Use of concept map correction, conversation, and summarization to improve the comprehension of seventh grade ELLs using their social studies text

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The Use of Concept Map Correction, Conversation, and Summarization to Improve the Comprehension of Seventh Grade ELLs Using Their Social Studies Text

By

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A Graduate Field Experience
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts Literacy and English as a Second Language At Cardinal Stritch University Milwaukee, Wisconsin 2012
Abstract

The purpose of this research study is to assess the effectiveness of concept-map correction, summarization, and conversation on the comprehension of English language learners (ELLs) of social studies texts. The students selected for this five-week study are four seventh-grade students from a suburban school district in the Midwest. The study began with a pre-test. After the pre-test, the students read a different passage from their social studies book each week. Every week each student individually corrected a concept map, wrote a summary, and had a conversation about the content they had studied. At the end of five weeks, a post-test was given. The results of the study concluded that students improved or maintained in their comprehension of the social studies content they were expected to know.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

“Without explicit teacher explanation and intensive scaffolded assistance, many struggling readers fail to comprehend” (Block & Parris, 2008, p. 23). Further study indicates that many teachers do not know how to provide comprehension instruction (Block & Parris). Today, there is a growing population of students who are falling behind in literary growth due to a lack of comprehension. Furthermore, the United States has a growing second language population who needs this comprehension instruction in addition to language instruction (Freeman & Freeman, 2001). Most instructors currently working in schools are not trained to serve this population (Trumbull & Farr, 2005).

The population of English language learners (ELLs) in Wisconsin has grown a tremendous amount. Since 2002 there has been a significant increase in the ELL population, while the native-born student population has decreased (WINSS website, 6/20/09, http://data.dpi.state.wi.us). In addition, overall test scores of ELLs in their content areas on their eighth grade state mandated test has produced advanced and proficient results around the twentieth to sixtieth percentile dependent on the content area (WINSS, 8/27/10, http://data.dpi.state.wi.us).
ELL students are expected to learn fluency, comprehension, reading, and writing within their first few years in this country; however, many students come to the United States with no previous educational experiences and have parents who work long hours and are not able to help them at home (if they are lucky enough to know English) (Trumbull & Farr, 2005). These students may not have access to individuals outside of school that would be able to help them. With this abrupt increase in the ELL student populations, it is clear that all teachers need to receive training in how to teach comprehension strategies. Dependent on the culture students are from, they may be familiar with comprehension instruction. If students are from a culture that values understanding different ideas in text and not what is popular instruction in the United States, there may need to be some scaffolding before students understand the text. (Block & Parris, 2008). Depending on the culture, students may be familiar with a different type of
comprehension model taught than that in the typical United States classroom. The modeling of comprehension strategies is a useful tool for professional development. Furthermore, the strategy of summarization has proven to be effective for not only daily comprehension, but for extended periods of time.

**Described Setting of Research**

The research was conducted in a suburban, Midwestern school. This school had a diverse student population (80.0% Caucasian, 12.0% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.7% Black, 3.7% Hispanic, and 0.6% other). The total population of the school was 685 students with 55 of those students receiving special education services at the time of the intervention. Also, students had a time of additional instruction everyday in which teachers presented material in a different way to aid student comprehension. The academic achievement of the school was high for the past five years according to the WKCE scores (WINSS website, 8/27/10, [http://data.dpi.state.wi.us](http://data.dpi.state.wi.us)). In regards to the ELL population, there was a total of 38 ELLs at the school, but they did not all receive classroom support. The ELL teacher only supported students who had not yet reached a 5 on the ACCESS test. The rest of the ELL students did not have interaction with the ELL teacher unless the individual student asked for specific help. For newcomer students there was the opportunity to have a one-on-one resource and instruction period with the ELL instructor. The ELL population of the school was extremely diverse. This diverse number included students who spoke fifteen different languages. The most common languages were Farsi, Punjabi, Mandarin, and Spanish.

There was no formal class period for ELL students to individualized instruction for credit. They often relied on their peers who shared their native language. The way ELL
students were indentified for the program is through a completed survey in which they could indicate whether another language was spoken at the home besides English. If the student did speak another language at home, the student was assessed by the Maculaitis (MAC) test. If the student was found to be in need of language support, then he or she was enrolled in the program. The pupils enrolled were assessed using the ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) test in January to measure the progress that had been made.

The seventh and eighth grade ELL students received support in their social studies and language arts classes. Also, the eighth graders received support in their science classes. This support came in the form of modifying and giving language instruction during the class periods. The ELL teacher did keep in touch via e-mail and regularly checked the grades of students who had struggled in their science and math classes.

ELL students at this school were clearly at a disadvantage because their parents were not able to advocate for them. The reason parents were not able to advocate for their child was because of their inability to speak the English language. The school made behavioral referrals and academic decisions, but when parents advocated for their children, they were able to give a different perspective to their child’s situation. The ELL teacher was the only advocate for these students. The general education teachers did not have much control over the schedule of ELL students and therefore could not advocate as fully as a parent would have been able to. The ELL teacher met informally and discussed student concerns on a monthly basis with other ELL teachers in the district. These meetings resulted in changes to student paperwork or schedules. Successful transitions were made because of the discussion and planning that had been done at these meetings.
Policies and procedures at the school were always firm and observed the same by all faculty members. Teachers were asked to call home when a student broke the rules. With ELL students this process was very difficult, as many of their parents did not speak English. When ELL students were excessively tardy, he or she was reprimanded the same way as native English speakers, but their parents did not fully understand the reasons. For those students who were fortunate enough to receive an education in their native country, being on time was not something that was necessarily valued.

Most of the instructors at the school had been teaching for at least five years. They were very willing and open to new ideas and were excited to help students in any way they could. The teachers looked to the reading specialist, ELL teacher, and special education teachers for ideas that could be implemented in their classrooms. The percentage of non-white students had doubled in the last five years, but the school had adjusted to meet the needs of these students. At least 10% of the school was bilingual, which could be used to the advantage of the school. However, most of the teachers were monolingual (besides the language teachers) and those who spoke another language did not speak the same language of the many ELL students.

Two male and two female students were invited to participate in this research. They all spoke different first languages and were in the seventh grade. The reason these young men and women were picked was because they struggled in their social studies classes. Specifically, they struggled on tests and quizzes, which was thought to be due to a lack of comprehension. The first student was born in the United States; at the time of the study, Olivia1 was thirteen years old and spoke Serbian as her first language. Her overall ACCESS score was a 5.1 in sixth grade. The second student, Brandon, was also born in the United States. His primary language

1 All the names used in this study are pseudonyms.
spoken at home was Arabic. All of his family spoke conversational English. His ACCESS score was a 5.4 the previous year. The third student arrived in the United States from Russia in the summer of 2009. Up until the start of this study Wendy had spent all of her time in the school district, but would be moving to California in June. Her ACCESS score from the last year was a 4.6. The fourth and final student, Javier, had lived in the school district his whole life. The primary language spoken in the home was Arabic. His ACCESS score was a 5.0 last year and he specifically struggled with writing.

**Best Practices Related to Summarization and Conversation for Comprehension**

Through my research I have found that summarization and conversation are the best resources to promote student comprehension. In regards to written summaries, students have found success using the following types: underlining (Haiti & Sharifar, 2009), concept mapping (Chang, Sung & Chen, 2002), and map correction (Chang, Sung & Chen, 2002). While all of these summarizations have had some success, the one that was found to be the best overall was map correction. This is one of the summaries that will be included in the research.

Additionally, much research has found that writing is the last component to come for all students (Indrisano & Paratore, 2005). For this reason, I will be using the following questions for students to write their summary paragraphs: who, what, when, where, why, and any other details important to the written summary (Jitendra, Hoppes, & Xin, 2000). Finally, students will engage in discourse about their new knowledge (Colombo & Fontaine, 2009). This dialogue has been beneficial for students in gathering new and different ideas. It is a way for students to capture their thinking about reading in a way that everyone can see (Indrisano & Paratore).
Overview of the Research Topic

I used the time that the school allotted for remediation and enrichment for this intervention. Students who were assigned to my room spent time remediating in social studies. Every time I met with these students, I worked with them on social studies curriculum for forty-five minutes. The reason for this intervention was because this subject was very difficult for all the ELL students. This difficulty was thought to have occurred because of a lack of comprehension. This idea was held in common by both the students’ social studies instructor and the examiner. The schedule for the class was set-up in an every other day fashion. I saw all students twice a week, but some weeks there was a third day.

Each student received a concept map with correct and incorrect answers that accompanied a certain social studies text passage. With my help and guidance, students read in the books for information supporting or not supporting the statements on the students’ concept map. If a statement was true, students would find evidence in the book and printed that evidence under the appropriate statement. If a statement was false, students would change it to be true and would have located evidence from the book to support the correction. I believed this process would engage students in a way that was more in-depth than the typical reading guide or worksheet. This interaction helped students identify the main ideas for the assigned reading. Once the entire map was corrected, students would be assigned two main idea to summarize. The summarization included answering the questions, who, what, where, why and when. Additionally, students were instructed to add more relevant information. Finally, students had a conversation based on their paragraphs. Questions were posted around the room to help students think through how he or she could have contributed to the conversation.
At the onset of this process, I modeled this for students and then gradually released the responsibility of the process to the students. After students summarized their point, they shared with other students in the class. All students filled out their summary section after students presented. We then had a discussion about the points. The instructor modeled the format of the discussion.

Conclusion

With the growth of the ELL population in the United States, it was clear that there was a need to try different strategies to reach them. The specific school that the research was conducted in tended to be extremely diverse and became more so every year. It was important that the research was conducted and shared with the colleagues of this school so that they had an easier way to make their content comprehensible. In order to meet the needs of ELLs, I gave students a resource of written summarization and an opportunity to be engaged in conversations about his or her findings in regards to their social studies classes. Students in this diverse school could have been intimidated and frightened if they did not know the language well or did not have parents to advocate for them. I hoped students were given a larger access to learning content as their native English speaking counter parts were.
Chapter 2

A Review of Research Studies

Research on summarizations, organizers, and conversations that are effective tools for supporting the comprehension development of ELLs is very limited. However, I have uncovered many case studies that have proven to be successful in shaping my research. The following studies have many significant points on the favorable ideas in which to instruct ELL students using best practices. For example, research by Garth-McCullough (2008) showed that students need accurate and relevant background knowledge in order to create a complete summary of the content they are studying. When students have some relevant background knowledge on which to make connections, they will be able to approach the content with much more confidence. Additionally, researchers have discovered that students benefit from summary frames or graphic organizers to organize information (Jitendra, Hoppes & Ping Xin, 2000). While summary frames and organizers have been found to be helpful, they are much more so if the students have a summary example that works for them to follow (Kamps, Abbott, Greenwood, & Arreagga-Mayer, 2007). Different summary frames work for different content areas. However, these summary frames and organizers are not effective in and of themselves. Direct instruction on how to complete summaries has proven to be more beneficial than no direct instruction (30-60 minutes was used in most cases) (Chang, Sung & Chen, 2002). Researchers have also found that many organizers used for ELL students have benefited non-ELL students (Hayati & Shariatifar, 2009). Students who have learning disabilities also have found benefits from these organizers (Rogevich & Perin, 2008).

Educators must also be sensitive to cultural background when preparing lessons for all students, especially ELLs. A summarization may benefit an ELL student more depending on
his/her cultural background (Garth-McCullough, 2008). For example, the social and linguistic experiences of an African-American child differ from those of a Latino child or a Caucasian child. ELL students must also be allowed to talk about their ideas in regards to the content studied. Talking about reading and writing can give students an identity as readers and writers to understand the content presented to them (Vetter, 2010). In regards to conversations, students need help through the use of these conversations to make history come to life as well. Talking with students about how history connects to them may help in their comprehension abilities (Colombo & Fontaine 2009).

The typical secondary school instructional model is based on the idea that students already have comprehension skills and can understand content area text, whether in books or articles. Oftentimes instructors give out worksheets that can be completed without comprehension of these books and articles. Many students are able to complete these assignments, but do not do well on the summative assessments. When students do not complete the assessment well, they are told to study harder and more next time. The problem these students have is that they do not understand the content. This cycle is not best practice for student comprehension. A more useful tool to use would be a type of summary frame. A summary frame is a way of summarizing a text using a graphic planner in order to connect and make sense of the content. Some students have not developed the writing skills necessary to complete these summary frames adequately. For this reason, some students may use verbal strategies including think alouds while they are still developing written language skills. Although this strategy is a great resource for all students (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005) to have and use, it does not help the student develop writing skills. If a student is behind in writing, it is not
an ideal situation to have him or her use think aloud skills only. Students also need a written reference point that they can refer to when understanding is lacking.

This review of research covers a broad range of strategies that can be used to support comprehension. It explores different types of summarization, concept mapping, and discussion. The focus of this research was mostly on ELLs, but additionally included research on students with learning disabilities (LD), emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Researchers claim students with special needs benefit from similar types of interventions when compared to ELLs (Honnert and Bozan, 2005). The content this literature review will cover a variety of content areas. While the intervention that was performed was based on social studies text, there was not enough information to focus on that content alone for this review. Many of these content studies are infused with technology. With an ever-changing society and differing amounts of technology available to students, I felt the need to include technology.

I have chosen five main categories in which to present this research: ADHD and LD students’ summation skills, technology-based summaries (using the Internet and computers), mapping strategies, discourse and comprehension and individual student needs.

**ADHD and LD Summaries**

Many researchers have compared students with special needs to beginning ELL students in respect to successful teaching methodologies that can be used for both groups of students. Many students outside of the mainstream classroom also need to find a summarization technique that allows them to be successful learners. In order to become successful, these students need to
understand what they can do while reading a text. In this section, the focus will be on comprehension strategies used to understand text.

The purpose of the first study was to measure the effectiveness of the TWA-WS (think before reading, while reading, after reading with written summarization) on adolescents with behavior disorders (BD) or with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and BD to answer the following question: To what extent do students with BD and/or ADHD benefit from this intervention? The study was designed following the authors’ belief that students need to be explicitly taught literary strategies. It is necessary to explicitly teach students with BD these strategies so they can see how to perform them correctly before they try it on their own. Furthermore, students need to be able to self-regulate as they read. This is important because comprehension may break down and each student needs to know what to do if that happens.

Rogevich and Perin (2008) decided to work with students who had BD and ADHD and were from the ages of 13-16. Participants were in a self-contained residential facility because they were considered juvenile delinquents. The facility was located in a suburb outside of a large, northeastern United States, metropolitan area.

For this research students were divided into four different groups. These four groups consisted of the following: students with BD who received intervention, students with BD and ADHD who received intervention, students with BD who did not receive intervention, and students with BD and ADHD who received no intervention. These 63 boys were pre-tested to establish a reading level and given the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children Edition 3 (WISC-III; Wechsler, 1991). It was concluded that the mean score was a fifth grade level. The instructor then chose 12 science passages and 1 social studies passage from the students’ textbooks (a fourth grade reading level). In order for these passages to qualify each passage had
to be able to “stand alone” and be understood in one instructional session. Five of the passages were used in the five instructional sessions (sessions 2-6), 2 were used for the pre-test, 2 for the post-test, 1 for near transfer, 2 for far transfer, and 1 for maintenance.

Students were taken through eight different sessions in order to collect accurate data. In the first session, students took the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests (MacGinitie, MacGinitie, Maria, & Dreyer, 2000) and a written summary pre-test in the same order (reading test first, then summarization). In sessions two through six students were given instruction, with each session occurring based on student availability (starting 1 to 2 days after the pre-test in consecutive days, or with a day or two gap between the sessions). In session seven, one day after session six, the instructor gave the students a post-test and a near transfer test. Finally, in session eight, three weeks after session seven, students took a far transfer test in the same order for everyone. There were some variables that may have affected the results of this study. First, when students were absent for a session the instructor made up the session on an individual or small group basis. Another variable for this study could have been the number of tests given to students in session seven. In session eight the administrator gave a far transfer and social validity test (only for intervention participants). This test was given three weeks after session seven was conducted.

Students learned specific strategies in each lesson and were taught the TWA as they went. The first three steps, or strategies, of the TWA were to determine the author’s purpose, what each individual student would like to know, and what the student learned about a certain text. Next, students thought about reading speed, previous knowledge, and rereading all parts (steps 4-6). Finally, after students had read the passage they thought about the main idea (step 7). Once the student had the main ideas checked by the examiner he or she started to write a summary using the five-summarization rules (Brown & Day, 1983): delete trivial information,
delete redundant information, substitute super ordinate terms for a list of terms and actions, select a topic sentence, and invent a topic sentence if one does not exist (step 8). In the end, students shared with the instructor what they had learned (step 9). In session two, students focused on the general overview of the TWA. In session three, students listened to the instructor read and think aloud and monitored the nine steps of the TWA as the participants read along silently with her. The instructor asked students in session four to collaboratively practice the steps of the TWA, and in session five they needed to practice these steps by themselves. In session six, the students worked in groups of two to three and quizzed each other on the steps and process of the TWA. During this process the no intervention BD group and the BD and ADHD group that did not receive intervention read the same curriculum. However, the students did not receive intervention, but were instructed with different reading strategies according to their traditional curriculum.

The data collected were from summaries the students wrote after the reading of their passages. The examiner and a graduate assistant picked out the important ideas (idea units) in each of the passages read by students and graded each idea on a scale of 0-2. Students received a score of 0 if they did not mention the idea, they received a score of 1 if the idea was mentioned, and they received a score of 2 if there was sufficient detail in their summaries.

The results of this study are explicitly listed on table four. This showed that in all four of the test results used that there was at least a twenty-point advantage for students who received the intervention instruction over their counter parts in all categories. The most significant difference between the intervention and practice groups was in the post-test area. The examiner concluded that the post-test supported the effectiveness of the interventions.
Table 1

*Intervention Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BD/Intervention</td>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>70.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Near transfer</td>
<td>61.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Far transfer</td>
<td>58.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>59.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BD+ADHD Intervention</td>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>63.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Near transfer</td>
<td>51.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Far transfer</td>
<td>44.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>43.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BD/Practice</td>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>29.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Near transfer</td>
<td>28.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Far transfer</td>
<td>19.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>27.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BD+ ADHD Practice</td>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>30.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Near transfer</td>
<td>30.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Far transfer</td>
<td>20.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>28.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This case study has supported the effectiveness of this intervention with students with special needs. Special education and ELL teachers alike would benefit from the usage of an organized method of instruction for teaching summarization skills.

The previous research was focused on the effectiveness of the TWA-WS strategy, which was successful compared with no intervention. It is imperative for all teachers to find the summary strategies that work best for their students. In the next study, the authors worked with students who struggled with the process of identifying main ideas of various reading samples. The authors investigated how instruction on main idea strategies and self-monitoring can help students increase comprehension and maintain that for a lengthy period.

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2 All averages are out of 100 possible points
Jitendra, Hoppes and Xin (2000) examined the influence and effect of self-monitoring and main idea strategies for lasting comprehension. The question the authors were trying to answer was the following: to what degree does explicit teaching by teachers promote main idea comprehension? The authors worked with middle school students with high needs. The authors believed that explicitly teaching main idea reading strategies was necessary. Once students see the reading strategy modeled, they can then try it themselves and monitor through self-management. This study refers to the strategy of self-management, which is the same concept as self-regulation mentioned in the previous study. This study is associated with students who are LD (learning disabled) while in the last study the authors looked at students who had BD (behavioral disorders). The study also states that the teacher needs to allow each student to be an active learner, fully engaged in the lesson in which he or she is participating.

There were thirty-three middle school students involved in the study. They were from an urban district in the northeastern United States and were required to meet the following criteria: they had to be at least two years below grade level in their reading skills, but could be no more than two and a half years below grade level reading in the subtests for Word Recognition and Reading Comprehension through the use of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test (Woodcock, 1987). Eighteen students were selected for the experimental group and fifteen for the control group. A doctoral student in special education taught the experimental group, while four special education teachers who had no extra training concerning the study taught the control group.

Students were instructed during their built in reading or study skills time in thirty to forty minute increments. The control group received regular instruction during this time by their special education teachers. Although the control group was not observed, the teachers reported studying decoding and systematic reading
activities. It should be noted that all main idea teaching and self-monitoring happened in small groups of six to eight students. The instructor presented a part of the strategy, modeled it, and finally demonstrated how to make a main idea sentence. Students were then given the opportunity to practice these skills in a guided and then an independent environment. Students were monitored and given corrective feedback during this work time. The examiner then gave eight lessons of instruction that covered all the main components of how to identify and comprehend all the necessary parts of a main idea in a paragraph and then in a text. These lessons took place over the course of fifteen days.

Students were given a pretest the day before they had their main idea instruction. Students were given the posttest the day after they had their instruction and finally, completed a delayed posttest six weeks after the instruction. Students were instructed to write the main idea summarizing each social studies text in one sentence during the pre-test, post-test, and instruction time.

The results of the pre-test indicated that students were divided into appropriate skill-based groups. These students tested at appropriate levels for the parameters of this experiment. The post-test results indicated that students who were in the experimental group fared far better than the control group. It should be noted that both groups did worse on the post-test than on the pre-test in the area of production questions (questions where students needed to independently produce an answer without any prompts). Students completed another test after six weeks without instruction. The results pointed to the fact that students in the experimental group scored comparable to their post-test scores while the control group scored slightly worse.

This experiment combined self-monitoring and main idea summaries in unison. The results that this intervention produced pointed to a way to teach students with special needs for
lasting comprehension. The examiners felt that this could be helpful for general education students too. The examiners have also found that the best way for students to be able to achieve lasting comprehension is through direct instruction.

My experience as a teacher working with a wide variety of students suggests to me that students with disabilities benefit in very similar ways to ELL students in their instruction methodologies. Summary frames that are consistent and modeled for students with special needs help with their comprehension (Rogevich & Perin, 2008). Also, it is important for these students to not only use summary frames, but it is beneficial if the student knows how to self-monitor for comprehension (Jitendra, Hoppes, & Xin, 2000). Educators need to look for these ways to increase the lasting understanding of their students with disabilities, ELLs, and their mainstreamed classroom students.

Technology Strategies

Many students today have educational challenges. Some students, as previously mentioned, may have a learning disability of some sort, while others may be learning the English language. Regardless of the educational challenges all students must be taught through the usage of technology in some way. In today’s world, a student who is not allowed access to technology lacks hope for a competitive future occupation. It is necessary to introduce students to technology so that they may access relevant information. There are many different summarization strategies necessary for accessing this information and organizing the information gained from the Internet in a way that will enable students to comprehend. Like the previous case studies, technology gives students a different way of learning, as apposed to textbooks. These case studies also work with students to help them access information in a quicker, more
productive way. The following studies embrace a way for students to discover and use this skill set for competitiveness in regards to their future occupations.

Twyman and Tindal (2006) conducted a study to improve the comprehension and problem-solving skills of students with disabilities in social studies using a conceptually framed, computer-adapted history text. The researchers wanted to know how technology supports help these 11th and 12th grade students understand social studies. The examiners wanted to help support students with technology outside of a textbook based setting. The assessors saw the need to teach students text organization (summary skills) through technology. The authors believe there are many different ways to present information. Technology is the focus of this study, which caters to the strengths of the individual student. This technology allows students to work in a multi-media, flexible learning environment. The authors see this as extremely helpful for students with disabilities.

This study was conducted in a rural high school in the Pacific Northwest. The teacher in this study was trained for conducting this kind of research and had nine years of teaching experience. All student participants had a learning disability that related directly to reading or writing. There were twenty-four 11th and 12th graders included in this research. The students were place in two groups: the control group (12) and an experimental group (12). The framework used allowed students to observe teacher modeling, complete work in a guided atmosphere, and eventually work independently. This was of benefit to the students because they were working in an environment that gradually released the responsibility to the individual student.

Students in the experimental group worked with a conceptually organized, computer adapted text. Students opened their web-based pages to see a table of content with
four links, which contained the following information:

(a) an overview of the chapter, where the important information, vocabulary, dates, and people were listed and summarized; (b) a list of the concepts (industrialization, domination, and cooperation) and the attributes of each displayed in tabular format; (c) simplified text (8th grade reading difficulty) specific to each concept, where textual information was organized under each attribute; (d) a graphic organizer of the concepts and attributes; or (d) the problem solving assessments that asked a series of generalized questions that were designed as discussion points during class, as well as written assessments.

(Twyman & Tindal, 2006, p. 8)

No formal computer training was given to students in this group because they had enough word processing and Internet experience to navigate the given domain. The control group was taught the same lesson using the district-adopted textbook.

The assessments used were a vocabulary matching probe and concept maze (student created concept map) for content-area vocabulary and an extended response essay to test for problem-solving skills. Students worked on these skills for their social studies content time (40-50 minutes daily). For the experimental group, students were given instruction on how to use definitions and brainstorm examples of those definitions. It was then expected that students would categorize them into columns based on problems the definitions deal with and solutions to those problems. In addition, it is important to note that these students were also given an adaptive text. In an adaptive text, students are given a different reading that
is written at an eighth grade level. The text was also organized with headings, which helped students understand where in the text to look for information to each question. The text organizes the information in a hierarchical manner illustrating only the most important information. The control group worked with basic reading comprehension strategies, but received their instruction in a general education classroom.

After instruction, students in the experimental group matched more vocabulary terms, developed more complex concept mazes and did much better in the short answer category. They made significantly more gains in their skills on each set than the control group did when the pre- and post-tests were compared. The instructor for the experimental group noted that students were more engaged and answered many more questions than they typically had in the past. The control group teacher reported that their students struggled with the text.

Strategic thinking processes are typically not used by struggling readers, especially when reading expository text (Twyman & Tindal, 2006). The authors in this study supported readers in their usage of these strategies. Pre-knowledge of the text was taught by the instructor, a specific and consistent way to solve problems was used, and this computer-based program enabled students to make sense of sentence structures that were more complex than single words.

This structure of instruction proved to be most beneficial for the students in the study. Educators should look closely at the way they teach expository text. Do they teach students in a way that makes the text intertwined with their lessons? In addition, it must be noted that teachers should give their students different ways to interact with a text (vocabulary matching, concept maze, and problem-solving essays). The chance to interact with expository text in these ways is necessary so that students have more than one strategy to use in which to show their comprehension skills by connecting their nodes of knowledge.
Technology usage enables students to interact with text in a way that is relevant to them. Students should be given this technological access on a daily basis. Utilizing summarization skills is a good, accessible place to start to allow and guide students in the use technology. Summarization may take place in many different forms. If students have good summarization skills, then they may be able to summarize text off the Internet. The authors of the next study encouraged students to use technology in order to gain access to summaries at a potentially faster rate than using a text.

Woodruff, Rosenholtz, Morrison, Faulring, and Pirolli (2002) investigated summarization and the use of the Internet. These researchers were interested in discovering which type of summarization thumbnail, which is a miniature version of a text or graphic to make organization easier, would be fastest for users to find the information they were looking for. The three types of summaries that were used in these searches were: enhanced thumbnails (thumbnails that are supplemented with readable textual elements), plain thumbnails (graphically scaled versions of documents) and text summaries. Plain thumbnails served as the control for this specific study. Some of the advantages of text summaries were that they give much information and are able to be downloaded quickly. A disadvantage of text summaries is that they contain so much information that it was difficult for the participants to find the needed information quickly. The thumbnails were thought to have complementary strengths and weaknesses. One advantage not mentioned from before is that often time thumbnails have the same genre and style of page, which may have made it more accessible to the readers. The authors believed that information on the Internet that is textual and graphical should be able to be accessed more quickly. It was thought by the authors that if the text can be reduced information can be accessed much more quickly and user satisfaction would be higher. The authors also
focused on creating these thumbnails in regards to work that the student has not seen before. This gave the authors a more precise idea in regards to how this technology helps student comprehension. The authors also thought that the search of the Internet needed to produce results that were arranged in a more practical order for the need of the users.

Participants were taught how to use thumbnails and text summaries and then released to do their task. The participants were all regular Microsoft Internet Explorer users. They were part of the Xerox PARC community. There were 18 participants, 6 women and 12 men, who ranged from the age of 19 to 56. They used the Internet several times a day. These users also used text summaries much more than thumbnails, so although they were Internet savvy they did not have specific expertise in thumbnails. Participants were timed on how fast they could locate the necessary information using each one of the summarization techniques.

Participants were given an overview of the experiment when they arrived. The examiner informed the participants that they would be locating information from a specific web page with multiple links. Internet Explorer was then reviewed so that there would be no ambiguity about Internet comfort level (although all people used Explorer multiple times a day). Participants were then given the following instructions: each link summary page contains 100 links, only use the links on this page, only use one Explorer window at a time, some answers are found on multiple pages, and the answer does not need to be the best one, just the one that fulfills the question requirements.

An introduction to one of the types of summarizations was given to the participants. The specific questions for the type of summarization selected were then loaded into the computer. Case study members then used two practice searches to make sure they understood the procedure. When participants wanted to start searching for the answer to the question they
would click start. When they thought they had found it they pressed stop. The examiner would evaluate the question and inform the participant if it was correct. If incorrect, the participant would press start and search for the answer again. After the two practice questions were completed the person being tested entirely finished the four questions for that specific summary following the same guidelines. When the above process was completed the participant would move to the next type of summary and undergo the same process until all three were covered.

The experiment took approximately 75 minutes and produced clear results. The examiners analyzed these results in two ways. They analyzed the data to determine how much time was spent for each type of search and then they reconfigured the data to see how much time was spent on the summary pages and how much time was spent on the content pages (individual web pages with potential answers). On average, the examiners discovered that it took 67 seconds to find information with the enhanced thumbnail search, 86 seconds with the regular thumbnail, and 95 seconds with the text summaries. It should be noted that if the participant could not find the answer in five minutes, then that was their recorded time. It was also found that participants spent more time on the summary pages (twelve seconds per visit) versus the content pages (eight seconds per visit). The examiners observed that some of the questions asked took longer, despite the summary type.

Strong evidence was discovered that urges educators to use enhanced thumbnails. This combination of thumbnails and text summaries was found to be most helpful for finding information quickly. It could also be beneficial for educators to use enhanced thumbnails in order for their students to find information quickly. In regards to ELL students, this study gave me the idea to try to find something that reduced the amount of text students had to sift through. I found map-correction was much more beneficial for students than just using the book in a
stand-alone type of way. Just as enhanced thumbnails are a different way of searching through text on the Internet, maps that need correcting help students to not have to search through all the text of their own textbooks. Students were able to gain the needed knowledge without having to search through the whole five-page section. The students were able to identify the paragraph that needed to be re-read in order to get the needed information.

Students need a relevant way to search and structure summarization in a way that makes sense to them (Twyman & Tindal, 2006). It is important for students to have a way to summarize their ideas through the use of technology. Also, thumbnails used with text summaries are more helpful for finding information quickly (Woodruff, Rosenholtz, Morrison, Faulring, & Pirolli, 2002). The necessity of summarization skills is evident in the types of tasks employers expect their employees to utilize. Using a computer to organize summarizations will help all students, not only ELLs, to be more successful in whichever future occupation they decide to pursue.

Mapping Strategies

Technology usage is necessary in all classrooms to prepare students for their futures. An additional skill students will need to have successful futures is the ability to summarize. There is much information that employers require their employees to know and if an employee can summarize he or she can do the job requirements more efficiently. Mapping is a summarization skill that many educators teach their students. It helps students to organize the information they know in a way that gets the unnecessary text out of the way. There are many types of mapping strategies that have interested researchers in the past decade. Concept mapping is currently at the forefront of much research (MacKinnon & Keppell, 2005). Some researchers indicate that
concept mapping is great for students, while other researchers say the strategy has many adverse effects (Chang, Sung, & Chen, 2002). In this section, the focus will be on which type of mapping strategies are most useful for students, specifically ELLs.

Chang, Sung, and Chen (2002) conducted a case study to see if three different types of concept mapping: map correction, scaffold fading, and map generation, improved students’ ability to comprehend text and write meaningful types of summarizations. The authors of the study believe graphic strategies provide readers with a different approach to the text as opposed to a linear presentation. The authors see this approach as looking more like a tree, which allows the reader to access information more quickly. In addition, the authors believe that many graphics in the traditional textbooks have illustrations that may be detrimental to comprehension. Also, these graphics can cause students to only passively interact with the text they are expected to understand. The authors also think that graphic organizer creation is a great tool for student comprehension, but can take too long to train students how to do and complete the organizers. This amount of work can also cause students not to want to use the organizer to aid with their comprehension. It is also believed that an expert constructed map will be more beneficial as it will give the student the basic macrostructure of the text.

The data collected were from one hundred and twenty-six fifth grade students with some sort of disability in Taipei, Taiwan. The students were divided into three experimental groups (one for each of the three different types of concept mapping) and a control group.

Initially students were given the Expository Text Comprehension Test (as cited in Lin & Su, 1991) to assess their comprehension abilities. The test consisted of 20-25 multiple-choice questions and consisted of two types of questions. The first type of question could be answered from directly reading the text; the second type of question made it necessary for students to use
their inferring skills. Before and after the exams students were given summarization efficiency scores from 0 to 1. Students received scores of closer to one if they summarized completely, but concisely.

In this study, students used seven selections of scientific writing consisting of between 400 to 820 Chinese characters. Students were trained in concept mapping through this study. The map-correction group was given an expert-created concept map that contained 30-40% of the wrong information. Students had to read the article and then correct the concept map. Students were also expected to give supporting reasons of why the ideas were correct or incorrect. They were allowed to press a “scoring” button as they were going through to see how well they were doing. The scaffold-fading group also worked with the same seven scientific selections of writing. Their training consisted of students reading an expert concept map. The concept map given to these students was only partially completed. When students were given all the concept blanks and relation links they were asked to construct their own map. The final group, the map-generation group, used the same seven selections but was not given any sort of instruction. They were instructed to make a map of concepts and semantics after they read the text by themselves. Students were only taught how to make a concept map, but were not given a partial framework like the other groups. The control group was only instructed on how to read the text. These students also had the term summarizing the text explained to them, but received no further instruction.

The core of the experimentation was done on the computer. Students received computer training before the experiment took place. The pre- and post-tests were completed on the computer as well. All groups received information on how to summarize. The next day the students took the comprehension and summarization pretests. Students then worked individually
on computers to complete their experiments. Each session was approximately forty minutes. This time was broken up into two categories: students had ten minutes to read the text and thirty minutes to construct or correct their maps. Advantages were given to the three experimental groups that were able to look back at their previous texts when working on their maps in order to get ideas. The control group only read the article and was not able to look back for ideas. These sessions were held twice a week for four weeks.

After the last session students took their posttest. They were given 15 minutes to read the text and fifteen minutes to do their mapping. Once thirty minutes was complete, students took a comprehension test for twenty minutes. Finally, the students were given a questionnaire about the usefulness and effectiveness of the concept map.

The results showed that students who were in the map-correction strategy group scored significantly better in comprehension than all other groups. The map-correction strategy and scaffold-fading strategies aided students better in text summarization than did the map-generation and no concept mapping groups.

This study gave evidence that there is a superior structure for summarization and text comprehension. The examiners observed that construction of a concept map in which students had to correct misplaced nodes and links gave them expert knowledge, and corrected possible passive knowledge acceptance. Students were not able to circle a letter, write yes or no, or fill in the blank, but instead had to give a reason for their thoughts. This is a model that worked well in this upper elementary classroom and would be advantageous to try with students. In addition, it has implications for new ways to present lessons that encourage students to be active in their interaction with text, as does the next study.
There are many different mapping strategies that have been found to be successful for certain populations in certain settings. Previously, map-correction was shown to be successful. Hayati and Shariatifar (2009) performed a different study through the usage of many of the same principles. However, instead of the usage of concept mapping, these examiners explored and knowledge mapping.

Hayati and Shariatifar (2009) wanted to research three questions. The first question was what is the effect of using a KM strategy on the performance of intermediate EFL students in multiple-choice reading comprehension tests? The next question was what is the effect of using an underlining strategy on the performance of intermediate EFL students in multiple-choice reading comprehension tests? Finally, the authors wanted to know which one (KM or underlining strategy) is more effective for improving students' performance in multiple-choice reading comprehension tests? The authors believe that reading is important to increase professional and academic standings. Also, reading should be emphasized in the initial stages of learning a foreign language, according to the authors. The authors believe this because they state that reading involves an activation of knowledge to accomplish an exchange between two people. This is an active process necessary for communication, which is essential for two people trying to communicate. Finally, the authors believed that using reading strategies while reading the text is almost always beneficial.

The students who participated consisted of 40 female and 20 male ELL students who attended Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz. Students were given a proficiency test and selected based on their scores for the study. Students who scored between 35 and 50 out of a possible 80 were asked to participate in the study (gender was a limitation not taken into account for this study). The students were then divided into three groups of twenty students each: KM,
underlining, and a control group. Before the two experimental groups started the readings they both participated in 60-minute long training sessions for their specific summary strategy.

During the training session for knowledge mapping the researchers explained the strategy students would use in their reading session. The students were told of the advantages of knowledge mapping and were then given a hand out describing the steps involved in knowledge mapping. The steps are as follows: read text thoroughly to pick out main theme, put the most important concept on the top of the paper, reread text and circle other key concepts, rank concepts from most to least inclusive, draw lines between concepts and explain their relationships on those lines, and review knowledge map to make sure it is as accurate as possible. Students were then given a 300-word text with twenty minutes to read and construct a knowledge map. After the twenty minutes were completed the class discussed the reading and developed a class knowledge-map on the blackboard. This ensured that students generated accurate knowledge-maps.

The underlining group was instructed to read through the text the first time, without underlining anything. Students were then instructed to reread and underline key words and ideas that supported the reading of each paragraph. Finally, students were given a 300-word passage with the same grade-level difficulty as the knowledge-mapping people. A class discussion ensued to make sure that students followed a good underlining procedure.

Students in both groups were now ready to begin the study. They were given 300-word passages with each group having individual students read four different passages based on the following topics: “Atomic Clocks”, “Industry in Liberia”, “Wit vs. Humor”, and “Visual Arts”. Each group was asked to use their own strategy when he or she read through the article. The control group was given no specific instruction for this scenario. At the conclusion of the
reading, students were given forty minutes to answer 36 multiple-choice questions. Once the data were analyzed, it was determined that the underlining strategy had the best outcome for students. Underlining students scored an average of 25.40 correct out of 36 followed by the knowledge-mapping group who scored on average 22.25. The control group received an average score of 16.35 correct.

The question that arises from this case study is: Why did the underlining group score higher than knowledge-mapping group? The examiners concluded that the underlining method challenges students to process the text at a deeper level than the other strategy. In addition, the knowledge-mapping strategy is thought to be a more complicated and novel idea. When working with students who have a hard time with text, it is imperative to find a strategy of summarization that is not too difficult to follow.

This study has an abundance of implications for the field of education. It should make all educators aware of the underlying strategies that they use in their classrooms. These strategies should include guided and scaffolded strategies such as underlining and perhaps knowledge mapping if students are able to understand the complexity of the text. Once the underlying strategies are identified, it is the responsibility of the educator to make the strategy explicit and to give students the opportunity to practice these strategies.

Underlining strategy and map-correction are important strategies by which teachers should engage their students. The strategy used should be dependent on the type of reading and the purpose (Irwin, 2007). Often times these interventions take place in a group setting, but some students benefit more from a one-on-one environment. Stone, Boon, Fore, Bender, and Spencer (2008) used the mapping strategy in a slightly different way than the previous two studies, but in a one-on-one setting. The authors used text mapping as a strategy for improving
student comprehension skills. The question that the authors wanted to address was does text mapping improve reading comprehension of self-contained, freshmen students with emotional behavioral disorder? The authors gave each student training in purpose, use, and completion of the teacher-created text maps, in the second part of the intervention, each student created their own text maps. The selections used for this study were from reading selections of the technical language arts curriculum of a special education classroom.

The authors of the study believed that reading and comprehending are some of the most important abilities for any students to possess. Poor readers need to be taught reading behaviors in order to possess these skills. It is very important that students have some sort of visual in order to understand the texts they are reading. The authors thought the usage of some sort of story map would be beneficial.

The specific students who participated in this study were four students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). These students attended a suburban school in the Southeast region of the United States. Students had to correctly decode 75% of the words in a sample reading and had to be able to focus for at least 20 minutes on an activity. They were also in the self-contained technical language arts class that met in the morning from 8:15 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. Each student was taught individually how to use a text map.

The baseline intervention started with the students reading a passage as a group. Next, these students answered implicit and explicit comprehension questions on an individual basis. The instructor did not answer questions, but redirected the students back to the passage. Once students were able to successfully answer the majority of comprehension questions, the instructor moved them onto the next phase. The first part involved the teacher sitting down with students individually to explain the importance of the text maps. After this, the student and
teacher would read the passage together. The teacher would stop at points and ask questions about what was read and if it was important. During this exchange the teacher would give the student time to identify the idea and fill in the map. After engaging each student in this activity, the instructor gave each student a set of comprehension questions. Once students were comfortable in this routine, the teacher reviewed the major components of the map and let the students set out on their own. At the completion of the reading and the map, students were given 15 fill-in-the-blank comprehension questions to finish their time.

Every student improved his or her reading comprehension score through the intervention. Two students, Russell and Reggie, did not improve as much because their scores were higher to begin with. Jamaica and Jeremy improved their scores the most, as they started out with the lowest scores. Their scores declined during the baseline phase of the intervention. Both students stated the drop was because the reading selections got much more difficult. In addition, Jamaica and Jeremy increased their reading scores significantly after the first teacher-generated map was presented. Students made the greatest jumps in the baseline intervention, and scored well as long as they completed the assignments.

The implications of the study are that students should be given a frame for understanding information. The text map gave students a tool to use in other classes and helped their grades in other academic areas to improve modestly. EBD (or ELL) students benefit from individualized scaffolding in order to achieve on the level of their general education counterparts.

While the previous study used a specific kind of text mapping for students with disabilities, there is more research that has used other mapping strategies with success. Burke (2004) used the story-mapping strategy with his third through fifth grade students to attempt to aid their comprehension. The examiner was interested in two questions. First, he wanted to
know what the effects of story-grammar mapping were on the reading comprehension of students with specific learning disabilities. He also wanted to know if the effects of the story-grammar mapping would be sustained. The author believes that students with disabilities will be more successful when story grammar is taught, graphic organizers are used, and students with disabilities are required to story map. This was due to his pre-service experience and what he believed would be the most effective for students. While the author realized these were not original ideas, he did notice that there was not much published about students who were labeled LD.

Burke included six students in this study that took place in a rural, northern Georgia school. The participants were in a general education classroom for all subjects except math and English. These students qualified for this study because they had never been exposed to story-mapping, received one hour a day of reading support from the author, scored a 2.0 or higher on the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (Kaufman & Kaufman, 1985), and had a 95 percent school attendance rate. The study took place in a special education resource classroom for students with mild disabilities during the second half of their daily reading time. There were other students in the room who worked with a paraprofessional in a one-on-one setting or small groups. Instruction took place Monday through Friday and a day was repeated if two or more students missed the day.

The passages used were from primer and first grade levels of the series FOCUS: Reading for Success (Allington, Cramer, Cunningham, & Perez, 1985). Passages had a main character that was easy to identify. Students were given a story-grammar map that had spaces for them to fill in the following items: setting/time, characters, problem, solution, outcome, reaction, and theme. Students completed a blank story map after they read each passage.
In order to ensure that students had all the information they needed, the instructor followed a procedural checklist. This checklist consisted of the following points:

- Providing students with a purpose for using story maps
- Presenting students with the appropriate passage
- Prompting students to read with expression while attending to relevant features
- Randomly calling on students to read once per session
- Providing verbal feedback after reading (praise)
- Correcting errors (pronouncing words correctly)
- Using a transparency of the story map to record answers during baseline
- Referring to each element at least once during each session
- Beginning a new passage once criterion was met
- Administering the story map

Acceptable answers to the story-grammar parts were pre-determined. For any map there were eight answers for each student. The procedures took part in three stages: probing students without any explicit instruction, explicit instruction (intervention), and a phase of discontinued intervention (independence). Data were collected during all of these phases. The results were individualized in the following table (Table 2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before intervention</th>
<th>After intervention</th>
<th>Once instruction ended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beau</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chasiney</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2 Story grammar correct responses (in percent)**
Story grammar instruction improved students’ ability to identify the key elements of a text. Since this was a descriptive study, there are several limitations to it. In order to get accurate results in the relationship between story-mapping instruction and student performance, an experimental design should be implemented. Also, the population of students is small and therefore this study must be used with caution. Finally, there was no time limit for students to complete this map since fluency was not one of the main components. The author concluded that this adds to the research that has been completed on story-mapping and story grammar instruction as a successful means for increasing narrative text comprehension for students with learning disabilities.

Overall this mapping research has given me many ideas to consider. Specifically, it has given me one strategy that I will use for my action research plan, map correction. Map correction has proven to be successful in the context that it was used (Chang, Sung, & Chen, 2002). In addition, underlining was also found to be valuable when compared with knowledge mapping (Hayati & Shariatifar, 2009), a different kind of mapping than map-correction. Also, Stone, Boon, Fore, Bender, and Spencer (2008) concluded that concept mapping was a successful strategy if scaffolded and explained well. Finally, Burke (2004) added to all this knowledge by instructing students on the usage of story grammar and story maps. After this research was read and assessed, this question came to my mind: Will students be able to verbally communicate what he or she comprehends? This brought me to the research of my fourth category.
Discourse and Comprehension

If a student is able to verbally communicate an idea, there is no guarantee he or she will be able to write it. For some students, the reverse is true. Although allowing students to write and discuss content to check for understanding are great tools for differentiation, both have flaws if a balance between their uses is not achieved. Teachers sometimes take control of discussions, but discussions in which students talk more than the teacher and answer each other’s questions help more with student comprehension (Irwin, 2007). There are many studies that provide evidence in favor of discussion and conversation being essential an essential component for student understanding (Soranno, 2010; Hulan, 2010; Ingram & Nelson, 2006). The more individualized the small group, the better chance students have to participate and be heard. In this section, I will explore the benefits of students’ conversation and discussion for comprehension.

Colombo and Fontaine (2009) conducted a study that focused on the idea of conversation, specifically with ELL students. The question that the researchers were interested in was to what extent does the Historical Tutoring Program aid in the development of rich academic literacy and comprehension? In this study, students were able to practice academic vocabulary, use his or her English language abilities, make text connections, and use inferences in their quest to comprehend what they were reading. Social studies, specifically history, was the focus of this study that included fourth grade students. This is a study of the Historical Tutoring program, which engages ELL students in language-rich and engaging social studies instruction. This study focused on the influence of the academic conversations on the development of academic literacy and comprehension. The authors believe that students explaining social studies content to other students is engaging and makes the content more alive. The authors also believe that many times
students can complete reading assignments and not understand what they are reading. This lack of reading skills can sometimes happen because schools need to meet Annual Yearly Progress and test scores become more important. The discussion of what is being read is often lacking. When students are able to speak about what they are learning, they are more easily able to connect the content to themselves. In order for ELLs to comprehend much of their social studies context, they need to receive language-rich instruction.

Colombo and Fontaine collected information for this study from an integrated school, but these fourth grade students still lived in a homogeneous neighborhood. The students had experienced prejudice because of skin color or ethnicity, so they were able to make text-to-self connections since the topics studied all centered on prejudices. Throughout this study, tutors worked with this knowledge and were able to engage ELLs in meaningful conversations. These conversations targeted vocabulary, text connections, and inferencing strategies, which students increasingly used. Primary data were collected by using audio and video recordings, ELL student journals, and by monitoring the on-line Wiki. Students were selected for this study only if they were at an intermediate or above level of English proficiency according to the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA). Fourth grade teachers selected 14 students and two were assigned to each tutor. The tutors were fifth year elementary education majors at the university that this study was conducted through.

Throughout the study, students read three books that would help them to connect their experiences as ELL students to history. Tutors asked the following questions: 1) what is happening in this picture? 2) What do you think this means? 3) Why do you think that? The tutors then taught the word that were highlighted by the examiners in context and pulled each word out of context to write on note cards. Finally, the tutors engaged these ELL students in
conversation using the targeted words. Students made text-to-self and text-to-text connections. The final part of this study, involved the use of a Wiki site in order to share ideas or questions with ELL students and tutors from other schools. These discussions helped to scaffold vocabulary and understanding of the content. The Wiki would also feature questions and pictures each week such as “What is segregation? Can you think of examples of when people are segregated? What do you think about segregation? Is it good or bad? How is your school different from the schools in the book?”

Colombo and Fontaine and their research assistant analyzed many different transcripts for various nodes of information. These nodes included predictions, inferences, social justice connections, questioning the text, summarizing, text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. The examiners found that the social studies content, reading selections, and academic conversations led to a successful way to engage ELLS in vocabulary development and the use of comprehension strategies. Academic vocabulary was used in 16 of the 18 recorded sessions in an authentic way. Students also received vocabulary rings and, with the help from their tutors, were able to use them successfully in their writing and conversations. The previous was only possible when their tutors modeled how to use the vocabulary words first, but in a different context. The students also used inferences with more frequency. Of the twelve audio recorded transcripts used, each one was found to have multiple examples of the usage of inferences. The examiner found a correlation between tutor modeling and the amount of times students used inferences. The last category that was analyzed was text-to-text and text-to-self connections. Of the twelve transcripts used, there were 35 text-to-self connections and 15 text-to-text connections.
The implications of the study by Colombo and Fontaine (2009) are many. Although this was a pilot study, there is much promising data regarding the potential of academic conversations. The books that were used provided much thoughtful academic discussion between ELL students and their tutors. Interest level was high and ELL students were able to make many powerful connections to the children who experienced segregation in the books.

The practice of conversation is not only beneficial for ELL students, but their general education counterparts as well. In the next qualitative study Vetter (2010) observed a high school English teacher who engaged her students in conversations about reading and writing. The question that the examiner was intent on answering was how could students be positioned as engaged readers, capable writers, and member of a writing community? The instructor spontaneously used classroom interactions in order to situate the students as readers and writers. Vetter looked explicitly at how the instructor positioned the students as engaged readers, capable writers, and members of a writing community.

The author believes that a teacher needs to position each student in a way that will help him or her to become a successful reader or writer. In order for the individual student to be a successful reader or writer, he or she must have a positive discourse with his or her teacher and classmates. Once a student has identified his or herself as a reader or writer, it puts the student in a certain position, or gives an identity, to them in the context of reading and writing (Fairbanks & Arial, 2006). When a student is positioned appropriately, a sense of a reading and writing community is established with peers and teachers.

This study took place in at Rushmore High School in a working-class neighborhood of a southwestern United States city. The school had the most diverse population in the city: 67 percent Latino, 30 percent African American, 2 percent Caucasian, and 1 percent Asian and
Native American. Thirty-one percent of the students were also English language learners (ELLs). The school was labeled as academically unacceptable by the state. There were twenty-five students in the English 3 class where the study took place. This class was for students who were on grade level. Sixteen of the students were Latino, nine were African American and eight students were labeled as ELLs.

The examiner kept track of classroom language and literacy events. The question she wanted to answer was “In what ways did one high school English teacher negotiate classroom interactions that positioned students as readers and writers?” (Vetter, 2010). The examiner observed Gina in three different class periods. She observed Gina positing herself to her students in a way that took them from disengaged reader and writers to capable readers and members of a writing community.

The data were collected and analyzed by the examiner for patterns and themes in the student/teacher interactions. The examiner reviewed transcripts and interpreted what was happening in each of the interactions. She then interviewed the students and teacher to get their interpretation of the exchanges. These ideas give all teachers a snapshot of the complexity of classroom interactions and improvisation. Gina took many situations that could have turned into a debate or fight and made them into a readers’ theater activity. For example, Sam and Raul were debating about who the better reader was. This caused Gina to reflect and challenge the two students to a read off. They read and acted out the words. This idea made two reluctant readers engaged readers. In regards to writing, Gina tried to turn students from resistant to capable writers. She was able to do this by having students randomly pick a writing prompt and giving them different categories to think about them. For example, Detrek picked a writing prompt about addiction and he did not know how to write about it. Gina explained that he could
write about the prompt by giving advice, a personal story, or talking about any kind of addiction, not just drugs. She also talked him through the idea of narrowing his thesis down to one main idea. Finally, she positioned students as part of a writing community. This was based on taking a well-written student essay and talking about the content. Every time a student pointed out that the writer used big words, Gina pointed out that every student has a thesaurus and can use words like that as well. She also engaged the students by asking them to identify the main ideas and identifying the thesis. Gina was able to support writers and readers in a social context through conversation.

Vetter concluded that reading and writing is a social process. The dialogue between the students and teacher is crucial for students to grow in these categories. It should also be noted that Gina’s responses were crucial for engaging students in the reading and writing community.

This main implication of this study is the idea that teacher guided discussion can make a difference in student engagement. This is clearly partially because the teacher is positioning her students as the readers and writers she wants them to be. Although these real and authentic conversations are great, students can also benefit from conversations coupled with direct instruction.

ELL students need to have a chance to share their ideas and eliminate misconceptions. The ELL students need to be able to position themselves to be active participants in reading and writing based discussions (Vetter, 2010). Teachers need to help scaffold understanding in order for ELL students to be more involved in these activities. In addition, conversations have shown success for students in specific social studies content as well (Colombo & Fontaine, 2009). For this reason, students will share their summaries in this
intervention. ELL students need a small group or a one-on-one session to voice their understanding of what they are learning; this intervention will be a safe place for them to do it.

**Individual Student Needs**

Through discussion, ELL students are able to share their ideas. Since most ELL students become proficient in speaking first, this is a way for the students to engage the most quickly. These next studies focus on addressing an individual student’s needs. The first study in this section focuses on the portion of school in which students are taught content again and in a different way. The second study views what role culturally-based background knowledge plays in becoming a successful student. Both of these studies focus on meeting the student in his or her proximal zone of development and bringing the student to a higher level of comprehension.

Kamps, Abbott, Greenwood, and Arreaga-Mayer (2007) worked with first and second grade students in small groups to give intense reading instruction. The examiners had three questions they needed to address: will ELL students who are in Tier 2 interventions perform as well as English-only students in early literacy skills, will ELL students in Tier 2 direct instruction progress faster than ELL students in an ESL balanced literacy program, and will students enrolled at RtI schools grow faster in their literacy skills than those at non-RtI schools. This study used direct instruction in a small group and the control group used another standard intervention that was not based on direct instruction. The changed variable had to do with the experimental group receiving instruction through the usage of the following principles of instruction: phonological/phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, decoding, fluency, and comprehension building. The control group did not receive this intervention, but received a separately planned and designed standard intervention.
The authors believe ELL students need to be directly instructed in order to comprehend what they read. The direct instruction should be focused on the basics of the English language. RtI gives the teacher the opportunity to academically progress-monitor each individual student. The authors also believe that RtI will work better than the control groups intervention with students over time. Additionally, it is believed that whatever reading instruction ELL students get, it needs to be explicitly taught.

The students in this study were first and second grade students from Kansas. Three hundred and eighteen students were split into two groups for this study. A total of 117 students (84 ELL, 33 English-only) students received the tiered instruction and 113 students (60 ELL, 53 English-only) received the standard intervention. Student data came from six different schools, with 84% of the students on free or reduced lunch.

The two measures that were used initially were the Dynamic Indicators of Basics Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) (Good, Simmons, & Smith, 1998) and the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test. (Woodcock, 1991). Two subtests were used of the DIBELS test: Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) and Oral Reading Fluency (ORF). The students were tested using these assessments in the spring and fall.

Students in the experimental group were given an intervention using direct instruction in small groups of 3 to 6. This direct instruction included: phonological/phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, alphabetic decoding, fluency building, and comprehension skill instruction. Students in the control group (or control schools) used guided reading for their Tier 2 interventions. Phonemic awareness and phonics instruction was only addressed to students individually during “teachable moments”. The main focus was on reading and re-reading books based on each student’s personal level. The groups usually read together based on their level,
and there were 12 to 17 students in each group. Since this research took place across several schools, a time frame was not mentioned or enforced. These small groups were a mixture of ELL and native speaking students.

The results showed that students benefited from this intervention based on the results of the NWF for first graders. For second graders, the control group and experimental group tested the same for the ORF. ELL students made just as much progress according to the NWF in comparison to their native speaking counterparts. Although ELLs and native speakers made progress, natives made much more progress on the ORF. All students in the experimental group showed more growth than their control group counterparts.

The findings of this study suggest that small group direct instruction is good for all students. The setting of a mixture of ELL and native speaking students helps both groups of students to grow. This direct instruction of this intervention did involve a minimal amount of student discussion as well. Both of these components, direct instruction and discussion, helped native-speakers and ELL students. The examiners found that when ELL students can participate in small group, evidence-based interventions, the outcomes are favorable (Kamps, Abbott, Greenwood, and Arreaga-Mayer, 2007).

The students involved in the previously mentioned study focused on the academic hurdles that all students, particularly ELL students, have. There are other hurdles to overcome besides the comprehension of academic content. Another hurdle that ELL students need to overcome is their potential difference in background knowledge. If teachers bring ideas to the classroom based on the background students have in classroom instruction, adjustment may be made easier for newcomers. Students need to learn in a way that is relevant and meaningful to them. It is important to include students’ cultural knowledge to enhance their understanding. For students
to comprehend and summarize text well, they need to be taught the prior knowledge that a native English speaker may have. ELL students, dependent on their culture, may not have the prior knowledge needed to complete the academic tasks required of them. This next study examined how educators can use the student’s cultural knowledge to teach prior knowledge needed for academic comprehension.

Garth-McCullough (2008) examined the role that culturally bound knowledge played in the reading comprehension process of low, medium, and high performing students. The research conducted attempted to answer the following question: If students have prior knowledge of the culture the text is referring to, will they achieve at a higher level of reading comprehension? This study focused on eighth grade African-American students in a large Midwestern city. Half of the students attended charter schools, the other half attended regular public school. Students were given two assessments, before the readings, in a one-on-one format with each text in the range of 190 to 200 items in length. Both tests contained free association, binary choice (yes/no) and multiple-choice types of questions. These items were associated with the culturally bound types of knowledge that would be necessary to read the given texts. The texts being read include the following variable genres: African-American, Chinese American, and European American. The post assessment for comprehension was administered one-on-one and contained thirty multiple-choice questions for each of the six readings. The author believes that bringing in the culture of various students can help them understand the context of literature they are reading. Once an educator had brought culture into his or her classroom he or she must identify variables in the classroom that interfere with or promote student learning. Finally, the author also acknowledged that different groups of students have different opportunities to the literature taught in schools.
The total number of students who participated was 117, sixty-two males and fifty-five females. These students were given the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) (Garth-McCullough, 2008) their seventh grade year to identify the reading achievement level. Based on their reading levels they were broken into different reading groups. The groups consisted of students who tested between a 10.4 (tenth grade, fourth month) and 3.3 (third grade, third month) for their reading levels. Students placed in the high group tested between 8.0 and 10.4, students placed in the medium group were between 7.0 and 7.8, and the low group tested at 6.9 or below. Next, six stories were collected (2 from African-American, 2 from Chinese American, and 2 from European American vernaculars). The selected texts were all between a 6.0 and 7.3 reading level.

After the pre-assessments (the tests that determined their reading levels) were given, students were broken up into four random test groups with low, medium, and high level students in all of them. The participants were put in a room with an examiner who did three different types of reading that taught a large volume of the culturally bound knowledge and activated prior knowledge about the culture. Students were given two assessments, before the readings, in a one-on-one format with each text in the range of 190 to 200 items in length. Both tests contained free association, binary choice (yes/no) and multiple-choice types of questions. These items were associated with the culturally bound types of knowledge that would be necessary to read the given texts. Students read the articles together and were able to ask questions if they did not understand the content. Students then went to a group where an educator taught a text about a different culture and then the students went to the final group and read the text and discussed once again. Once each group completed all three readings, each individual student was given the post assessment for comprehension. This was administered one-on-one and contained thirty
multiple-choice questions for each of the three readings. One room of students did not engage in
prior knowledge activity to act as a control. The prior knowledge exercise stayed with the same
text, but the order that each group read the text was different. This could have been a significant
variable if some knowledge contained in a text was able to help students out with another text.
After the groups were finished, they were given the post assessment (this has been previously
described).

Before the examiner began this study she made the basic assumption that cultural
knowledge plays an important role in the reading comprehension process. She predicted that the
high reading group would perform the best, which happened to be true for all three types of
literatures overall. This may be linked to the idea that high-achieving readers typically use
strategies when they read, which would be due to something completely uninfluenced by this
case study. Garth-McCullough did find that the group with high reading and low cultural
knowledge did worse than any other group in reading comprehension of the African-American
texts. In the Chinese American texts, culturally bound knowledge was still found to be important,
but the high reading, low cultural knowledge students still performed better than the middle and
low readers regardless of the amount of cultural knowledge they had. Middle readers with low
cultural knowledge preformed the same on all the tests as low readers.

The findings of this case study suggest that there is a good way to address prior
knowledge gaps. Educators are able to give prior knowledge assessments and tailor their
teaching to address those gaps as they teach their curriculum. Also, this provides good insight
for educators who may be working with students who need intervention assistance in reading.
The researcher states that these students could benefit the most from culturally relevant
discussions and activities of the text they are reading. In addition, when giving a prior
knowledge activity that involves reading, educators can pre-teach vocabulary to struggling readers to ensure they start out with the necessary background knowledge.

The previous studies focused on students as individuals. When teachers use the individual knowledge of their students, it can make the process of comprehension easier. Garth-McCullough (2008) performed the study in order to understand her students’ background knowledge. Many of these students were higher-level ELL students. Kamps, Abbott, Greenwood, and Arreaga-Mayer (2007) worked with small groups in a Tier 2 setting. Both of these studies pulled information from student needs to make a decision on how to academically instruct the students.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed research on the following topics: ADHD and LD students’ summation skills, technology-based summaries (using the Internet and computers), mapping strategies, discourse and comprehension and individual student needs. In the first section, the research was focused on ADHD and LD students. This research showed that students needed to be taught to monitor their work (Rogevich & Perin, 2008; Jitendra, Hoppes, & Xin, 2000). This monitoring provides students a way of keeping track of their thinking in a concrete way. In the second section, Twyman and Tindal (2006) and Woodruff, Rosenholtz, Morrison, Faulring, and Pirolli’s research showed (2002) that technology could be used to help students’ access information more quickly. The research showed that when students are given a way to summarize a text, it become much easier for them to make sense of what they have read (Twyman & Tindal, 2006). In the second study, students were given a chance to sift through information on the Internet in the quickest way (Woodruff, Rosenholtz, Morrison, Faulring, &
Pirolli, 2002). In the third section, research was focused on mapping case studies. The research in these studies showed the usefulness of using concept maps. The research of Chang, Sung and Chen (2002) showed the usefulness of map-correction above underlining and concept mapping. Students had the information in front of them for map-correction, but they needed to use their higher level thinking skills to answer why a part of the map was right or wrong. Stone, Boon, Fore, Bender, and Spencer (2008) found success in underlining more so than the use of maps. Hayati and Shariatifar found that ELL students who used some sort of an organizer, specifically a map, were more successful than ELL students who didn’t (Hayati & Shariatifar, 2009).

Finally, Burke (2004) used a story-grammar mapping with her ELL students. This research showed that students were more easily able to identify elements of the text. In the fourth section, the research focused on comprehension and discussion. The research showed that the use of certain language in a discussion might help ELL students in talking successfully about social studies (Fontaine & Colombo, 2009). This study also showed that students were more successful when they were able to talk about their ideas. Secondly, the research of Vetter (2010) showed that students received power through their conversation and writing. These students were allowed to share their thoughts and ideas that gave them added value and meaning in the discussion that was conducted.

The last section focused on individual student needs. The research showed that when students are given individualized instruction, Tier 2 RtI, they have results that increase their comprehension skills (Kamps, Abbott, Greenwood, & Arreaga-Mayer, 2007). The next study focused on culturally bound knowledge. The research showed the benefit of acquiring the knowledge that students walk into the classroom with (Garth-McCullough, 2008). The research showed that students who receive intervention for reading benefit the most from culturally bound
knowledge instruction. These previously mentioned case studies have also give me a time frame to work with in order to show lasting understanding. I will have a five-week period to see if my students have reached a point where I can consider their reading comprehension skills improved.
Chapter Three

Procedures for the Study

The purpose for this study, *The Use of Concept Map Correction, Conversation, and Summarization to Improve the Comprehension of ELLs Using Their Social Studies Text*, was to instruct ELL students in the usage of strategies for comprehension. All of these students, except for Brandon, were supported in the social studies classroom without pullout. The study should add valuable information for what is in existence for research of ELL students and comprehension of social studies. The research study happened over a period of six weeks in a suburban school with ELL students. Described below is the sample population, the procedures used, and how the data were collected.

Description of Sample Population

The study took place in a suburban area of Southeastern Wisconsin. The school had an ELL program, a speech and language program, a special education program and general education classrooms. The school had 685 students with 38 classified as ELLs. There were fifteen different languages spoken in the school. An additional 12% of the population qualified for free or reduced lunch.

The participants of the study were four seventh grade ELL students who were between the ages of 12-13. The students were chosen for this study based on their performance on their tests and quizzes in social studies class. A student who averaged a C or D on his or her tests during the second quarter of school was considered for the study. Additionally, the results of their ACCESS test, a test that measures English language proficiency (WIDA website, 3/25/2011 http://www.wisa.us) showed that the students who were selected could benefit from a study on
comprehension. According to their ACCESS scores the students had not yet reached a level of 6.0, which would imply that the comprehension of each student was not fully proficient yet. The parents all consented to the study. Composite score for their 2009 ACCESS test along with students’ gender and language are listed below.

**ACCESS scores 2009-2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>First language</th>
<th>ACCESS score</th>
<th>Comprehension score on ACCESS test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brandon⁴</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javier</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Serbian</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the WIDA website, a student who was at a Level 5 is able to connect social and academic language to classroom content material at their grade level (WIDA website, 3/25/2011 [http://www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)). The students all scored between a 3.5 and 5.4 in the comprehension part of their ACCESS test. Wendy¹ started school in the United States in sixth grade and scored a 4.6 her first year in the United States. Brandon, Javier, and Olivia started school in the United States during kindergarten at English language proficiency levels between 2.8 and 3.3.

Additional information that were considered for this study were 2010 scores for students on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) (DPI website, 4/10/2011, [http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/oea/wkce.html](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/oea/wkce.html)) in reading. Each student selected had his or her scores displayed in the table below.
WKCE Results for Reading 2010-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Reading Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javier</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All students scored in the proficient area. All of the students’ scores were at the lower level of proficient on the test. So, according to the WKCE these students scored at a competent level in the academic area of reading. WKCE data coupled with the ACCESS scores were helpful in student selection. Another set of data used was the content area grades of the students at the time of the examination. The grades students obtained for the second quarter in all four of their core content areas are displayed below:

Content Area Grades for ELL Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
<th>Language Arts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javier</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These students struggled more not only in social studies, but also in language arts. Their scores in math and science were much higher than the average student in class. The science and math teachers both worked extremely hard to make the content interactive.

All of these students spoke a language other than English at home. Brandon and Javier both spoke mostly Arabic, Olivia spoke mostly Serbian, and Wendy spoke mostly Russian. All
students had parents who spoke conversational English (as was evident at parent-teacher conferences). The students were all born in the United States, except for Wendy who was born in Russia and moved to the United States for sixth grade. The steps taken to improve the students’ comprehension of the social studies textbook are described in the following section.

**Description of Procedures**

**Pre-test.** I sent home letters of permission to obtain parental consent for the students to participate in the study. Next, I administered a pre-test. The pre-test consisted of a reading from the seventh grade social studies text, *Creating America: A History of the United States* (Garcia, Ogle, Risinger, Stevos, & Jordan, 2002). The methodology of how to complete his or her first pre-test was taught and modeled for the students. Before completing the pre-test, the students and instructor talked about the process of concept map correction (Chang, Sung, & Chen, 2002). I modeled this process for the students using a concept map. Some of the ideas in the concept map were incorrect (this was intentional) and the students helped me to correct these ideas that were wrong, and give evidence to support why the concept was correct or incorrect. Next, I modeled how to write a summary that answered the questions who, what, when, where, why, and gave any other interesting details (Jitendra, Hoppes, & Xin, 2000). Students were assigned two ideas each from the concept map to answer these questions. Finally, I modeled a way of discussing the summaries using references from the book and connecting to different ideas that students already know (heuristic; inferences, predictions, informational; responses right from the text, reflective; text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world; adapted from Fontaine & Colombo, 2009). The chart below provides examples of each way in which an idea was communicated in the study.
Communication of ELL Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of Communication</th>
<th>Sub Categories of Communication</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example from Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heuristic</td>
<td>Inference</td>
<td>Using evidence or reasoning to come to a conclusion about an idea that is not explicitly stated</td>
<td>“If the Convention had no air coming in, then it must have been really stinky in there.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>To make known an idea in advance</td>
<td>“I think they will not be able to get through the mountains and will have to stop before them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>Restating something that was already read or known</td>
<td>“It says the Constitutional Convention was only for white men.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>Text-to-text</td>
<td>Relating a text you have read to a text you are presently reading</td>
<td>“This reminds me of my silent reading book…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text-to-self</td>
<td>Relating what you are reading to a personal experience you have had</td>
<td>“I would not have gone West, it sounds hard.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text-to-world</td>
<td>Relating what you are reading to something in the world around you</td>
<td>“Native Americans don’t have any land at all today!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pre-test and post-test results for this study are fully contained in Appendix A.

**Procedures during the intervention.** Next, students and I met twice a week for 45 minutes for a span of six weeks. Sometimes there was an extra day, which I used to solidify the information and give students more time to finish the process. Each week consisted of reading the text out loud as a group. We stopped and discussed the words we did not understand and discovered what the word meant. The group discovered what the word meant through the usage of context clues. Next, students had to correct their maps, which I created based on my research.
and analysis of the study by Chang, Sung, and Chen (2002). Once the maps were corrected, students then wrote their summaries. Finally, each student shared his or her summary. While students shared, questions were asked and connections were made to each student’s own individual summary. After the process was completed (which took two forty-five minute class periods to complete) the cycle started over again.

**Post-test.** At the end, students were given the same post-test to mark the improvement made to their comprehension skills (Appendix A). Students were not allowed to use their reading packet for the pre or post-test, but could use the map and summarization.

**Data Collection**

The students were pre-taught the strategies to be used in the study and all students were given a pre-test (Appendix A). Throughout the time frame of the study I used field notes and observations, which I recorded and transcribed as well as the number and types of responses given by each student (Appendix B). Student work samples were collected every week and finally the same post-test was given to see if student progress was made (Appendix A). I collected test and quiz scores from before, during and after the intervention. Those results are explained in chapter four.

**Conclusion**

The focus of this study was to introduce students to a strategy for correcting false information, summarizing, and talking about their ideas to build comprehension skills. These strategies included map-correction, who, what, when, where, and why summarization, and a guided conversation. Students focused on text from the textbook *Creating America: The*
History of the United States (Garcia, Ogle, Risinger, Stevos, & Jordan, 2002) that was simultaneously covered in their social studies class.

Students completed a pre and post-test. The instructor used these tests to understand if students had developed a deeper comprehension of the content studied. Also, student maps and summaries were collected to observe how the students thought.
Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to teach the strategies of map-correction, summarization and conversation in order to aid in the comprehension of social studies text for ELL students. The data in this chapter were collected after four seventh grade English language learners participated in a study focused on map-correction, summarization, and conversation. The study lasted for six weeks. The data from the study are presented in this chapter. The data are presented in four sections: map-correction, summarization, conversation, and student behaviors.

Map-Correction

Some of the data from this study came from social studies pre-test and post-test (Appendix A), which consisted of the components of map-correction, summarization, and conversation. The map-correction component was adapted from a study by Chang, Sung, and Chen (2002).

Map-correction was the first component of the pre- and post-tests. The students began both tests by reading a three-page section of the social studies text (Garcia, J., Ogle, D.M., Risinger, C.F., Stevos, J., & Jordan, W.D., 2002) out loud together and independently correcting a map that had correct and incorrect information included in it. Students also took the same post-test five weeks later for comparison purposes. Students were also required to correct or explain why six ideas were correct in the pre- and post-tests. Students received full credit on the graph if they rewrote an incorrect concept on the map to make it true without help from the instructor. A student did not receive credit (results shown in Figure 1) if he or she needed help correcting the idea. When the student received help, the instructor re-read a section of the chapter to the
student in order for him or her to get the answer correct. The struggling students received help because as part of the test each student had to make a summary out of two of the ideas. The summaries would have been wrong if students had not received help. The wrong summary would have led to students using wrong information later on in the intervention.

Students were able to correct or explain correct ideas on the map more often independently than with assistance. Some students overlooked certain parts of the text because they thought a specific section of the reading was not significant. The chart below indicates the ideas that students were able to get correct without help out of a possible six (Figure 1).

**Figure 1 Number of Ideas Corrected Without Help**

![Bar Chart](image)

All students were able to find the answers to the map with the previously mentioned two supports. On the pre-test two of the four students were able to correct their maps independently. On the post-test three of the four students were able to correct their maps independently. On the pre-test, Javier and Brandon were able to complete their maps independently. On the post-test, Javier, Brandon, and Wendy were able to complete their tests independently.
Summary

In addition to the map-correction, students completed the second part of the intervention each week, which was a summary. The students wrote their summaries to answer the questions who, what, when, where, and why (adapted from Jitendra, Hoppes, & Xin 2000) based on the two concepts they were responsible for writing about from the map. I checked the summaries to make sure there was no incorrect content included. If the summaries contained incorrect information, I allowed students to change them. As part of the student conversations, each student shared his or her summary. These summaries were collected and graded on a scale of zero to four based on the following rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-Half of the content is missing</th>
<th>-One component is missing and paragraph does not connect sentences together</th>
<th>-Paragraph contains all the necessary components and most sentences connect</th>
<th>-Paragraph connects all the sentences and has everything required</th>
<th>-Paragraph connects, everything necessary is included and more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Olivia had the most growth in this area. Her summarizations for the pre-test are shown below. She did not have the time to put the ideas in paragraphs, so she separated the ideas into two boxes instead:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussions held here were private</th>
<th>James Madison took notes at the Convention and was a quiet man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who- 55 delegates</td>
<td>Who- James Madison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What- discussions</td>
<td>What- took notes and was quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When- May 25th, 1787</td>
<td>When- During Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where- Philadelphia</td>
<td>Why- So he could remember all info.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why- So all ideas are private.</td>
<td>Where- Philadelphia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Olivia did not write paragraphs and did not add any other interesting details. Therefore, Olivia received a one on the pre-test. Before she started the post-test she told me that her two
ideas did not go together and she wanted to write two paragraphs. The paragraphs she wrote are below:

_In 1786 they started a group for the Constitutional Convention. They had the Constitutional Convention to have a better and stronger gov’t. In the Convention there was a man named James Madison. He was a quiet man that took very thorough notes on everything that was going on. I think that he was quiet and he took notes thoroughly Because if he was busy taking notes so he did not want to talk and waste time. He was so hard working that he earned the title of the “father of the Constitution”._

_In 1776 Americans thought that government was the main threat to peoples rights. They wanted a stronger government so they could protect peoples rights but not too strong to be controlled. Madison later wrote about the problem._

Olivia received a three on her post-test paragraph. Every detail was included from the rubric in her paragraphs. All of the sentences made sense in the order in which they were presented. The scores on the pre-tests, posttests and for the rest of the weeks for each of the students are indicated on Figure 2:
Brandon did not make any gain in his writing. He received a one on his pre-test summarization and a one on this post-test summarization. The component that Brandon missed was discussing any more interesting details on his pre- and post-tests. However, the flow of his paragraph was better on the post-test as he used transition words. Brandon did receive a two once during week three. For that summary he included all the components necessary for that week.

Javier was able to gain one point on his post-test. He received a one on his pre-test and a two on his post-test. On the pre-test, he did not indicate where the event (the Constitutional Convention) was being held. On the post-test he did indicate where the Convention was held. Throughout the intervention, Javier consistently wrote paragraphs that met the criteria. The average score of a two, Javier received from week two forward.
Olivia made a gain of two points on the post-test. She received a one on her pre-test and a three on her post-test. On her pre-test, as implied from the previous example, Olivia did not write a paragraph and therefore received a one. On the post-test, her paragraphs were written in a way that flowed well and she had all the necessary components. Olivia started to get twos in weeks three and four, but received a one in week five, as she did not even start to write her paragraph. The paragraph she wrote on her post-test was her best effort.

Wendy made a gain of one point on the post-test. She received a one on her pre-test and a two on her post-test summarization. On Wendy’s pre-test she did not include any details about when the Constitutional Convention took place. However, on her post-test she included all of the necessary components. Wendy consistently scored a two on all her paragraphs from the first week through the post-test. She ended up scoring a three during the week four session. Her sentences flowed well together and her writing was very clear.

Conversation

The third component of the intervention every week was for the students to have conversations anchored on the information that each individual student acquired from the text. The data collected from this section had to do with the type of responses students offered. The types of responses in the conversation were also measured during the pre- and post-test. These responses were gleaned from the conversations about students’ learning, which were divided into three sections based on response or participation types: informational responses, heuristic responses, and reflective responses. As mentioned in Chapter 3, heuristic and reflective responses show a deeper, more personal connection to the text as opposed to informational responses. In the following two conversations I will indicate the types of responses after the
comments. This first conversation was about the Whiskey Rebellion, a protest against a tax placed on whiskey.

Javier: *Farmers didn’t want tax on whiskey* (informational)

Olivia: *They went up against the President? Whoa!* (reflective)

Javier: *No one would do that today.* (reflective)

Instructor: *People oppose the President, but they do it in a more civilized manner.* (from transcript 2/8/11, week 1)

This second conversation was about Lewis and Clark and how Sacagawea aided them in their exploration of the West.

Wendy: *Sacagawea sounds cool* (reflective)

Javier: *But why did they help us?* (reflective)

Instructor: *Anyone?*

Brandon: *They didn’t know we were bad.* (heuristic)

Olivia: *We also had weapons* (heuristic)

Wendy: *But we couldn’t have done it without her* (Sacagawea). (reflective) (from transcript 2/25/11, week 3)

The above conversation has all three different types of responses that were recorded in this study. A response was considered informational if it came right from the text, paraphrased or word for word. A response was considered reflective if it was connected to the students’ experiences in books or from their own personal life or their worldview. Finally, the two heuristic responses were coded as such because they required students to make predictions or inferences. When Brandon spoke about how the Native Americans did not know the English
were bad he made in inference using his background knowledge. Also, when Olivia said we also
had weapons, she had predicted that the Native Americans did not.

Students were able to help correct each other’s summaries as well. Although I checked
students’ summaries each week, I missed one correction in week 3, which proved to be
beneficial. Wendy⁴ started to share some incorrect information, “Pike was exploring the same
area as Lewis and Clark….” (class transcript, 2/25/11). Brandon corrected her immediately,
“No, that’s not right, Lewis and Clark explored north and Pike in the south, like I think New
Mexico.” (class transcript, 2/25/11). Wendy understood and Brandon pointed out the place in
the text in which he found the correct answer.

Two students, Olivia and Wendy, grew in their conversation participation throughout the
intervention. Olivia and Wendy⁴ started out participating by being asked direct questions in
sessions 1-3 to expand on their summaries. Both of these young ladies grew in their abilities to
share their summaries and engage in conversation throughout this intervention. By the time
session 4 and 5 started Javier and Brandon¹ became very comfortable asking Olivia and Wendy
questions. For session 4 and 5, I did not participate very much in the discussion, but it flowed
very naturally without any major pauses. To show how students changed over time, Olivia’s
conversations will be listed and discussed. On the pre-test, Olivia participated in the following
collection about the Constitutional Convention:

Olivia: The government control had to be strong enough to protect people, but not to control.
Javier: I wonder if that is where checks and balances came from?
Olivia: I guess so.

⁴ Names are pseudonyms
Instructor: *Is that connected to the fact that the sessions were held in private in any way?*

Olivia: *What?*

Instructor: *Did the people at the Convention protect the general population by holding the Convention in private?*

Olivia: *I dunno.*

(class transcript, 2/1/2011)

Olivia participated in the conversation on the pretest. Olivia, like the other participants, was used to participating by giving very short one-word answers. Olivia continued to grow in her participation as seen in week 4:

Olivia: *The British impressed about 6,000 sailors.*

Brandon: *Were sailors the only people impressed?*

Olivia: *Yes, before the War of 1812*

(class transcript, 3/4/2011)

This conversation was a breakthrough for Olivia and was the first one in which she shared an answer that was more than one or two words (besides when she shared her paragraph). She continued to grow all the way through to the post-test:

Olivia: *James Madison is quiet, kind of like my dad.*

Javier: *That is what made him a good writer.*

Olivia: *People who are good writers sometimes don’t need to talk as much.*

(class transcript, 3/12/11)

In the previous conversation, Olivia was able to connect the text to her own world experience. She connected James Madison to her dad and made a connection to what she knew

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*5 Impressing sailors refers to the idea that the British took their own men and made them join the navy as sailors.*
about good writers. Her conversational contributions continued to increase throughout the intervention.

Another example of the speaking and responding that happened beyond just the sharing of the summaries happened in session 5. This time the conversation was between Javier and Wendy about how some colonists went west for religious reasons.

Wendy: *Brigham Young was the next leader for the Mormons. He was in destination to Utah, then part of Mexico.*

Javier: *What is Mormon?*

Wendy: *A religious group.*

Javier: *Were they running?*

Wendy: *They want freedom.*

Javier: *What kind of religion is it?*

Wendy: *Not Christian or Muslim* (class transcript, 3/10/11)

This discussion centered on the section of the book entitled *Trails West* (Garcia, J., Ogle, D.M., Risinger, C.F., Stevos, J., & Jordan, W.D., 2002). Results of the pre- and post-tests for these responses are on the table on the next page (Figure 3).
As students went through the intervention they increased the amount of heuristic and reflective responses, which indicated a deeper connection to the content. There were no heuristic responses on the pre-test, but there were three on the post-test. Also, only one student gave a reflective response on the pre-test, while seven reflective responses were given on the post-test. The students were very successful in growing beyond the informational contributions to the conversations. Although the use of the map-correction encouraged informative responses, students started thinking beyond the information stated in the text as displayed by the above figure (Figure 3). While the students still preferred the informational contributions, as they had sixteen informational responses on the pre-test and seventeen informational responses on the post-test, the amount of contributions grew in the other areas.
**Students’ Behaviors**

Students showed both confident and uncertain behaviors during the course of this intervention. This section will focus on the behaviors exhibited by students that showed a lack of confidence. In session one the students were very reliant on me for guidance and input, which was to be expected. For instance, Olivia wanted me to check all of her problems before she went on to the next one on the map-correction and summary. I explained that this would not give her the independence she needed in the social studies classroom. Also, she knew that this was a topic that was a data point being used in the research. She slowly stopped inquiring if the answer was right.

All students made gains, but each one did so at his or her own pace. For a deeper understanding of student behavior, the focus of this paragraph will be on Wendy. Although she missed a week of the intervention, she experienced much growth in independence. She started the intervention in need of help on two out of six data points. During weeks one and two Wendy only needed help on two out of eight points both weeks. Wendy was able to independently complete the map during week three, but needed help again during weeks four and five on one of the eight points. When completing her written summaries, she never asked for help, which could have been beneficial for her. She started with a one on her written summary because she did not include all the components in her summary. Wendy finished with a two, which was still less than the score given for average work, which was a three. Finally, on the pre-test conversation, she contributed two informational responses. On the post-test, she contributed two informational responses as well as one heuristic response and one reflective response.
Conclusion

The results of this study, *The Use of Concept Map Correction, Conversation, and Summarization to Improve the Comprehension of ELLs Using Their Social Studies*, are based on the pre and post-tests. Other data that were considered for this chapter included maps and summaries from the sessions, discussions, and field notes. Each student grew or was able to maintain the level of independence used on the map-correction section. All the students grew or stayed the same on their abilities to write a clear, concise summary that flowed well. The students also showed growth or stayed the same in their level of connection by providing more reflective and heuristic responses. The results along with limitations and strengths of the study will be discussed in chapter five. Another topic addressed in chapter five will be recommendations for future research.
Chapter 5

Conclusions

This study examined how map correction, summarization, and conversation affected four seventh grade ELL students’ comprehension of a social studies textbook. The findings of the study reveal a benefit in the usage of map correction, summarization, and conversation on comprehension of social studies text. Overall, participants improved or maintained their performance on all parts of the post-tests. This chapter has three parts: connections to other research, strengths and limitations and recommendations.

Connections to Other Research

This action research was designed to address the comprehension of these ELL students in regard to social studies. Two of the participants were not in need of this intervention, but needed the practice on expressing their ideas in a summarization paragraph. These students all scored proficient in reading on their Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE), which consisted of students reading short passages and answering questions about the text in selected-response format (80 %) or student constructed responses (20 %) (Wisconsin DPI website, 7/17/11 http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/pdf/read_framework.pdf), but were not receiving high scores in their social studies class. This observation not only occurred at the school where the research was conducted, but is a problem nation-wide. Garth-McCullough (2008) found that without the appropriate background knowledge, students might not do as well when tested. In addition, she noted that even when taught the necessary background knowledge, students might not have comprehension that is as in-depth as a person who has heard the information their whole lives.
Additionally, this study was done and should be done as a Tier 1 phase of RtI because it benefits all students. Kamps, Abbott, Greenwood, and Arreaga-Mayer (2007) studied the concept of Response to Intervention (RtI) in the Tier 2 phase for ELL students. The examiners for this intervention found that direct instruction was necessary for students to comprehend what they read. Also, Kamps, et al. focused on how these students did as individuals. For my study, I made sure that students were able to keep pace with how the lessons were moving. If a student fell behind, I worked with him or her to catch up again. Also, the direct instruction that I used led to students being able to be gradually released to be responsible for completing the work independently for their concept maps, summaries, and academic conversation with minimal instructor help.

When I designed my research I wanted to make sure to connect to recent research. When I read the research by Chang, Sung, and Chen (2002), I understood how important it was for ELL students to have some sort of organizer for their thoughts, rather than a linear presentation. Chang, Sung, and Chen argued that the reason linear presentations do not work is because students are not able to go back and revisit content and see how concepts connect. This map-correction concept map had all the main concepts on one page. The students who were involved in my intervention expressed many times how great it was to have an organizer. In their social studies classes the students often used organizers, but each organizer is different and usually a particular kind is not repeated. The map-correction component was the students’ first part completed after reading the text every week. I saw the students analyze the content more deeply than they would on the typical worksheet while they completed this first part of the intervention.

Hayati and Shariatifar’s (2009) research suggested that reading is active and communication should be allowed throughout the whole timeframe in which students are
creating, evaluating, and sharing maps. Although I did not allow students to talk while they were correcting the map, they did talk during their paragraph writing and conversation. Hayati and Shariatifar also thought it important to keep the text short so that students would be able to master the content; therefore I decided to keep the content I used short as well. If a reading passage was more than 1,000 words I cut out sections of the passage. With a smaller amount of content to master, students should be able to make sense of it more quickly. The students for my intervention definitely showed that mastery of content can happen more rapidly with a shorter passage.

One way in which he or she can accomplish this is through the use of conversation. As an ELL teacher I spend my days in many different classrooms and am surprised by the miniscule amount of academic conversation students are encouraged to have. Therefore, I included conversation as a part of my research. The benefits of conversation were also studied by Colombo and Fontaine (2009) who focused their study on the idea of speaking to help students understand social studies content. The authors believed that allowing these discussions made the content more alive and that language-rich instruction needed to be more of a focus for these ELL students. In my study, I observed student conversations and recorded them so that I could reflect on the understanding of the seventh grade students in the intervention. The conversation aspect of this study proved to be very beneficial as students were able to correct each other and give feedback as needed. Colombo et al.’s study reminded me to ensure that students felt safe to share in any environment. The specific participants in my study preferred to share in a conversational way.

Stone, Boon, Fore, Bender, and Spencer (2008) also worked on mapping strategies, but from a slightly different viewpoint. The readers these examiners worked with were struggling
readers. Within my study, the readers were all considered proficient; however, the social studies text was difficult for them. Some students did not show difficulty in their comprehension, but communicating it in the way that was required for this intervention was problematic at times. In order for the struggling readers to be successful in Stone, et al.’s (2008) study, they were given a teacher-created text-map to view. This teacher-created map aided students, as it was a great example for them to model their maps after. My research differed from this study in that the teacher created map was on created with all responses correct. The map used in Boon, et al.’s (2008) research had all the answers correct. The map that I used gave me a deeper understanding of the general mapping process. The idea that set the map I used apart from Boon, et al.’s (2008) research was that fact that students had to give their rationale as to why a part of the text was right or wrong. This process required that the students become active readers (Chang, Sung, & Chen, 2002).

During my intervention, I explicitly taught students how to complete the map correction concept maps and modeled for them the content to be included in their conversations and summarizations. Rogevich and Perin (2008) focused on this explicit teaching idea as well. Rogevich and Perin focused specifically on teaching students reading strategies explicitly. The students in Rogevich and Perin’s research, who were described as low achieving, learned to self-regulate as they read. In my research, students were also encouraged to use context clues and other ways to “recover” when comprehension breaks down. The conversation that students and I had helped them to self-regulate there reading comprehension. Even the best reader in my study did not understand everything as she or he read, but she or he used the strategy of asking questions and re-reading the text around the sentence to aid in comprehension. These studies inspired me to implement the practice of asking students to re-tell what they had read. The
problem with this is that when I interrupted students who were working on their maps they were not always willing to stop and talk.

Before I started my research, I realized that I wanted to stay away from worksheets because there are more constructive ways of presenting and engaging with textbook content. Twyman and Tindal (2006) used technology to teach text organization (summary skills) to their students. They advised that students should use a certain type of thumbnail to access information more quickly. While I did not use technology, I did reflect on how students could access information more quickly. While Twyman et al. used technology to help students gain access to information quickly, I used a map-correction concept map. The use of technology versus print resources allows students to secure information quickly (Woodruff et al., 2002). Once students had filled out their maps, they had a resource that could be quickly accessed in order to complete their summary paragraphs. In Woodruff et al.’s study students were able to find information more quickly using a different type of summarization thumbnail. These thumbnails provided students with the information they needed without having to search through large sections of text. In planning this research, I made sure students had their maps before they read. In doing this, students were able to pick out key words to look for on each section of the map. With this knowledge, students were able to read their textbook with a purpose in mind. The support for presenting information in a different way is astounding. It is not surprising that these research ideas make sense in every different teaching structure I have taught in as well as for this intervention.

Based on the results of the post-test, all students maintained or improved in their comprehension of their social studies text. Students were able to successfully complete their maps with minimal instruction from me. Two students needed help on the pre-test and only one
needed the support on the post-test. These two students were proficient readers, but not necessarily proficient readers of social studies. Olivia was the only student who was not able to correct the whole map by herself on the post-test.

Also, three students advanced and one maintained on their summarization performances. I noticed that even though three students could correct their maps on the post-test, none were able to communicate that in a concise, detail-oriented paragraph. The one student, Olivia, who was able to proficiently write her summarization, was not able to correct her map independently. From Olivia’s results I can now see that summarization works for her better than the map. For my other three students, I saw them correct their maps with ease, but they did struggle a bit more with the writing of a paragraph. The struggle these three students had with their writing helped me to understand that they need further writing instruction.

Also, students were able to use heuristic and reflective responses more often, which demonstrated a higher-level of comprehension when compared to informational responses. On the pre-test, Javier gave the only high-level contribution to the conversation. On the post-test, all students were able to give at least two high-level responses. These results are probably due to the way that I positioned them as readers and writers first to be successful in their conversations (Vetter, 2010). My research, along with Vetter’s, allowed students to read and write more thoughtfully within a language community. The way my students were able to contribute, especially in the conversation, was an indicator of such reading and writing (as the conversation was based on both reading and writing), towards the end of my study, it became apparent that students had started thinking more deeply about the content. The modeling that I did could have been a reason that the students were able to share their higher-level thinking. Rogevich and
Perin (2008) explicitly modeled and taught their students what was expected of them. The results also indicated a deeper connection and understanding of the content.

Overall, several reasons could have contributed to the progress these students made. The first reason could be that the students were receiving additional support by being in this small group setting. This intervention was much like the Tier 2 intervention that Kamps, Abbott, Greenwood, and Arreaga-Mayer’s (2007) gave for ELL students. Second, it could be that students were receiving and processing the information in three different ways: map-correction, summarization, and conversation. In class students usually only summarized and annotated in addition to worksheets. Also, I was in class supporting three (not Brandon) of these students. I would reference the intervention during class, as it did mostly parallel what the students worked on in class as far as content. As a result of this intervention, they became more acquainted with my teaching style and me. Also, Wendy missed a week and could not make up the session because of homework responsibilities. The intervention still helped her, as evidenced by her conversation responses, summarizations, and ability to do the maps.

**Strengths and Limitations**

The results of this study did show improvement for ELL students, however, there were some limitations. First, I will discuss the improvements. A strength of the study was that I knew all the students and had talked with them numerous times. I had also met all of their parents at conferences and felt comfortable speaking with all of them. The small group setting was also strength as these students talked more than they usually do when in an academic classroom setting. I was able to easily assess their comprehension after all sessions by looking at their maps and listening to their conversations.
A limitation of the study was when the students got too comfortable. The students in this study developed friendships with each other and often got off task. Also, there were personal issues of divorce and moving that kept two of the participants particularly distracted. Perhaps these students would have improved more during a different season of life with fewer personal distractions. These two students’ academic grades had also gone down from the news of their personal situations. Another limitation involved the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) test. The district decided to give the test at the time of this intervention. Students could have been fatigued from this test during weeks two or three.

**Recommendations**

If someone were to replicate this case study, I recommend a few changes. First, I would give a multiple-choice comprehension assessment for the pre-test, post-test, and all the weeks in between. This would help to support where education in the United States is headed (data driven, numerical data). Also, there were some parts of the concept map that seemed to be not comprehended particularly well. For example, in session three, Brandon, only partially corrected the statement “Pike explored the same territory as Lewis and Clark and was captured by Spanish troops.” He corrected it by stating the following: “he went farther into Spanish territory.” He did not address the part about being captured by Spanish troops. Therefore I would recommend one thought per circle.

ELL students are not the only ones who struggle with social studies. I would like to test this strategy with a different subset of students (perhaps students with disabilities). This research could prove to be insightful for social studies teachers and how they arrange their time and
instruction in the classroom. Finally, since the group used for this study was so small, it would be helpful to try this study with a larger population.

**Conclusion**

Throughout my study, I wanted to see how map-correction, summarization, and conversation would aid ELL students in comprehension of their social studies textbook. I wanted to contribute to the scant information out there. The results of this study were based on conversations, classroom test and quiz scores, and teacher assistance needed to correct the maps. Although there was no formal test, the gains made by this small group were hopeful. The results supported new possibilities of what a social studies classroom could look like. Even though this study had limitations, I felt that my students were successful. The way students were able to communicate their comprehension increased and he or she was able to connect with the text in a different way than before.
References


Hulan, N. (2010). What students will say while the teacher is away: an investigation into student-led and teacher-led discussion within guided reading groups. *Teaching and Learning*, 14(1/2), 41-64.


Vetter, A. (2010). Positioning students as readers and writers through talk in a high


Appendix

Appendix A: Social Studies Pre and Post Map Tests and Paragraph Summaries Tests
Pre-test
Read the passage. Find evidence for each item proving it to be true or false. Cross out the ones that are false. Next, pick two of the ideas and write a summary explaining who, what, when, why, and where for each idea. Add ideas that you feel are important or interesting.

Only white people were allowed to go to the convention. They grouped up to talk about ways to trade, etc. They needed a strong central govt. In 1786 in Annapolis, Maryland.
Read the passage. Find evidence for each item proving it to be true or false. Cross out the ones that are false.

Next, pick two of the ideas and write a summary explaining who, what, when, why, and where for each idea.

Add ideas that you feel are important or interesting.

The people who went to the convention were half lawyer and others were planters, merchants, doctors, Thers were no African Americans or women allowed. Other people were like James Madison, He was a quite man but with eloquence. If he even did talk he would talk quite.
Evidence: Half were lawyers, others were planters merchants & c. pg 229

Discussion held here were private. pg 230

Evidence: All ideas be considered, know one be pressured, be able to change sides in any debate that was kept secret. pg 229-230

Evidence: The Convention was called to end slavery.

Creating the Constitution

Evidence: There were only white men including James Madison at the Convention. pg 229

Evidence: Delegates wanted a strong government, but not too strong.

Evidence: Need a strong government to protect people's rights but not too strong to be controlled.

Evidence: James Madison took notes at the Convention and was a quiet man.

Evidence: He took thorough notes on the Convention's proceedings.

Read the passage. Find evidence for each item proving it to be true or false. Cross out the ones that are false.

Next, pick two of the ideas and write a summary explaining who, what, when, why, and where for each idea. Add ideas that you feel are important or interesting.

Discussion held here were private.

Who-55 delegates
What- discussions
When-May 25, 1787
Where- Philadelphia
Why- so all ideas are private.
Evidence: Hamilton called for the states to send representatives. pg 223

Discussion: There were only white men, including James Madison at the Convention.

Evidence: True, there were no Native Americans, African Americans.

Evidence: True, delegates wanted a strong government, but not too strong.

Evidence: True, delegates began to work hard to design a new national government. pag 230

James Madison was a little sneaky but he was a great writer. He took notes everywhere he was. He was the most important participant. One person called him "The best informed man of any point he debated."

At a convention, there were no Native Americans, African Americans, and women, with the delusions that they didn't consider those groups of people to be citizens.
Post-test
Evidence: about half were lawyers, others planters, merchants, and doctors. Pg 239

Evidence: only about half came to the Convention

Evidence: there were no native americans, african americans or women. 229

Evidence: Delegates wanted a strong, but not too strong, government.

Evidence: enough to maintain order, and not control citizens. 230

Evidence: 230 he seems like a quiet person.

Evidence: no it was meant to have a strong central government. 230

Evidence: 230 yes they had security at the door.

Evidence: 230 the convention was called not to end slavery but to have a strong central govt. that does not want to control these citizens. In 1787 the convention was held. The convention was held in philadelphia. They also had security to keep it private, with out
Evidence: Page 388

They never actually talked about slavery.

Evidence: Page 239

African Americans are denied the right to vote.

Evidence: Page 239

African Americans are denied the right to vote.

Evidence: Page 239

African Americans are denied the right to vote.

Evidence: Page 239

African Americans are denied the right to vote.

Evidence: Page 239

African Americans are denied the right to vote.

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Read the passage. Find evidence for each item proving it to be true or false. Cross out the ones that are false.

Next, pick two of the ideas and write a summary explaining who, what, when, why, and where for each idea.

Add ideas that you feel are important or interesting.

Who: James Madison
What: took notes
Where: Constitutional Convention
When: 1786

Who: Americans
What: wanted a strong govt.
Where: U.S.
When: 1776

Why: He was busy
Why: They could protect other peoples
Details: "He earned the title of "Father of the Constitution"
In 1786 they started a group for the Constitutional Convention. They had the Constitutional Convention to have a better and stronger govt. In the Convention there was a man named James Madison. He was a quiet man that took very thorough notes on everything that was going on. I think that he was quiet + he took notes thoroughly because if he was busy taking notes so he did not want to talk and waste time. He was so hard working that he earned the title of the “Father of the Constitution.”

I 1776 Americans thought that government was the main threat to peoples rights. They wanted a stronger government so they could protect peoples rights but not too strong to be controlled. Madison later wrote about the problem.
Read the passage. Find evidence for each claim proving it to be true or false. Cross out the ones that are false.

Next, pick two of the ideas and write a summary explaining who, when, why, and where for each idea.

Evidence: Government should protect people's rights.

James Madison took notes at the convention and they were the most detailed picture they now of each convention. The convention didn't count Native Americans. African Americans or women as U.S. population.

There were only white men because George Washington, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson. They were the most important figures of the convention. They took notes, and it was a cue for the convention.

Evidence: The Constitution was a strong document to be held secret.

Drafters wrote a strong document to be held secret. It was a strong document to be held secret. Evidence: There were only white men at the convention. Evidence: George Washington, and others were lawyers, merchants, and doctors.

There were only white men at the convention. Evidence: The Constitution was a strong document to be held secret.