a convenience sample limited the number of participants, Bui (2014) states that this type of sample is commonly used and appropriate for a master's thesis. Additionally the use of these participants allowed the researcher access to historical data.

There were twenty-three participants in the study: thirteen males and eleven females. At the time of the study, eleven of the participants were nine years old and thirteen were eight years old. Of the twenty-three students, thirty-two percent, or seven students, had individualized education plans and four of those students received special education services in the targeted area for this study, reading. The researcher assumed that the percentage of students that received free and reduced priced lunch matched the school's percentage of thirty-nine percent.

In the school selected for the study, students took the Northwest Education Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests for universal screening in reading. Students were given this assessment in the fall of 2015 and were given the assessment again in the spring of 2016. Of the twenty-five participants, two scored in the eightieth percentile, or in the high range on the fall screening. Eight students scored between the sixty-first and seventy-ninth percentile or the high-average range, and nine scored in the forty-first to sixtieth percentile, or the low average range. Four students scored below the twenty-first percentile and are considered in the low range. All students took part in both instructional strategies and are represented in the corresponding data.

Intervention

The independent variable measured by this study is the Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) approach to independent reading practice, as compared to traditional Sustained Silent

Reading (SSR). In SSR participants read silently and independently for 20 minutes daily with the teacher also engaged in silent reading, thus modeling positive reading behaviors. When engaged in ScSR participants read independently and silently for 20 minutes after a brief lesson on a fluency or comprehension strategy. As the students read, the researcher held Individual Monitoring Conferences (IMC) with four to five students, first taking a running record and then initiating a discussion about the book while monitoring student's comprehension (Appendix B. Scaffolded Silent Reading Instructional Materials). Finally, the researcher helped the student to set a goal for completing the book and to choose a book response project.

The dependent variable is the participants' reading achievement. The researcher measured participants' reading fluency (rate and accuracy) and comprehension using the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency (2006) and Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension (2006) assessments (Appendix C. Measurement Instruments). Participants took both of the assessments at the start of the study, again after their participation in SSR, and finally after participating in ScSR.

Materials

Three main types of instructional materials were used in this intervention. The first was the classroom library. ScSR requires students to read from a wide variety of genres at their independent level. This requires a carefully arranged classroom library. In this classroom books were clearly labeled with reading levels and arranged by genre to support and guide student choice. The library was organized by the classroom teacher several years prior to facilitate ease of student use. Books were placed in bins and sorted by genre, each bin was labeled with a genre and image and the books in that bin had a matching sticker on the cover. The books were also labeled on the back with their Guided Reading Level. There were

approximately 800 books in the library ranging from Guided Reading Level F to V, with the majority between levels L to Q.

A genre wheel, the second instruction material, was used by participants to track their reading, printed on brightly colored paper, each student had their own wheel where they tracked the genres of books they had completed (Appendix B. Scaffolded Silent Reading Instructional Materials). In ScSR students are expected to finish a minimum of five books every nine weeks of the school year. Once students have read from all the genres on the wheel they can begin again and select books from previously read genres. In one school year students are expected to complete two genre wheels. Participants in this study were expected to complete between two to four books during the six weeks of ScSR.

Finally, during ScSR the researcher used the Individual Monitoring Conference (IMC) form to record and track meetings with participants (Appendix B. Scaffolded Silent Reading Instructional Materials). On the IMC form the researcher took a running record of the participant's oral reading, noting reading rate and ensuring the text was at an independent level. The IMC also provided guidelines for the comprehension conversation and goal setting with students. For narrative text participants were expected to show their comprehension by retelling the story including mentions of characters, setting, problem, goals, episodes, and resolution as appropriate for their location in the text. For expository text the retelling was expected to include the topic, main idea, supporting details, and specific vocabulary. If the student did not include these items in their retelling the teacher asked discussion questions to further determine the student's comprehension of the text. The last part of the IMC was a goal setting conversation, which encouraged the student to both set a page goal for their next conference and a date to complete the whole book. These goals were set based on the students' previous progress through the text.

Measurement Instruments

The easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension (2006) measures were used to measure participants' reading comprehension both before and after the interventions (Appendix C. Measurement Instruments). The easyCBM assessments are designed to assess students' literal, inferential, and evaluative comprehension. They consist of an original work of narrative fiction and fifteen to eighteen multiple-choice questions, which are designed to be at middle-of-the-year third grade difficulty. Students were instructed to read the passages first and then answer the questions. There was no time limit and students were allowed as much time as needed to read the passage and answer the questions.

Participants' reading fluency was measured before and after the interventions using the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency (2006) measure (Appendix C. Measurement Instruments). This assessment measures both accuracy and fluency with grade level material. Students were given the test individually, reading a passage aloud for one minute. At this time, the researcher marked any incorrectly read words or omitted words. If a student struggled with a word for longer than three seconds the word was provided and an error marked. At the end of one minute, the researcher indicated the total words read, errors, and total correct words only recording words read correctly as the participant's score.

The easyCBM assessments are known as curriculum-based measures (CBMs). CBMs are standardized measures that sample from a year's worth of curriculum to assess the degree to which students have mastered the most important skills and knowledge for each grade. To measure student performance on the easyCBM measures, a student's raw score on a given measure is compared to the percentile rank associated with that score. Performance at the 50th percentile rank can be interpreted as 'average'. Performance below or above the 50th percentile indicates that a student is performing either above or below average respectively.

Participants' individual scores and were collected after each assessment and recorded in a spreadsheet (Appendix D. Assessment Results). The spreadsheet was maintained through the entirety of the study recording participants scores on both assessments before any treatment, after SSR, and finally after ScSR. At the completion of the study the mean was calculated.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension measure has been previously established by Lai, Irving, Park, Alonzo & Tindal (2012) who found "acceptable levels of reliability" as measures used repeatedly over time to measure student progress in developing comprehension skills. The authors also describe the process used to develop valid measures. The passages used in the easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension measures were written by a variety of people who were either elementary and secondary school teachers or graduate students from many education colleges, then a professional item writer created more than 400 questions for the passages. To ensure reliability the researchers used a variety of approaches to study the reliability of the easyCBM comprehension assessments including repeated measures, analysis of variance, split half reliability using the Guttman formula, top/bottom reliability, and Rasch analysis.

Lai, Alonzo, and Tindal who looked at correlations between the easyCBM measures and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) confirmed the reliability and validity of easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency tests in at 2013 report. The correlational of the fluency measure was very strong.

Procedure

Each of the measurement instruments was administered to participants prior to the start of the study. The fluency measure was given to students individually over a one-week period,

with each student reading a single one-minute passage. The comprehension measure was administered to the whole group. Participants were prompted to read the story first and then carefully answer the questions. Participants were made aware that they had as much time as needed to finish all of the questions. When finished all measures were collected and scored by the researcher.

To begin the first phase of the study participants then engaged SSR during their daily literacy block. At a set time each day students took out their self-selected books and read silently and independently for twenty minutes. The teacher also read during this time. Of the two treatments SSR was chosen for the first treatment because of the lack of interactions between the teacher and students. In ScSR teachers provide instruction prior to students' independent reading practice and the researcher wanted to avoid students using the lessons learned in ScSR during SSR. The practice of SSR continued for six weeks. On the seventh week the researcher assessed students' fluency and comprehension using the easyCBM measures as described above.

Over the following six weeks students engaged in ScSR. Each day the ScSR practice began with a five to eight minute lesson on an important facet of fluency or comprehension, taken from *The Reading Strategies Book* by Jennifer Serravallo (2015) (Appendix E. Scaffolded Silent Reading Lessons). Following the lesson participants then read independently for 20 minutes. While participants were reading the teacher conducted IMCs with four to five students each day. Participants met with the teacher weekly and were monitored for fluency, comprehension, and book completion. Again on the seventh week the researcher administered the easyCBM measures.

Data Analysis

The data for this study was collected through the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency and Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension measures (Appendix C. Measurement Instruments). The data from these measures was treated as a pre-and post-test for each of the study treatments; SSR and ScSR. Participants' scores were collected after each assessment and recorded in a spreadsheet (Appendix D. Assessment Results). At the completion of the study the mean score was calculated for each phase of the study. This data was analyzed based on the change in the number of students at each percentile level, as well as the change in the mean score.

Conclusion

In all, twenty-three third grade students at a northern Minnesota elementary school were instructed using two different silent reading strategies: Sustained Silent Reading and Scaffolded Silent Reading. Data was collected using the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency and Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension assessments, and those scores were used as the pre-and post-test scores for this study and compared by the number of participants at each percentile and mean scores for growth. The following chapter will analyze those scores to determine which program allowed for the most growth.

Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

This chapter reports the results of the data analysis for this research study. The first set of data shown in this chapter was collected through pre- and post- tests, easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension (MCRC) and easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency (PRF), to determine the effectiveness of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). The second set of data in this chapter was collected through the same pre- and post- tests to determine the effectiveness of Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR). The third section of this chapter shows the difference in score improvements between the pre- and post- tests when using the two instructional methods.

Findings

The following figures illustrate participants' scores on the MCRC and PRF assessments before and after engaging in SSR and ScSR. The MCRC has a total for 20 points for comprehension questions answered correctly. The PRF counts words read correctly in one minute. Scores for both assessments are reported by percentile using nationally norm-referenced interpretations provided by easyCBM.

Sustained Silent Reading Data

Figure 1 shows the results of the pre- and post- test easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension (MCRC) assessment. On the MCMR pre-test two participants scored at or below the 10th percentile, three at the 25th, thirteen at the 50th, four at the 75th, and only one participant was at or above the 90th percentile. After participating in SSR for 6 weeks one student remained at the 10th percentile, one student remained at the 25th, eleven students were at the 50th percentile, eight students scored in the 57th percentile, and two students scored at the 90th percentile. The mean score for all participants was 12.2 items correct before participating in SSR and 13.8 items correct after participating in SSR.

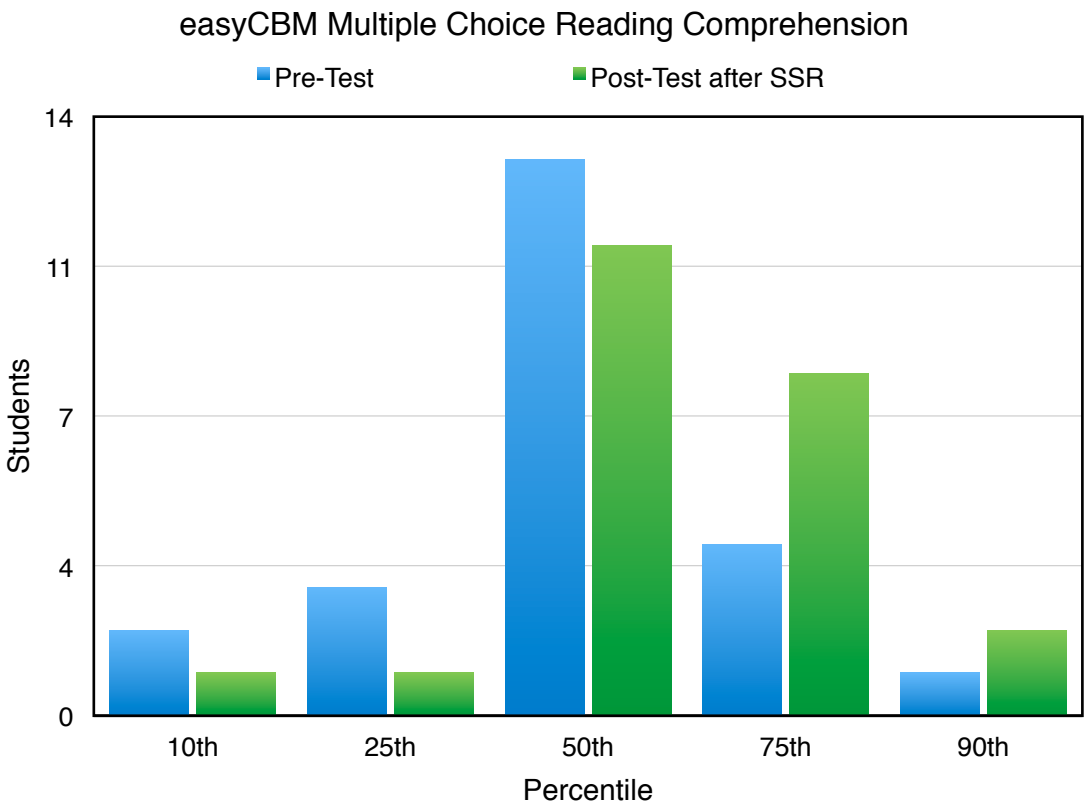

Figure 1. Pre - and Post- Test data for MCRC before and after Sustained Silent Reading (SSR).

Figure 2 shows the results of the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency (PRF) pre-test and post-test for the SSR period of the study. At the beginning of the study one student scored in the 10th percentile in fluency, two at the 25th percentile, nine at the 50th, five at the 75th, and six students scored at or above the 90th percentile. After the treatment the number of students in the 10th percentile remained the same. The number of students in the 25th was four, six students were in the 50th percentile, four in the 75th percentile, and eight students were in the 90th percentile. The mean score for all participants prior to SSR treatment was 121.3 and 118.3 after the SSR treatment.

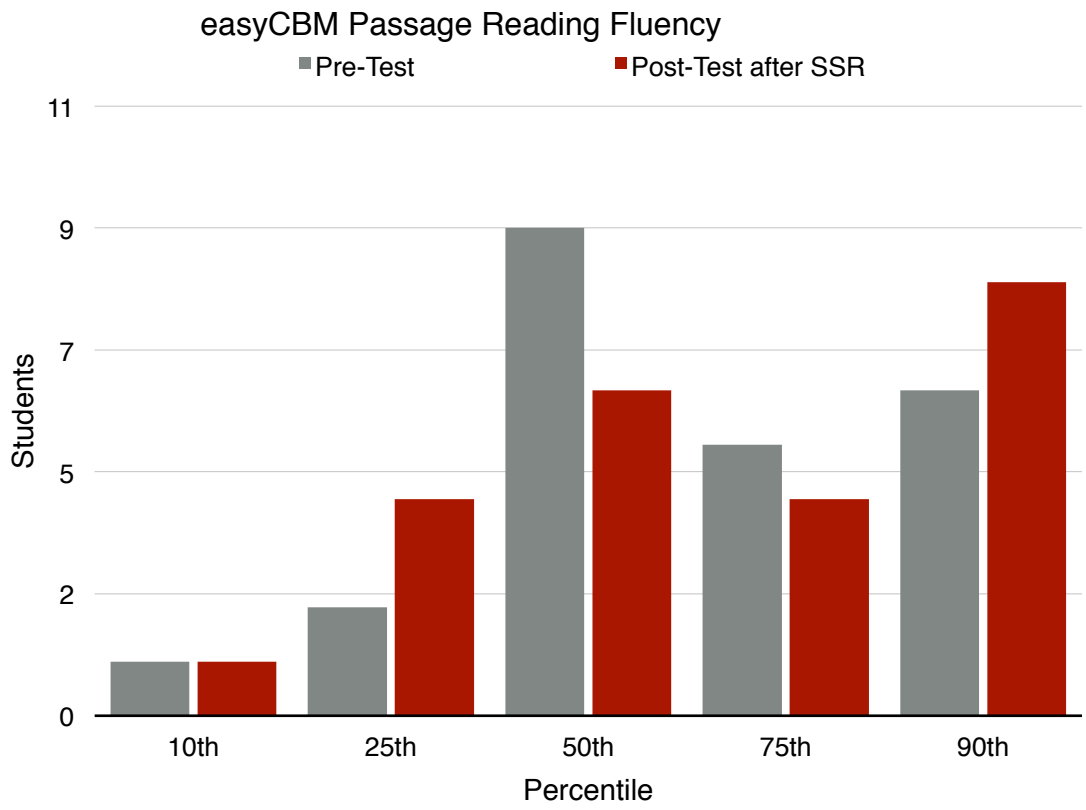

Figure 2. Pre - and Post- Test data from PRF before and after SSR

Scaffolded Silent Reading Data

The results from the MCRC pre-and post- test are shown in Figure 3. Before beginning ScSR one participant scored in the 10th percentile, one participant scored in the 25th, eleven were at the 50th, eight at the 75th, and two participants scored at or above the 90th percentile. After the six week ScSR treatment the number of students scoring at the 10th percentile continued to be one, four students scored at the 25th percentile, six at the 50th, eight at the 75th, and four at the 90th percentile. The mean score for all students before participating in ScSR was 13.8 items correct after participating in ScSR the mean score was 14.1 items correct.

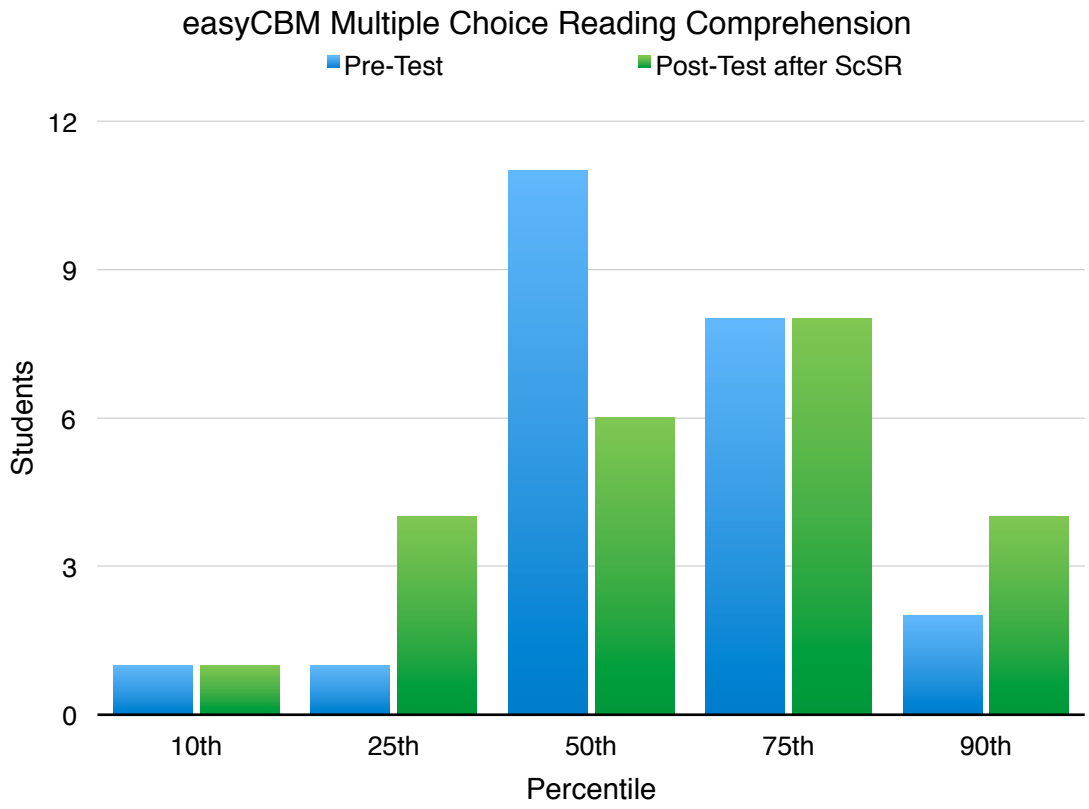

Figure 3. Pre- and Post- Test data from MCRC for ScSR

On the PRF pre-test for the ScSR phase of the study one participant scored at the 10th percentile, four at the 25th, six at the 50th, 4 at the 75th, and eight at or above the 90th percentile. As shown in Figure 4, after the treatment one participant remained at the 10th percentile, three at the 25th, six at the 50th, seven at the 75th, and six participants were in the 90th percentile. The mean score for all students prior to participating in ScSR was 118.3 words correct and after ScSR the mean score was 122 words correct per minute.

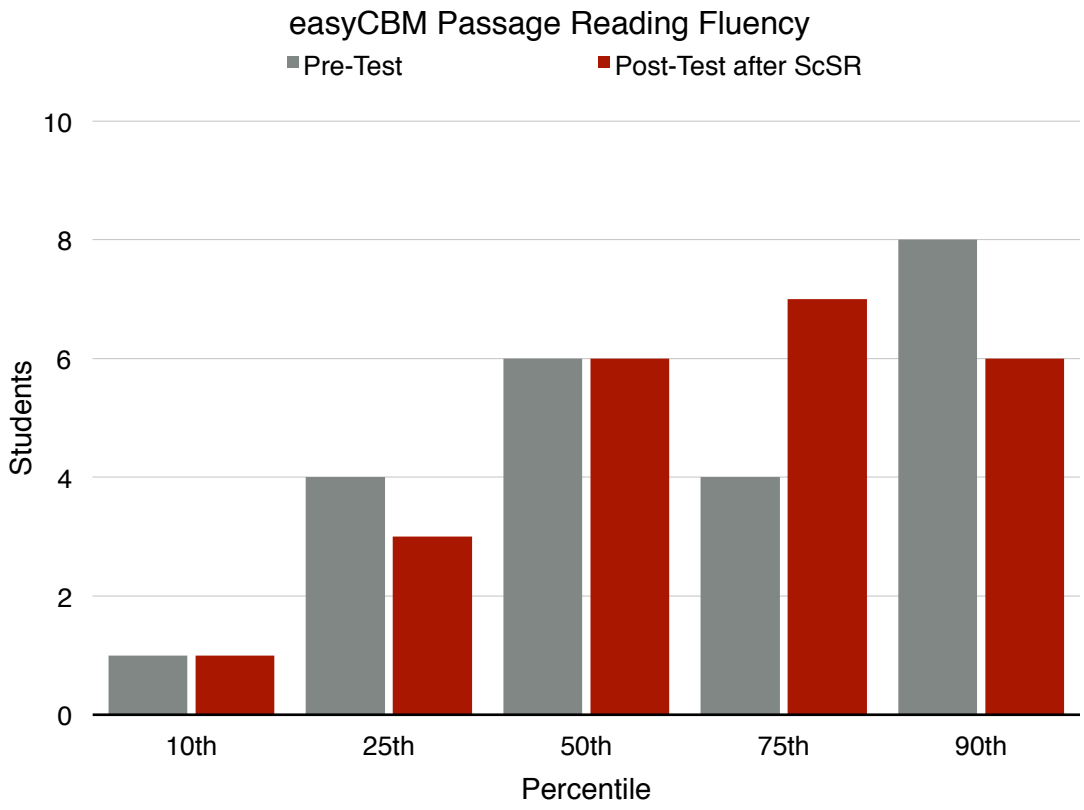

Figure 4. Pre - and Post- Test data from PRF before and after ScSR

D*ata Comparing Sustained Silent Reading and Scaffolded Silent Reading*

Figure 5 shows the effects of SSR and ScSR on participants' reading comprehension using the MCRC assessment. SSR showed an average increase of 1.6 items correct while ScSR showed an average increase of 0.3 items correct. Participants' scores increased by 1.3 more items correct in the SSR data.

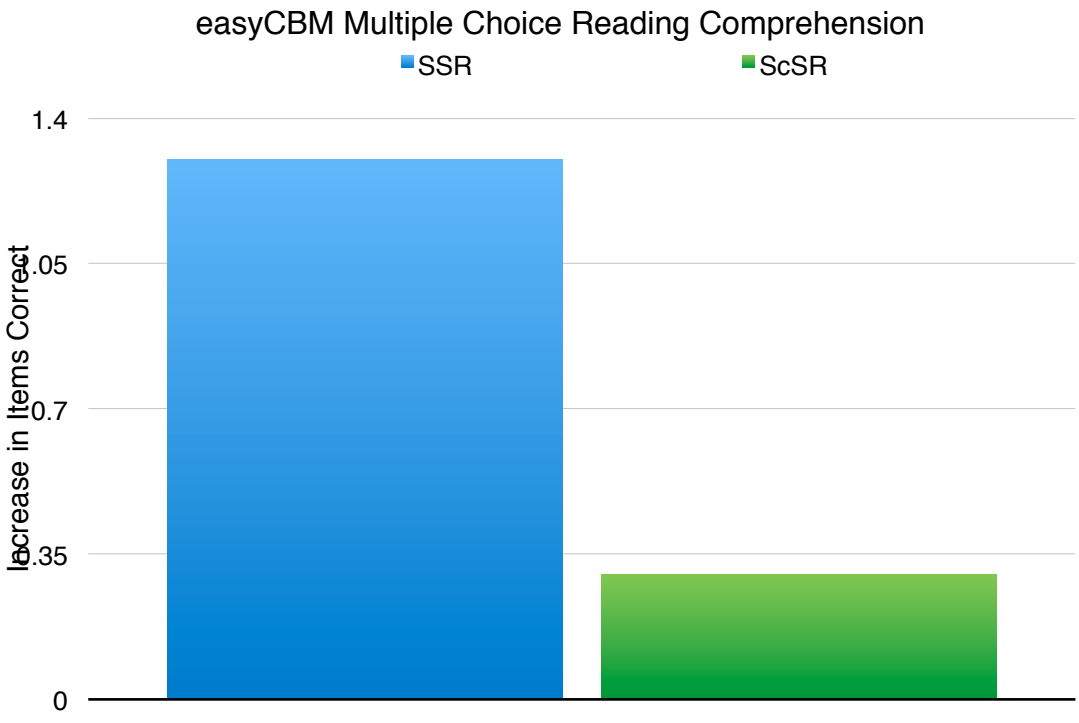

Figure 5. Increase in items correct on MCRC when using SSR and ScSR

Figure 6 shows the average increase in words read correctly in one minute on the PRF assessment when using SSR and ScSR. After SSR participants showed a decrease of 3.0 words read correctly, while after ScSR participants showed an increase of 3.7 words read correctly in one minute.

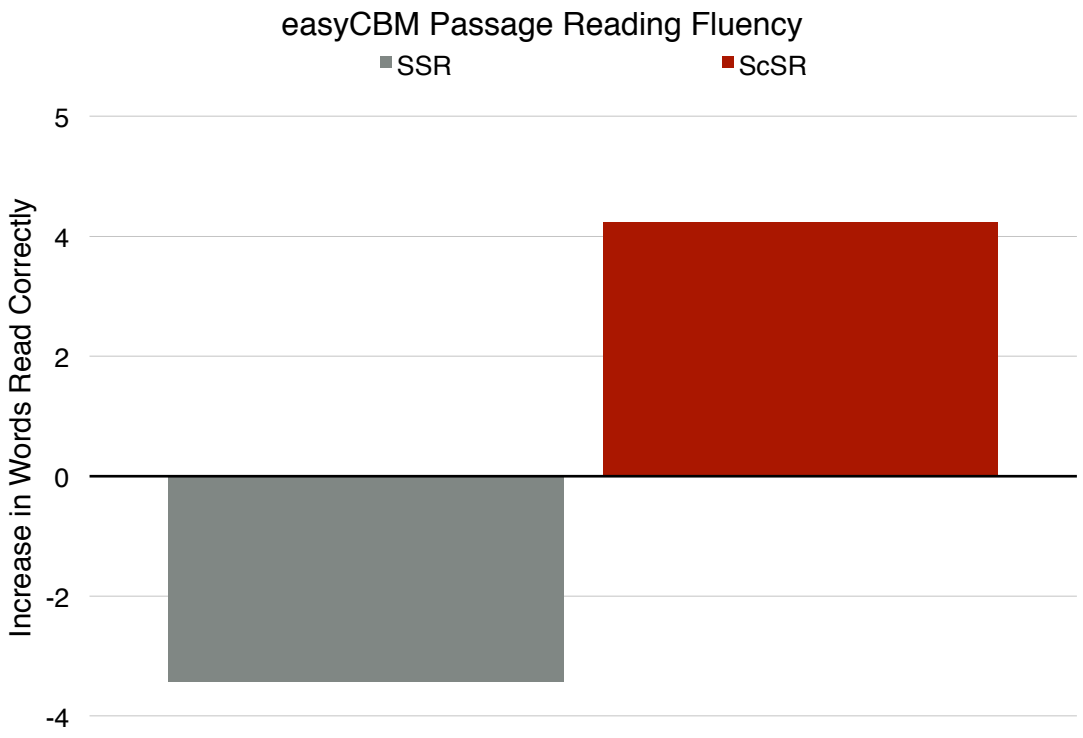

Figure 6. Increase in words read correctly on PRF when using SSR and ScSR

Conclusion

In summary, participants were given two assessments in each phase of the study, the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency and the easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension assessments (Appendix C. Measurement Insturments). The scores were collected in a spreadsheet that was maintained for the duration of the study (Appendix D. Assessment Results). The data was presented through bar graphs showing class percentiles on the PRF and MCRC assessments. Additionally the change in class mean score after each treatment was compared through bar graphs.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Introduction

In today's classrooms with their focus on rigorous instruction and adequate performance on high-stakes testing it is even more important that students become masters of reading and comprehending texts independently. Yet since the National Reading Panel's report, which found that there was little research to back up the practice of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), students have been spending little time engaged in independent reading (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD), 2000). The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) on students' reading fluency and comprehension. Additionally the researcher wanted to discover if there was any difference between the effectiveness of ScSR and traditional Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) on improving students' fluency and comprehension.

Discussion

When evaluating the findings of this study, it is difficult to determine if SSR or ScSR is a more effective strategy. Participants showed some growth from the pre-tests to the post-tests after both treatments. After SSR participants showed growth through an increase in scores on the easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension assessment but scores went down on the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency assessment. After ScSR participants showed growth on both assessments. However the gains were not significant for either strategy.

At the beginning of the study the researcher collected baseline fluency and comprehension data, participants then engaged in SSR for the next twenty-eight days. In SSR participants read silently and independently for twenty minutes daily with the teacher also engaged in silent reading, thus modeling positive reading behaviors. Students read from books of their choice with no interruptions or monitoring by the teacher. After the six-week period the researcher gave students the post-tests and the results were mixed. The mean score on the

easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension (MCRC) assessment increased from 12.2 items correct to 13.8 items correct. In the same period the mean score on the easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency (PRF) went down from 121.3 words correct per minute to 118.3 words correct. This researcher feels that the increase in scores on then MCRC can be explained not only by the dedicated time for reading but students' increased comfort with the assessment tool. The researcher feels that the decrease in students' scores on the fluency assessment was not statistically significant as the mean score stayed within the 75th percentile range.

Although the researcher did not collect qualitative data, observations were made during both treatments that pertain to the effectiveness of each instructional practice. While engaging in SSR there were four participants that would spend significant amounts of time not reading. These students would walk around the room, flip through pages in their books, or consistently change books, finishing none. There were also students who stated that they enjoyed the quiet, dedicated time for reading, adding that it allowed them to focus on their reading in a way they could not when other activities were happening in the classroom.

Following the week of assessments after SSR, students were introduced to the ScSR technique. While engaged in ScSR participants continued to read independently and silently for 20 minutes but only after a brief lesson on fluency or a comprehension strategy. As the students read, the researcher held Individual Monitoring Conferences (IMC) with four to five students, first taking a running record and then initiating a discussion about the book while monitoring students' comprehension. Finally, the researcher helped the student to set a goal for completing the book and choosing a book response project. After six weeks students were again given the MCRC and PRF assessments and showed improvements on both. The mean score on the MCRC increased by 0.3 items correct and the mean score on the PRF increased by 3.7 words correct in one minute.

Again the researcher, while not officially collecting qualitative data, made observations about students' attention to task and engagement with reading. There were still students who were consistently off task but that number was reduced to only one or two students. One reason this number went down is because in their IMC the teacher worked to make sure students were reading books at their independent level, set goals with each student, and checked on these goals at the next IMC. Overall participants appeared to be engaged during their IMC and if absent on their scheduled day repeatedly asked to reschedule.

Limitations

Although the data showed that both strategies increased student outcomes, there were several limitations. The first limitation was related to the sample size and makeup. The sample was very small only twenty-three students in a very homogenous northern Minnesota elementary school. A second limitation was the length of time allotted for the study. A period of six weeks was allotted for each instructional strategy and within that time frame there were many interruptions including teacher and student absences, testing demands, snow days, and spring break. A longer time frame that was more evenly distributed across the school year would give the results greater validity.

Additionally, when the study was situated during the school year was a great limitation. The study ended the last full week of the school year and students were not as academically focused, as they had been prior in the school year. Additionally, the spring is a busy time for standardized tests and participants took eight standardized tests throughout the duration of the study possibly leading to testing fatigue, which may have depressed the growth shown on pre- and post- tests for this study.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several ways in which future studies could be furthered using the results of this study. First and foremost, additional studies should use a longer time frame. This study

was limited to six weeks of each instructional method making it difficult to see any significant difference in results from each instructional method. A longer time frame of six months or up to a year for each instructional method may supply researchers with more valid and reliable data.

Another suggestion for future research would be to look at qualitative data regarding student engagement in independent reading. As noted by Clausen-Grace & Kelly (2006) in their study on R^5 during SSR students spend much of their time off task, disengaged from their reading. Although the researcher was not actively monitoring these behaviors it was noted that students were more on task, read a wider variety of books, and thought more deeply about their independent reading when engaged in ScSR.

Finally, additional research should include more classrooms with more diverse populations. Data from a variety of classrooms would supply the researcher with a greater wealth data allowing for stronger conclusions to be drawn. Additionally with a larger sample data could be disaggregated to show the effects of SSR and ScSR on different populations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although educators have been sent mixed signals from researchers and educational policy makers it is clear that students must be able to read and comprehend independently at the end of their schooling. To that effect students must have time to receive instruction in and practice independent reading. The purpose of this study was to measure the effects of ScSR on students' fluency and comprehension and determine if it was as or more effective than SSR in improving students' fluency and comprehension. After SSR, improvement was shown in reading comprehension but there was no improvement shown in fluency. After ScSR, improvement was shown in both reading comprehension and fluency. SSR showed more improvement in comprehension on the MCRC assessment with an increase of 1.6 items correct. While ScSR showed a smaller improvement on the MCRC assessment, 0.6 increased

items correct, it showed an improvement of 3.7 words read correctly on the PRF assessment. Although the data from this study does not appear to be numerically significant this author believes that instruction in independent silent reading is an important part of well-rounded literacy instruction. To be successful in the workforce and continuing education students must be able to read and compered complex text and to do this they need instruction. Additional research on ScSR and other strategies that enhance traditional SSR is needed to provide today's students with the best possible instruction.

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Appendix A: Institutional Review Board

- Institutional Review Board Approval
- Approval Letter
- Informed Consent Letter

Name: Elizabeth Proepper
Email: eproeppe@uwsuper.edu
Phone number: 218-341-8472

Status: Staff/faculty **Graduate Student** Undergraduate Student
Name of faculty sponsor/mentor (if applicable): Wendy Kropid
Faculty member's email address: wkropid@uwsuper.edu

Anticipated start date: February 15, 2016
Anticipated end date: March 31, 2016

Does this project specifically recruit any vulnerable populations including but not limited to:

Minors?	**Yes**	No
Pregnant women?	Yes	**No**
Prisoners?	Yes	**No**
People with cognitive delays?	Yes	**No**
People hospitalized in nursing homes, etc?	Yes	**No**

Other vulnerable groups:

Will you be deceiving your participants? Please note: withholding details about the specifics of your hypothesis **does not** constitute deception. However, misleading participants about the nature of the research question or about the nature of the task they will be completing **does** constitute deception.
Yes **No**

Are the names/identities of your participants included on the data itself? Or, if someone looked at your data would s/he be able to identify the participant from the data or instrument?
Yes **No**

Are you gathering any biological samples as part of your research? Yes **No**

Minimal risk is when the likelihood that participating in your research will not cause harm or discomfort (including physical, mental, emotional, social, or economic) that is greater than those a person would normally encounter in daily life.

Does this research pose greater than minimal risk to participants? Yes **No**

Title of project: **Scaffolded Silent Reading: More Effective than Sustained Silent Reading?**

1. **Briefly describe your research question (50 words or less)**:

   The study will conduct an experiment to determine if replacing Silent Sustained Reading with Scaffolded Silent Reading will result in gains in reading fluency and comprehension in one 3rd grade classroom in Northern Minnesota.

2. **Will participants include individuals from specific populations (e.g. children, pregnant women, prisoners or people with cognitive delays)?**

   Yes, participants will include children.

   a. **If your participants will include individuals from specific populations, please specify the population(s) and briefly describe any special precautions you will use**.

      Participants will include children, there will be no special precautions taken. The study will consist of collecting data on student learning resulting from different instructional strategies normally used within the classroom.

3. **Briefly describe how you will recruit participants from your study (make sure to include any institutional affiliations of your participants). Please include any recruiting materials in an appendix**.

   Participants will be recruited from my third grade class. Student data will only be included if I have received parental consent.

4. **How many individuals do you expect to participate in your study?**

   I expect to have 25 individuals participating in my study.

5. **Briefly describe what participants in your study will do and where it will take place. Make sure to reference any and all materials/surveys/tests/assessments that will be used. (All materials *must* be included in an Appendix.)**

   At the beginning of the study participants will be assessed using form 3-7 of easyCBM Reading Passage Fluency measure and form 3-1 of the easyCBM Reading Comprehension assessment.

   Participants will then engage in traditional Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), reading for 20 minutes with little to no interference from the teacher, for 6 weeks.

The following week students' reading fluency and comprehension will again be assessed using easyCBM Reading Fluency Passage 3-8 and Reading Comprehension 3-2.

Next participants will engage in Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) for 20 minutes each school day in the general education classroom. Participants will meet with the teacher once weekly for conferencing, participating in a running record and comprehension observation. Reading will be recorded using a genre wheel and students will choose from a wide variety of summative projects after finishing a book.

Finally, participants will again be assessed in reading fluency and comprehension using the easyCBM passages 3-9 and 3-3 respectively.

6. **Please describe any risks and benefits your research may have for your participants. Please make sure to include whether the data could damage your participants' reputation or make them liable to conviction. (For example, one study's risks might include boredom and eye-strain. The same study's benefits might include satisfaction from contributing to scientific knowledge and greater self-awareness.)**

   It is possible that participants in the study may suffer from boredom or eyestrain from extended period of silent independent reading. Benefits to participants may include greater enjoyment of reading and improved comprehension when reading.

7. **What procedures will you use to ensure that the information your participants provide will remain confidential? In other words, how will you keep your data secure?**

   Each participant will be assigned a number and that number will be used as the way to identify and track data.

8. **Will your study use deception? (Please note: withholding details about the specifics of your hypothesis *does not* constitute deception. However, misleading participants about the nature of the research question or about the nature of the task they will be completing *does* constitute deception.)**

   No, there will be no deception in my study.

   a. **If your project includes deception, please fully describe the process you will use, why the deception is necessary and a full description of your debriefing procedures. Projects using deception should include their full debriefing statement here**.

9. **Do you have funding for this research?** Yes **No**
   a. **If so, state the name of the funding agency or department (For example, NIH, NSF, Faculty Development Grant, McNair Scholar)**.

10. **Where do you plan to present/publish or share your research?**

    In addition to being presented/published at the University of Wisconsin – Superior, my research will be presented to the other teachers in the Proctor Public Schools where the study is being conducted.

11. **Will participants be compensated? How?**

    No, participants will receive no compensation for participating in the study.

12. **Will a written informed consent form be used and signed by participants?**

    Yes

    a. **If yes, attach the informed consent form (see below)**

    b. **If no, explain how the research meets each of the following criteria such that the research qualifies for a waiver of informed consent**:

        i. **Research could not be conducted practicably without the waiver**;

        ii. **Research involves no more than minimal risk to participants**;

        iii. **Waiver will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of participants**;

        iv. **Participants will be provided with pertinent information in some other format**.

ONLY FOR PEOPLE USING RECORDING (VIDEO OR AUDIO):

1. **Will you conduct all interviews yourself or will you have assistance (including a translator)?**

    Alone With Assistance

2. **How will you secure the data so that the participants' image and/or voice are kept confidential?**

Please read the following statement carefully:

I have read the UWS IRB Regulations. I will comply with the informed consent requirement, and I will inform the IRB if significant changes are made in the proposed study. I certify that all the information contained in this proposal is truthful.

Submitting this proposal means that you affirm the above and will comply with the content. This counts as your legally binding signature.

February 12, 2016

TO: Elizabeth Proepper
Student Researcher

FROM: Eric Edwards, Chair
Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Expedited Status Determination for Research Involving Human Subjects: *Scaffolded Silent Reading: More Effective than Sustained Silent Reading?*

Your research proposal, IRB protocol #1236 has been determined to meet the guidelines for expedited status. The reader was Lynn Goerdt. Data collection is approved for one year from yesterday. Should collection need to extend beyond that date, you will need to resubmit your protocol to the IRB for an extension.

The purpose of the Institutional Review Board is to review research projects conducted by UW-Superior students, faculty, and staff to ensure that ethical practices and protocols with regards to use of human subjects are followed. Retain this memorandum with your research protocols. Please note that you must follow the proposal submitted to and agreed upon by this committee. If you change protocols or practices, or if data collection is expected to extend beyond the approved date, you must return to the committee for review of the modifications or extension.

Good luck in your research endeavor.

Cc: Dean of Faculties
Wendy Kropid
IRB Committee members
Eric Edwards
Lynn Goerdt
Yvonne Rutford
Andrew Breckenridge
Vanessa Hettinger

Informed Consent Document

1. Purpose:
The purpose of this experiment is to study the effectiveness of Sustained Silent Reading and Scaffolded Silent Reading in improving reading comprehension and fluency.

2. Procedure:
Participants will engage in traditional Sustained Silent Reading for 20 minutes a day for 6 weeks and then Scaffolded Silent Reading for 20 minutes a day for 6 weeks. Scaffolded Silent Reading is a technique that offers more teacher guidance than traditional Sustained Silent Reading. When engaged in Scaffolded Silent Reading participants will meet with the teacher once weekly for conferencing on fluency and comprehension. At the beginning, mid-point, and end, participants reading fluency and comprehension will be assessed.

3. Time required:
The study will occur during the school day as part of the existing reading instruction, no additional time is required of participants.

4. Risks:
It is not anticipated that this study will present any risks to the participants with the exception of possible eyestrain or boredom due to the time spent reading independently.

5.Your rights as a subject:
(i) The information gathered will be recorded in anonymous form. Data or summarized results will not be released in any way that could identify your child.

(ii) If you want to withdraw your child from the study at any time, you may do so without penalty. The information collected up to that point would be destroyed if you so desire.

(iii) At the end of the session, you have the right to a complete explanation ("debriefing') of what this experiment was all about. If you have questions afterward, please ask your experimenter or contact:
Elizabeth Proepper
eproeppe@proctor.k12.mn.us
218-628-4949 ext. 2040

Dr. Wendy Kropid, Professor of English Education
Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, UW-SUPERIOR, (715) 394-8240

Also, once the study is completed, you may request a summary of the results.

6. If you have any concerns about your treatment as a subject in this study, please call or write:

Eric Edwards
IRB Chair
Telephone: *(715) 394-8283*
Email: irb@uwsuper.edu

This research project has been approved by the UW-Superior Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, protocol # 1236

I have read the above information and willingly give consent for my child to participate in this experiment.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Scaffolded Silent Reading Instructional Materials

- Genre Wheel (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008)
- Individual Monitoring Conference Form (Jones, Fawson, Reutzel, & Smith, 2008)

My Genre Wheel

Individual Monitoring Conference Form

Student Name _____

Date of Reading Conference _____

Title of Book Student Is Reading _____

Part A: Fluency

Teacher's running record of student's 1-2 minute reading sample.

Number of Words Read _____ Number of Errors _____

Type to enter text

Words Read Correctly per Minute _____

Part B: Comprehension

Oral Retelling

Narrative Text:

___ Setting ___ Characters ___Problem ___ Goals ___Episode(s) ___ Resolution

Expository Text:

___ Topic ___ Main Idea ___ Supporting Detail(s) ___ Use of Vocabulary Terms

Discussion Questions

Narrative: Ask story structure questions about setting, characters, problem, and so forth.

Expository: Ask about the topic, main idea, supporting details, and so forth.

Part C: Goal Setting

Book Completion Goal Date _____

Goal Pages to be read by next Reading Conference _____

Part D: Book Sharing

Book Response Project Selected and Approved by Teacher _____

Appendix C: Measurement Instruments

- easyCBM Passage Reading Fluency (Alonzo, Tindal, Ulmer, & Glasgow, 2006)
- easyCBM Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension (Alonzo, Tindal, Ulmer, & Glasgow, 2006)

Assessor Copy **Form 3-9**

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Place the Student Copy in front of the student. Point to the names on the Student Copy as you read them:

   "This is a story about Abby. I want you to read this story to me. You'll have 1 minute to read as much as you can. When I say "begin," start reading aloud at the top of the page. Do your best reading. If you have trouble with a word, I'll tell it to you. Do you have any questions? Begin."
2. Start the timer.
3. While the student is reading, mark errors with a slash (/).
4. At 1 minute, mark the last word read with a bracket (]).
5. When the student gets to a logical stopping place, say **"Stop."**

It was Abby's birthday. She was seven years old. She was so excited!	13
Abby loved opening her family's birthday presents. She hoped she would get a	26
kitten this year for her birthday. She had wanted a pet cat for such a long	42
time! Abby's mom, dad, brother, and sister each had a present for her. First,	56
she opened a fancy bag from her mom. Inside the bag was a pretty doll with	72
black hair. Next, Abby unwrapped new markers from her brother. Abby's	83
sister gave her a new red sweater as a gift. Red was Abby's favorite color.	98
Finally, Abby's dad handed her a plain cardboard box with a lid. It wasn't	112
wrapped and didn't look like a present!	119
Abby studied the box carefully before opening it. She noticed small	130
holes poked through the cardboard sides. She heard something rustling	140
inside! She wondered if it could be a kitten. Abby gently lifted the top off	155
the box. Inside she discovered a ball of fuzz wrapped in a warm blanket. The	170
gray and white ball of fuzz started to stretch. It was a tiny kitten! It was so	187
cute! Abby felt so lucky. She had gotten what she always wanted. Abby lifted	201
the baby cat out of the box and held her in her arms. The kitten purred and	218
blinked her blue eyes. Abby decided to name her new pet Lucky because that	232
is how she felt. Abby thanked her family for all her presents. She hugged her	247
dad for making this the best birthday ever!	255

Total Words Read:_____ - # of Errors:_____ = CWPM:_____

Assessor Copy **Form 3-8**

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Place the Student Copy in front of the student. Point to the names on the Student Copy as you read them:

   "This is a story about Jimmy and Mike. I want you to read this story to me. You'll have 1 minute to read as much as you can. When I say "begin," start reading aloud at the top of the page. Do your best reading. If you have trouble with a word, I'll tell it to you. Do you have any questions? Begin."
2. Start the timer.
3. While the student is reading, mark errors with a slash (/).
4. At 1 minute, mark the last word read with a bracket (]).
5. When the student gets to a logical stopping place, say **"Stop."**

Jimmy loves games. He likes to play basketball, soccer, catch, and even	12
swim. Since he was little, Jimmy could not wait to ride a bicycle. Last year,	27
Jimmy's dad lost his job. Since then, money has been tight. Jimmy has not	41
been able to buy a bicycle, and he does not want to ask his parents for the	58
money. Jimmy is patient, and he will wait to ask to get a bike. Jimmy's best	74
friend, Mike, got a bicycle two months ago. It is blue with shiny handlebars.	88
Mike let Jimmy try it out. Jimmy thought it was hard to ride, but knew that	104
with some practice he would learn. In no time he would be able to fly down	120
the hills and make sharp turns. He imagined the feeling of pushing the pedals	134
as fast and hard as he could up hills for the reward of coasting downhill with	150
speed and ease.	153
Jimmy told his dad about riding Mike's bicycle. He could tell his dad was	167
excited for him. Two days later, Jimmy came home from school and saw his	181
dad out front. When Jimmy saw the huge smile on his dad's face, he knew	196
there was a surprise. As he got closer, he saw his dad standing next to a	212
bicycle. It was an older bicycle. It looked like it was red, but it was hard to	229
tell with the rust. His dad said they could paint it and make it perfect for	245
Jimmy. Right then, Jimmy knew he was the luckiest boy on the block!	258

Total Words Read:_____ - # of Errors:_____ = CWPM:_____

Assessor Copy **Form 3-7**

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Place the Student Copy in front of the student. Point to the names on the Student Copy as you read them:

   "This is a story about Molly. I want you to read this story to me. You'll have 1 minute to read as much as you can. When I say "begin," start reading aloud at the top of the page. Do your best reading. If you have trouble with a word, I'll tell it to you. Do you have any questions? Begin."
2. Start the timer.
3. While the student is reading, mark errors with a slash (/).
4. At 1 minute, mark the last word read with a bracket (]).
5. When the student gets to a logical stopping place, say **"Stop."**

Molly's birthday is coming up this Tuesday. She will turn eleven. Her	12
parents have asked her to write a list of all the presents she wants. She is	28
having a party, and lots of people will be coming. Her grandparents are coming	42
from California. Her best friend will be there. Her neighbor is coming and so	56
are her cousins. Her mom said about twenty people will be coming. This means	70
her wish list can be long!	76
Molly knows that she probably can't put everything she wants on the	88
list. So, she doesn't include a white pony or trip to New Zealand. She also	103
knows that she should be as specific as she can so she does not get a gross	120
brown pen if she really wants a blue or yellow one. Her little brother tries to	136
get Molly to add a new bike for him. She knows his birthday is just around	152
the corner so she does not. Molly thinks and thinks about what to put on her	168
list. Then, all of a sudden, she knows! She writes it very carefully. She uses	183
her best handwriting. Then, she folds the paper in half. She gives it to her	198
mother. Her mother is surprised it did not take Molly longer. She unfolds	211
the paper and a huge smile appears on her face. She reads, "Magic tricks to	226
make everyone's dreams come true." Molly's mom hugs her. She is proud and	239
tells her that she is sweet for thinking of others on her own birthday.	253

Total Words Read:_____ - # of Errors:_____ = CWPM:_____

The Great Bake-Off

Apple Brown Betty knew today was going to be a fantastic day. On her way to school she saw a sign announcing a town bake-off. Apple loved to bake and was famous all over town for her cookies and cakes. But Apple knew that to win this bake-off she would have to make something really stupendous. What could Apple make that would be so great, it would be awarded first prize?

After school, she rushed home to decide what to make for the bake-off. Apple thought about cookies. She loved cookies and suspected the judges must too. There were many kinds of cookies she could make. However, Apple suspected that even great cookies would not be good enough to win, for there would be dozens of cookies at the bake-off. Apple knew she wanted to stand out. Next, she thought about cakes. Her cakes were always scrumptious, but there would be many cakes at the bake-off too. Baking a cake like the other people would not win her first prize. She needed an innovative idea; she wanted to bake something no one had ever seen before. She would have to bake something brand new.

Apple went to her room because she wanted to think some more, and she always thought best in the quiet of her room. As she was sitting there, a great idea came to her. A cookie cake would be the perfect combination for the contest!

She rushed to the kitchen to start preparing her entry. She grabbed bags of sugar, salt, and flour. She also got eggs and baking soda and butter. Apple was so excited that she rushed to make her dessert. She threw the ingredients in a big bowl. She grabbed a wooden spoon and mixed them up well. She wanted to taste the batter but decided to wait. She wanted the judges to be the first people ever to taste her new creation. She put the cookie cake in the oven to bake and thought about the contest.

The next day Apple woke up and prepared to go to the bake-off. She got dressed and went to get her cake. It looked perfect. On her way to the bake-off, Apple saw many people with entries for the contest. Apple looked at the other cakes and thought hers looked the best. She hoped she was going to win the contest. When she got to the bake-off, Apple set her cake on the table. Her name was put by the cake so everyone would know it was hers. She was proud when people looked at the cake and then pointed to her. Apple wandered around the bake-off to see what else was there. She saw lots of cookies and cakes. They all looked beautiful, but none were as special as Apple's. Just then, Apple heard someone whisper that the judging was about to begin, so Apple rushed back to her cake.

The judges walked around to each person. They asked each one to describe what he or she had baked, and then the judges tasted the entry. The first person baked a chocolate cake. The judges said it was very good. The next person made peanut butter cookies. They were also very good. It appeared that the judges liked everything! Apple was the last person in line. As the judges came to her cake, Apple trembled. She really wanted them to like her creative cake. They asked Apple what kind of cake she had baked. Apple told them it was a cookies-and-cream cake; she also told them that she had made the cookies in the cake, too. They smiled at her and took a bite.

One of the judges made a funny face before he turned around and rushed out of the room. Another judge quickly put her piece of cake down as soon as she took a bite. She lifted a napkin to her mouth and tried to hide her face. The third judge looked at her friends. She did not even taste Apple's cake. Instead, she just looked at Apple and sadly shook her head.

Apple didn't know what to think. Everyone was looking at her again, but this time they were pointing at her cake and then nudging each other. Some of them even laughed! Apple Brown Betty wished she had never entered the contest. She felt absolutely awful.

When the bake-off was finally over, Apple hurried home. She did not really want to tell her mom and dad about what had happened. She opened the front door to her house as quietly as she could and tried to go to her room before her parents heard her.

Apple's mom and dad were waiting for her, though. Her mom walked over and gave her a big hug. She told Apple that she was proud of her for entering the contest. She reassured her daughter that people would not keep talking about what had happened for very long.

Apple was not sure what to do. She was almost afraid to speak because she could feel the tears trying to escape. She did not want her parents to feel bad for her. She also felt really silly because people had laughed at her cake.

Apple's dad walked over to her. He put his arm around her shoulders and gave her a hug, too. He said he had tried to figure out what happened and thought he had an answer. Apple wanted to hear what her dad had to say. She wiped her cheeks with the back of her hand.

"What do you think happened, Dad?" she asked. "The judges really hated my cake."

"Well," her dad responded. "Let's start in the kitchen. Show me what you used to make the cake."

They all went into the kitchen, and Apple started to gather all the ingredients she had used in the cake. She pulled out a bag of flour. She pulled out a bag of sugar. Finally, she pulled out a bag of salt.

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Reading Comprehension: 3-1

"Just as I suspected," her dad said. "I think your mom said she bought a huge bag of salt at the store last week. Did you read the labels on those bags?"

Apple gasped. She read the labels and started to laugh. Now she knew why the judges had not liked her cake. She remembered their faces and giggled.

The very next day Apple started planning for the next bake-off. She had all kinds of creative new ideas. She would bake cookies and cakes for her mom and dad. They were very proud of how well Apple baked. But they were even more proud that she used her own ideas. Apple knew she would be prepared for next year's bake-off. She also promised herself she would read the labels of everything she used to make cakes in the future!

1. **Why did the cookie cake taste so bad?**
   - **A.** Apple used salt instead of sugar.
   - **B.** Apple put in way too much sugar.
   - **C.** Apple didn't mix the batter well enough.

2. **What did Apple think about the idea of making cookies to win?**
   - **A.** If she made one of her really great cookies, then she would be able to win.
   - **B.** There would be too many good cookies entered for Apple to be able to win.
   - **C.** Many cookies would be entered, but she knew the judges would choose hers.

3. **What will Apple probably do the next time she decides to bake?**
   - **A.** Slow down and read all the labels on the boxes.
   - **B.** Make sure her ideas work before going to a bake-off.
   - **C.** Follow her recipe exactly so she won't have problems.

4. **Why did Apple probably like it when people looked at her name by the cake and then pointed at her?**
   - **A.** It showed that people knew Apple was the famous baker.
   - **B.** It meant that people liked the cake and knew it was Apple's.
   - **C.** It meant that people thought her cake was special and would win.

5. **What was Apple thinking right after her cake was judged?**
   - A. She thought the judges must be wrong about her cake.
   - B. She thought she knew what might have gone wrong.
   - C. She had no idea what went wrong with the cake.

6. **What did Apple do right after she put her cake on the table?**
   - A. She watched people to see if they thought her cake was special.
   - B. She went around to look at the other cakes and cookies.
   - C. She waited anxiously for the judges to come by the table.

7. **What mistake did Apple make when baking in the kitchen?**
   - A. She put the cookie cake in the oven too soon.
   - B. She waited too long before tasting the batter.
   - C. She didn't taste the batter before she cooked it.

8. **What did Apple decide to bake?**
   - A. A cake with cookies inside it.
   - B. A cake made of only cookie dough.
   - C. A large cookie that looked like a cake.

9. **When did Apple first know that there was a problem with the cake?**
   - A. Right after everyone started to stare at her and point at the cake.
   - B. As soon as she told the judges there were cookies in the cake.
   - C. When the judges acted strangely after tasting the cake.

10. **How did the story end?**
    - A. Apple started to think of new cooking ideas to be ready for the next bake-off contest.
    - B. Apple had learned a valuable cooking lesson and wouldn't make the same mistake again.
    - C. Apple decided to bake special cookies for her mom and dad using her new recipe ideas.

11. What did Apple try to do when she first got home?
    A. Avoid telling her parents what happened at the bake-off.
    B. Pretend that the bake-off went just fine, but she didn't win.
    C. Hug her parents and tell them what happened at the bake-off.

12. What about Apple made her parents the most proud?
    A. She came up with her own ideas for baking.
    B. She was famous in the town for her baking.
    C. She was willing to try again to win the bake-off.

13. How did Apple's dad deal with what happened?
    A. He thought of ways for Apple to fix the cake.
    B. He thought about what could have gone wrong.
    C. He decided to make the cake again the right way.

14. How did Apple act in the kitchen?
    A. She worked very fast, rushing, throwing, and grabbing.
    B. She worked extra fast but had everything under control.
    C. She was in a hurry to get finished but she shouldn't rush.

15. When did the judges sample Apple's cake?
    A. Right after the peanut butter cookies.
    B. It was the third one they tasted.
    C. It was the last one they tasted.

16. How did Apple's mom feel about what happened?
    A. She was happy that Apple tried to win the prize but unhappy that she hadn't won.
    B. She was proud of Apple and knew that people wouldn't remember it for long.
    C. She was disappointed in Apple and sad that Apple wouldn't be famous anymore.

17. **Why did Apple think she would win when she saw the cake the morning of the bake-off?**
    - **A.** She had both cookies and cake.
    - **B.** Her idea was the best one ever.
    - **C.** The cake looked perfect to her.

18. **How did Apple's feelings change during the story?**
    - **A.** She knew she was a good cook and never doubted it, even when things went wrong.
    - **B.** She knew she was a good cook, but she began to doubt it after losing the bake-off.
    - **C.** She wanted to always be known as a great cook, but in the end she didn't really care.

19. **Why did Apple laugh when she found out why the cake tasted so bad?**
    - **A.** She remembered how the judges acted.
    - **B.** She felt silly and was laughing at herself.
    - **C.** She was glad the problem wasn't her cooking.

20. **What was this story mainly about?**
    - **A.** What it is like to enter a bake-off contest in your own town.
    - **B.** What judges do at a bake-off when something goes wrong.
    - **C.** How a girl who was a famous baker learned a lesson.

Appendix D: Assessment Results

- Spreadsheet of assessment results by participant

Student	easyCBM	PRF		easyCBM	MCRC	
	Beginning	After SSR	After ScSR	Beginning	After SSR	After ScSR
1	111	106	132	13	13	18
2	47	53	59	0	5	5
3	165	147	145	15	19	18
4	90	94	78	13	18	17
5	136	137	131	15	17	15
6						
7	85	75	93	13	11	13
8						
9	105	119	104	13	14	17
10	167	171	150	14	15	17
11	90	103	100	10	8	10
12	117	106	113	13	16	15
13	152	157	144	12	15	10
14	136	147	132	14	15	15
15	111	110	127	14	14	10
16	201	175	183	12	11	13
17	103	90	116	11	15	13
18	143	148	157	12	16	18
19	127	120	117	16	14	18
20	115	138	131	14	14	17
21	90	72	78	15	15	13
22	105	85	104	10	13	14
23	166	148	173	18	13	17
24	76	73	82	6	13	10
25	152	147	157	10	13	14
Mean	121.3	118.3	122	12.2	13.8	14.1

Appendix E: Scaffolded Silent Reading Lessons

- List of Scaffolded Silent Reading lessons taken from *The Reading Strategies Book* by Jennifer Serravallo (2015).

Lessons

A Perfect Reading Spot

Keep Your Eyes and Mind in the Book

Readers Set Goals

Set Page Goals

Vary the Length or Type of Text (“Break Reads”)

“Party” Ladder

Notice What Repeats

Topic/Subtopic/Details

Clue in to the Topic Sentence

Be Word Conscious

Context + Clues = Clarity

Multiple Meaning Words

Word Part Clues – Prefixes and Suffixes