The effects of interactive read-alouds on emergent reader’s narrative comprehension

Amy Wabiszewski

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.stritch.edu/etd

Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.stritch.edu/etd/340

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Stritch Shares. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses, Capstones, and Projects by an authorized administrator of Stritch Shares. For more information, please contact smbagley@stritch.edu.
The Effects of Interactive Read-Alouds on Emergent Reader’s Narrative Comprehension

By

Amy Wabiszewski

A Graduate Field Experience
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Degree of
Master of Arts
Language and Literacy
At Cardinal Stritch University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
2015
This Graduate Field Experience for Amy Wabiszewski has been approved for Cardinal Stritch University by

[Signature]
(Advisor)

Date: 12/1/15
Abstract

This action research was conducted with a small group of senior kindergarten students in a public school in the Midwest during the 2015-2016 school year. Throughout the six-week intervention, the researcher investigated the effects of interactive read-alouds on students’ narrative comprehension. The researcher, a Reading Specialist, utilized the Common Core State Standards, Lucy Calkins Reading Units of Study, and on-going collaboration with classroom teachers to determine appropriate expectations. With an exclusive focus on narrative comprehension, the researcher selected four narrative story grammar elements including characters, setting, problem/solution, and beginning, middle, and end. One week of the intervention was devoted to an overview of the elements. In the four sequential weeks the researcher instructed students on one specific element through the lens of interactive read-alouds, complete with explicit teaching points, researcher modeling, and opportunities for student discussion. The concluding week of the intervention provided a review of the four story grammar elements. The researcher conducted three pre and post assessments to determine student growth. The assessments utilized were the Qualitative Reading Inventory 5, the listening comprehension subtest of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-III, and a narrative retelling rubric from ReadWriteThink. The data collected led the researcher to conclude that explicit teaching of narrative story grammar elements through interactive read-alouds improved students’ retell of narrative story grammar elements as well as their listening comprehension.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature Page</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the Context</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection to Research</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research Overview</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Terms</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: Literature Review</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Literacy</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Story Structure</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read-alouds</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Methodology</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Population</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: Results</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Retelling Rubric Results</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Comprehension Results</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents continued</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Listening Comprehension Results ........................................ 73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary .............................................................. 74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five: Conclusions ...................................................... 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections to Common Core State Standards .................................... 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections to Existing Research ............................................. 77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation of Results ......................................................... 79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths ................................................................. 81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations ............................................................... 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for Future Research ........................................ 83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary ................................................................. 84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References ............................................................... 86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 .................................. 91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Narrative Retelling Rubric ....................................... 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: Researcher created graphic organizer .......................... 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the context for the action research study is discussed. The first section described the researcher’s background as an educator as well as the purpose for selecting the topic of interactive read-alouds. The second section provided explicit connections to the research base surrounding interactive read-alouds. The last section included information regarding the setting, population, and timeline of the action research.

Description of the Context

The first five years of the researcher’s educational career have been in service to struggling readers. Four of the five years were in a Title 1 role where the researcher was primarily providing interventions to students whose reading skills were below grade level. While the researcher’s current position still requires servicing those students, as a reading specialist, the researcher is now responsible for supporting all students’ reading instruction. This includes, arguably most important, their Tier 1 universal instruction in the regular classroom. Through on-going collaboration with classroom teachers, particularly those at the primary level, the researcher recognized the value and importance of interactive read-alouds. In addition, kindergarten and first grade teachers would tell the researcher the multitude of benefits including improved vocabulary, comprehension, and knowledge of text structure and elements they have seen by using interactive read-alouds. The researcher started to wonder what effects interactive read-alouds would have on emergent readers—more specifically students in senior kindergarten who have mastered letters and sounds, but were not conventionally reading yet. This meant the students recognized a few basic high-frequency words in isolation but had not demonstrated an ability to connect sounds together to read words in print. Could the students benefit from interactive read-alouds focused on narrative story elements including characters, settings,
problems, solutions, and sequence of events? How would it affect their listening comprehension and retelling abilities?

The researcher first reviewed the Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA Center] & Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2010) for Kindergarten. Three standards in the Literature section address important aspects of what the researcher hoped the action research would accomplish including:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.2 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.3 With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story, and CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.K.10 Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding. In addition, the researcher understood that in order to conduct interactive read-alouds, the need for interaction between students and the text, students and the researcher, and the students themselves was non-negotiable. Two of the speaking and listening standards and one language standard for kindergarten validated that understanding:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.2 Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood, and CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.K.6 Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.

While the Common Core State Standards (2010) provided one support for the action research’s purpose, the researcher also reviewed the Lucy Calkins Reading Units of Study (Calkins, 2015) that her district adopted this year. One of the supplementary texts, A Guide to the Reading Workshop: Primary Grades (Calkins, 2015) devoted a chapter to reading aloud,
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDDS

including one section on how to make read-alouds more interactive. Calkins reminded educators that the texts selected for reading aloud to emergent readers should teach big ideas and new concepts. She also encouraged regular opportunities for students to respond to the text in engaging and active ways such as turning and talking or stopping and sketching.

The researcher’s new responsibilities as a reading specialist, collaboration with classroom teachers, review of the Common Core State Standards, and her district’s adoption of Calkin’s Reading Units of Study ultimately led to the formation of the research question: Do interactive read-alouds have an effect on the narrative comprehension skills of emergent readers?

Connection to Research

To answer the research question, the researcher investigated four areas including: best practices in early literacy classrooms, comprehension, narrative story structure, and interactive read-alouds. The researcher’s goal was that the interactive read-aloud process would expose emergent readers to high quality, developmentally appropriate literature while simultaneously and explicitly teaching them the important elements of narrative story structure. According to Hoyt (2007), interactive read-alouds with clear instructional focuses increase student achievement, help students become contributors to their own learning, and develop valuable oral language skills. Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, and Hunt (2009) and Wasik and Bond (2001) demonstrated ways in which read-alouds were embedded into explicit literacy instruction in an early childhood setting. Justice et al. (2009) concluded that using a print referencing style when completing a shared reading improved both students alphabetic and print concept knowledge. Wasik and Bond (2001) demonstrated that interactive book reading, when coupled with multiple opportunities to be exposed to and use the targeted vocabulary words increased preschool students’ language development.
Language development was one of the benefits of interactive read-alouds. Brabham and Lynch-Brown (2002), Delacruz (2013), and Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance (2004) described the positive effects interactive read-alouds and storytelling had on increasing primary grade students’ comprehension. When students had an active role in the discussion of text and when the interactive read-alouds occurred on a daily basis, improved results on student comprehension were observed.

Comprehension of narrative texts is often easier for emergent readers because of its predictable pattern and consistent story grammar elements. However, a variety of researchers determined different factors can affect student’s comprehension. For example, Khan, Nelson, and Whyte (2014) concluded that providing students an active choice in the story elements presented led to greater gains in preschoolers’ narrative skills; while Green and Klecan-Aker (2012) determined that explicit, small-group instruction in story grammar elements increases students’ oral narrative abilities. Kouri and Telander (2008) compared the benefits of sung versus spoken narrative stories on emergent readers at risk for reading delays.

The research on the benefits of interactive read-alouds for emergent readers was abundantly clear. The final pieces investigated were the essential parts needed for and implementation of interactive read-alouds in the classroom. Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) identified seven components expert teachers utilized to implement a successful interactive read-aloud. Wiseman (2011) observed how a kindergarten teacher helped co-create meaning with her students through interactive read-alouds while Maloch and Beutel (2010) explored the quality of second-grade students’ initiations during interactive read-alouds. Pantaleo (2007) concluded that small group discussions during interactive read-alouds could help students develop both their oral language and literacy skills. Through the work and readings of these researchers I created
my own interactive read-aloud intervention with a focus on emergent readers’ narrative comprehension.

**Action Research Overview**

This quantitative study was conducted in a suburban elementary school in the Midwest. The school, which services students in K4 through fifth grades was comprised of three hundred sixty-three students. The study itself included seven senior kindergarten students from two different classrooms. Five of the participants were male and two were female. The students’ were all five years old at the beginning of the study with the mean age 5.4. Five of the students were Caucasian and two of the students were African American. All of the students who participated in this study were a part of the regular education classroom.

The school in which this research was conducted has an intervention block for each grade level, referred to as W.I.N. (What I Need) time. This daily thirty minute block provided an opportunity for students to receive small group, differentiated instruction from classroom teachers, Title 1 teachers, the reading specialist, and instructional aides. At the on-set of a new six week round of W.I.N., pre assessments were administered to group students according to their area of need. The participants in my study were selected based on their Concepts about Print (CAP; Calkins, 2015) assessment scores as well as their solid letter and sound identification abilities. The Concepts about Print assessment determines students’ basic book handling skills including left to right directionality, concept of a letter versus a word, return sweep, and more. These students had many of the skills in place to discuss the consistent story grammar elements presented in narrative texts.

Throughout the eight week intervention, with two weeks allocated to pre- and post-testing, the senior kindergarten students engaged in interactive read-alouds, written and pictorial
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

reader’s responses using a graphic organizer, co-creation of anchor charts, and activities related to the week’s specific story grammar element. The interactive read-alouds followed a predictable format and focused on a single narrative story element each week including character, setting, sequence of events, and problem/solution. The lessons began with an explicit think-aloud that introduced the participants to the narrative story element with a specific example. The read-aloud always contained pre-determined stopping points for both teacher modeling and participant opportunities to turn and talk. Each read aloud concluded with an end of the story reflection where the participants revisited the week’s story element and its connection to other texts. Once a week, participants were instructed to complete the researcher-created retelling graphic organizer to demonstrate and assess their knowledge of the week’s narrative story element. A review of each of the four story elements was conducted week seven of the intervention with a variety of hands-on activities.

Summary

In the researcher’s new role as a reading specialist, she was responsible for supporting all students’ reading instruction. This meant that the researcher helped ensure their universal instruction was grounded in best practices. Interactive read-alouds were a research-based best practice with a plethora of benefits, especially for emergent readers. The next chapter discussed in depth the research that led to the researcher’s conclusion and guided the researcher’s own action research.
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

Key Terms

Comprehension: The process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002)

Emergent readers: A stage of reading development where students can recognize many letters and sounds, identify concepts of print, understands that writing conveys a message, uses “scribble” when writing, recognizes some environmental print (Reading Rockets, 2007)

Interactive read-aloud: A teaching context in which students are actively listening and responding to an oral reading of a text (Fountas and Pinnell, 2007)

Narrative: A category of texts in which the purpose is to tell a story (Fountas and Pinnell, 2007)

Story grammar: The description of typical elements found frequently in stories such as characters, setting, and problem (Marshall, 1983)

Think-aloud: A strategy where teachers verbalize their thinking aloud while reading a text orally, the purpose is often to model for students how a skilled reader constructs meaning from a text (Farr and Conner, 2004)
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Read-alouds were one of the most commonly implemented components of reading instruction making a significant difference for readers across all grade levels (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004). The effects of read-alouds were numerous and varied. For emergent readers, read-alouds were an opportunity to learn about concepts of print and hear a model of oral fluency (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009; Wiseman, 2011). Read-alouds also have demonstrated marked effects on students’ language development and vocabulary acquisition (Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Wasik & Bond, 2001). Additionally, one of the most valuable benefits of read-alouds for readers of any age was the effect on shared meaning making and comprehension (Delacruz, 2013; Wiseman, 2011).

This chapter summarized research studies both quantitative and qualitative that focused on the essential components related to this action research project. Specifically, the studies assisted in answering the question: Do read-alouds in an early literacy classroom help increase students’ narrative comprehension? The first collection of studies focused on early literacy classrooms, particularly best practices in reading instruction (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, and Hunt, 2009; Wasik and Bond, 2001). The second collection discussed comprehension and the role read-alouds had in developing and deepening students’ comprehension (Brabham and Lynch Brown, 2002; Delacruz, 2013; Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance, 2004). The third collection of studies focused on narrative story structure and explicitly teaching the elements of a narrative (Green and Klecan-Aker, 2012; Khan, Nelson, and Whyte, 2014; Kouri and Telander, 2008). The fourth collection of research discussed the necessary elements of effective read-alouds and their implementation in the classroom (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey, 2004; Maloch and Beutel, 2010; Pantaleo, 2007; Wiseman, 2011).
Early Literacy

With the 2005 release of the National Assessment of Educational Progress’ report (*The Nation’s Report Card*), early literacy instruction moved into the spotlight. Across the United States, researchers, educators, and policymakers advocated for preventative programming to help increase the number of elementary-age students becoming fluent readers and writers (Justice et al., 2009). This led to a shift toward increasing early literacy standards and providing explicit and systematic reading instruction, particularly for at-risk students and students who were socio-economically disadvantaged and, those who were more likely to experience serious reading and writing deficits (Justice et al., 2009; Wasik & Bond, 2001).

In this section, researchers studied two instructional strategies that demonstrated a positive effect on students’ early literacy learning. The first study conducted by Justice et al. (2009) compared the effects of preschool students instructed using a print referencing style during shared reading and those instructed using the teacher’s regular shared reading techniques. The second study by Wasik and Bond (2001) evaluated the effects of interactive book reading on preschool students’ language and vocabulary development.

Justice et al. (2009) conducted a year-long study that investigated the effectiveness of explicit print referencing when reading books to preschool students who were socio-economically disadvantaged. The researchers believed that if the students attended to and/or demonstrated additional interest in the book’s print, they would learn about print more quickly. This was important because the students typically were at a disadvantage because of their lack of exposure to and experiences with print. The purpose of the study was to implement the print referencing intervention in a variety of classroom settings (e.g., public prekindergarten, Head Start, early childhood programs) with students thought to be at-risk and sought to answer the
question: To what extent does preschool teachers’ use of a print referencing style increase the print knowledge of at-risk children over and beyond that which occurs with teachers’ typical reading style? The researchers hypothesized that the students whose teachers employed the explicit print referencing style would demonstrate more print knowledge on standardized measures than those instructed with the typical reading style.

The research design consisted of a randomized, controlled trial with multiple sites and cohorts applied to three different conditions. The results presented were derived from the first cohort of teachers and preschool students whose conditions (independent variables) were either part of the “print referencing” group or the “everyday shared reading” group. The conditions (dependent variables) were measured using three standardized, criterion-referenced assessments including the Upper-Case Alphabet Knowledge and Name-Writing Ability subtests of the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening: PreK (Invernizzi, Meier, & Sullivan, 2004) and the Preschool Word and Print Awareness Assessment (PWPA; Justice & Ezell, 2001).

The twenty-three teachers in the study were self-selected after agreeing to participate after a series of information sessions were held describing the basic tenants of the study. The teachers were associated with four different early childhood programs in either Ohio or Virginia. The programs included five early childhood special education classrooms, eight prekindergarten classrooms, nine Head Start classrooms, and one private preschool. Of those who participated, five graduated with an advanced degree, ten with a bachelor’s degree, three with an associate’s degree, and five with a high school diploma. Thirteen of the twenty-three teachers’ degrees were in either early childhood or elementary education. The average teaching experience was 10.5 years and average age was forty four years old. Additional demographic information was not provided.
The one hundred forty-two students selected for the study were based on a random sample from those who had caregiver consent. A range of three to nine students were chosen from each of the twenty-three classrooms. These students were all eligible for enrollment in an early education program based on specific at-risk criteria including poverty, recorded family stress, or developmental concerns. A reduction in the number of student participants occurred because of absences on assessment days and a variety of other family reasons. The final sample of one hundred six students consisted of fifty-nine boys and forty-seven girls whose average age was four years, four months. Sixty-seven students were reported as non-Hispanic White, twenty-four as Black, nine as Hispanic White, two as Native American, two as Asian, and two as Other. Six of the students received special education services. English was the primary language in 88% of the students’ homes. Almost one-third, 34%, of the mothers lacked education beyond high school. The majority, 75%, of the students’ families had annual incomes below $40,000.

The students’ classrooms were randomly assigned to one of two conditions; fourteen were assigned to the “print referencing” group and nine to the “everyday shared reading” group. All teacher participants agreed to implement a 30-week reading program with the set of 30 storybooks provided by the researchers. The storybooks were selected purposefully with specific attention on print features such as speech bubbles and font changes developmentally appropriate for preschool students. Teachers in both groups received the same schedule of storybook reading in addition to instructions on frequency of readings (once on Monday and three other times before week’s end).

Teachers in the “print referencing” group received four different supports from the researchers before and during the study. The first support was a one-day workshop where teachers learned about early literacy instruction and techniques, particularly print referencing
styles, and had an opportunity to practice with colleagues. A follow-up workshop was held halfway through the study to review key print referencing style characteristics and offer coaching for further classroom implementation. The second support teachers received was *Calling Attention to Print* (Justice & Sofka, 2005), a manual that outlined how to address print organization, print meaning, letters, and words and during shared read-alouds. In addition to the manual, each of the thirty storybooks teachers received contained two explicit instructional objectives and suggestions for how teachers could differentiate their instruction. Last, every two weeks teachers in the “print referencing” group were required to video tape one of their shared read-aloud lessons; during weeks eight and twenty-two the researchers provided written feedback for the teachers on their implementation of a print referencing style.

Teachers in the “everyday shared reading” group used the same set of thirty storybooks in the same order as the first group; however, they were instructed to use their typical reading style with their students. The supports provided for these teachers were slightly different. Their first workshop focused on the significance of shared reading in preschool and high-quality interactions. Teachers were still required to submit a videotaped read-aloud lesson every two weeks; however the researchers only provided general written feedback. The second workshop in which the teachers in the “everyday shared reading” group participated was on storybook reading practices, specifically connecting books to dramatic play and other center activities.

Students in both groups were assessed individually in a private setting within their preschool by trained examiners. The Upper-Case Alphabet Knowledge measure required students to name all of the letters in the alphabet presented in a random order; students received one point for each correct letter named. The Name-Writing Ability required students to create a self-portrait and then sign their name; this assessment was scored using a 7-point continuum
scale of early writing development. The third measure, Preschool Word and Print Awareness, was utilized to assess students on fourteen concepts regarding print and words based on examiner’s questions during a routine shared storybook reading. Scores for the PWPA were converted to a standard score with a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15.

A multivariate analysis of covariance or MANCOVA was employed to demonstrate statistical differences between the “print referencing” and “everyday shared reading” groups. When controlling for classroom instructional quality, there were significantly different gain scores on the three assessments, $F(3, 101) = 4.73, p = .003$. Then, a univariate analysis for each of the three individual assessments was conducted. Students in the “print referencing” group demonstrated statistically higher gain scores on PWPA ($p = 0.025$) and alphabet knowledge ($p = 0.007$); however, there was no significant difference in the name-writing measure ($p = 0.079$).

The researchers also examined effect sizes (Cohen’s $d$) to calculate the difference between the two groups in terms of gain scores. All effect sizes were positive and considered medium effects: $d = 0.56$ for alphabet knowledge, $d = 0.50$ for print concept knowledge, and $d = 0.42$ for name-writing ability.

The researchers’ concluded that students who participated in “print referencing” shared readings for thirty weeks (an academic year) demonstrated educationally significant gains in alphabetic knowledge, print knowledge, and name-writing ability as compared to their peers in an “everyday shared reading” group. The first two measures also demonstrated statistical significance. Thus, the researchers’ hypothesis was confirmed. The effects of this study were continuous. Students who lacked print knowledge were more likely to continue encountering reading difficulties in elementary school. However, students who demonstrated earlier print
knowledge skills will have greater success with both the alphabetic principle and formal reading instruction later in life.

Similar to Justice et al. (2009), Wasik & Bond (2001) also researched an early literacy instructional strategy that continued to help at-risk students in their formal reading instruction for years to come. Wasik and Bond (2001) studied interactive book reading in four-year-old preschool classrooms and its effect on at-risk students’ language development. The researchers based their study on the premise that children raised in low income households entered school with inadequate access to and contact with books in addition to limited language and literacy skills. The same children were already academically lagging behind their economically superior peers and were at this disadvantage through high school. The study included shared book reading and extension activities that reinforced the use of the new, targeted vocabulary words.

The researchers utilized three key characteristics of one-to-one at home reading in the whole-class intervention setting. First, to maximize students’ chances for learning new vocabulary words from the shared reading, the study ensured students were exposed to the targeted vocabulary words several times in a variety of contexts both in and out of the text itself. Second, to make the targeted vocabulary words noticeable in large groups, the researchers provided interactive, tangible representations (props) of the words as well as books that used comparable words. Last, the teachers in the intervention classrooms were provided training on book reading strategies, specifically open-ended questions and encouraging dialogue with students. The researchers hypothesized that a combination of the three characteristics would have a significant effect on the four-year-olds language and literacy development. The independent variables in this research were interactive book reading strategies: trained versus untrained and target vocabulary outside book reading context: control vs intervention. The dependent variables
included both pre and post assessment utilization of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III (PPVT-III; Dunn & Dunn, 1998) to measure students’ receptive vocabulary skills. Post assessment involved two supplementary measures: the first randomly chose forty-four of the hundred target words introduced and directed the students to recognize the words based on four presented pictures and the second, an expressive language assessment, required students to name the object in the picture. Furthermore, the researchers observed teachers use of the target vocabulary words outside of the book reading context such as during extension activities.

The 127 four-year-old participants all were from low-income families and attended a Title 1 early learning center in Baltimore, Maryland. While the participants’ ages ranged from 3 years, 11 months to 4 years, 7 months, the center serviced 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old students. Ninety-five percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunch and ninety-four percent of the students were African American. The students qualified for service in the early learning center based on a readiness screening created by the school district that consisted of expressive and receptive language items in addition to categorization and counting assessments. Originally, there were sixty-four students assigned to the intervention group and sixty-three to the control group; however, six students transferred to other schools placing sixty-one in the intervention group and sixty in the control group. Teachers of the four-year-olds were notified of the research study and informed that if they agreed to participate, half would participate in the intervention while the other half would be delegated to a control group. Four of the five teachers in both the morning and afternoon classes agreed to participate in the study.

The study was fifteen weeks in duration, between mid-October and May; though, due to both the school and teacher’s schedules the intervention did not transpire over successive weeks. In the first month, one of the researchers modeled the interactive read aloud and helped with the
extension activities for the intervention teachers. In the following eleven weeks, the teachers were expected to do both independently. Teachers in the intervention group received training where they were instructed in three areas: identifying target vocabulary words and giving students a chance to utilize those words in the books, forming open-ended questions, and planning for student conversations about the book. Furthermore, the intervention teachers were trained to use specific prompts with their students before, during, and after reading the book that would elicit more than a yes or no response as well as strategies that would help students be more respectful listeners while their peers were talking. Each intervention teacher was also provided all books and materials to complete the interactive read aloud, which were based on a familiar theme in preschool (e.g., --The Seasons). The following items were included for each theme: two developmentally appropriate trade books that contained comparable targeted vocabulary, interactive, tangible representations (props) of the targeted words, a big book and accompanying smaller book with pictures of the targeted words, printed directions for center activities based on the read aloud, and instructions and materials for post reading art, science, or cooking extension activities.

Teachers in the intervention group adhered to the same schedule every week in sharing the books and materials. On the first day, the teachers presented the props to the students and instructed them to identify what they were before reading the story. If the students did not know what a prop was, the teacher would identify it for them. Then the teacher completed an interactive read aloud of one of the two trade books, supporting students in discussion of the targeted vocabulary words. The second day was very similar to the first including the students identifying the props and the teacher reading the same trade book. In addition, students completed center activities that reinforced the targeted vocabulary words in a small group
setting. On the third day, the students identified the props and teacher read the second trade book. The teacher read the big book that included pictures of the targeted words as the students followed along in their smaller version on the fourth day. The props being used during the interactive read aloud were also now placed in the classroom for student use during center time. While the teachers in the control group were provided the same trade books to read, followed a similar schedule as the intervention teachers, and employed the same themes, they were not trained in the interactive read aloud strategies nor were provided the props to help the students identify the targeted vocabulary words.

The researchers analyzed the data in two ways: with classrooms and with students as the unit of analysis. When classrooms were employed as the unit of analysis, an ANOVA equated intervention and control classrooms for just the A.M. and P.M. respectfully. When the researchers included all factors (condition, teacher, and time of day), there was no significant difference between the means on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III of the two intervention teachers and the two control teachers and also no significant difference between the means for A.M. and P.M. classes; all Fs < 1.0. Based on the results, teacher and time of day were not believed to be between-group factors. The means of pretest PPVT-III were 73.66 (intervention) and 72.01 (control) and posttest PPVT-III were 81.30 (intervention) and 72.10 (control). With students as the unity of analysis, Treatment x Trial interaction, $F(1, 120) = 13.69, p< .001$. The means for the receptive vocabulary posttest also demonstrated a significant difference in the intervention group: $M=37.85$ (intervention) and $M=28.09$ (control) for the morning classes and $M=38.05$ (intervention) and $M=26.06$ (control) for the afternoon classes. When utilizing students as the unit of analysis, the significance remained: $F(1, 120) = 76.61$, $p<.001$. Finally, the expressive vocabulary posttest demonstrated significant results for the
intervention groups in both the morning, $F(1, 2) = 189.81$, $p<.005$; $M=7.49$ (intervention), $M=2.71$ (control) and afternoon classes, $F(1, 2) = 126.13$ $p<.008$; $M=7.39$ (intervention), $M=2.78$ (control). When the students were utilized as the unit of analysis $F(1, 120) = 128.43$, $p<.001$.

Based on this data, the researchers concluded that students whose teachers provided various opportunities to be exposed to targeted vocabulary words both in and out of the context learned more of the words than the students only presented the book. Teachers in the intervention group introduced vocabulary words in a meaningful context via an interactive read aloud, provided opportunities for students to discuss the story, brought the words to life by showing students the props, and created extension activities to use the words in a different context. The researchers believed that the lack of continual exposure to the targeted vocabulary words in a significant context could account for the lower posttest results on the receptive and expressive vocabulary assessments in the control group. Similarly, the PPVT-III results demonstrated students in the intervention group scored significantly higher than peers in the control group. The researchers attributed the results to the intervention teachers employing the read aloud strategies they were trained in to other areas of their teaching, specifically the presentation of open-ended questions and encouraging student discussions during the read aloud or extension activities. They observed students in the intervention group asking their teachers questions about unknown words or the story in general and the intervention teachers more often using the proper identification for a targeted vocabulary word rather than a generic pronoun such as “it”. In conclusion, this study demonstrated the possibility of applying a whole-class intervention in a Title 1, high-poverty preschool that had positive results on the language and literacy development of four-year-olds on both standardized and intervention-specific assessments.
The two studies in this section stressed the importance of explicit early literacy instruction, particularly for students considered at-risk or socio-economically disadvantaged. The first study by Justice et al. (2009) concluded that utilizing a print referencing style when completing a shared reading improved students alphabetic and print concept knowledge. Wasik and Bond (2001) demonstrated that interactive book reading, when coupled with multiple opportunities to be exposed to and use the targeted vocabulary words increased preschool students’ language development. The studies demonstrated ways in which read-alouds were embedded into explicit literacy instruction in a preschool setting. The next section discussed the role that comprehension has in read-alouds in the primary grades.

**Comprehension**

Educators in the primary grades faced a complicated problem, how to improve the comprehension of students who were still learning to read (Delacruz, 2013). A plethora of researchers have provided suggestions for what they believed helped early readers increase their comprehension. The suggestion of read-alouds was already employed by many teachers in the primary grades. The studies in this section supported that the type of read-aloud utilized had a tremendous effect on student comprehension, most specifically the interactive read-aloud (Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Delacruz, 2013; Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance, 2004).

The first study conducted by Brabham & Lynch-Brown (2002) utilized correlational data to examine the effects of three different read-aloud styles: performance reading, interactional reading, and just reading on student vocabulary and comprehension. In the second study Delacruz (2013) assessed students’ comprehension by comparing two schools: one used daily interactive read-alouds and one used a traditional basal reading program. The third study conducted by Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance (2004) also compared two different groups,
storytelling and story reading, to determine the effect on emergent readers’ comprehension. The researchers of all three studies concluded student comprehension increased due to the proper implementation of interactive read-alouds or storytelling.

Brabham and Lynch-Brown (2002) studied the effects of read-aloud styles on both comprehension and vocabulary development in the early elementary grades. The purposes for their research included studying various types of reading with bigger groups of students, using three different read-aloud styles (interactional, performance, and reading) with the same books, and designing a correlational experiment to investigate the effects of the three read-aloud styles on first and third grade students’ comprehension and vocabulary development. The researchers hypothesized that the interactional and performance read-aloud styles would have an effect on both the students’ comprehension and vocabulary development. The predictors for this study included read aloud style: interactional versus performance versus reading and grade level: first versus third grade. The criterion were a vocabulary pre and posttest with forty multiple-choice questions and a comprehension test with seventeen multiple-choice questions that assessed both literal and inferential comprehension for each of the two informational texts. Both assessments were created by modifying questions from a test already published by one of the researchers (Brabham, Boyd, & Edgington, 2000 as cited in Brabham and Lynch-Brown, 2002).

Three hundred sixty students were randomly selected from those who had parental permission to participate. The twelve first and twelve third grade classrooms utilized were derived from five different schools in a countywide school system that were professional development locations for pre service teachers. Located in the southeastern United States, the district served students with a variety of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. In both first and third grade, sixty students were randomly selected for each of the three read-aloud styles.
One hundred fourteen of the participants were absent for at least one assessment; their data was not included in the final results. Two hundred forty six participants remained; one hundred seventeen were in first grade and one hundred twenty nine were in third grade with eighty-seven in the “just reading” group, seventy nine in “performance reading,” and eighty in “interactional reading.” The participants had an equal number of boys and girls (one hundred twenty three). Ethnicities of the students was as follows: one hundred seventy one were Caucasian, fifty were African American, ten were Asian and Asian American, eight were Hispanic Americans, and seven were not identified. Most of the groups, 63%, had half to three-fourths of the students in attendance for all assessments and read-alouds.

The two read-alouds, *Call Me Ahnighito* (Conrad, 1995) and *Everglades* (Craighead George, 1995), utilized for the study were both informational storybooks that provided factual information in a narrative format. The researchers selected the texts because of their unique vocabulary and information as well as the difficult concepts not usually encountered by first and third grade students. Both texts had a similar number of pages, amount of time needed to read aloud, production company, and suggested read aloud age range. The researchers created scripts for the read-aloud styles and texts by employing a targeted, listening-thinking activity with different options for before, during, and after reading. The scripts required the pre service teachers to document time spent reading aloud and total lesson length in addition to marking off each lesson component: discussion, response, and independent writing or drawing activities. For teachers in the “just reading” groups, scripts instructed them to read the story without stopping for questions or comments. After reading, the students were instructed to write or draw a response to the book silently without the opportunity to discuss the text or ask questions. Scripts for teachers in the “performance reading” groups directed them to read specific comments and
questions that highlighted certain words and concepts which the students were then invited to discuss for approximately five minutes. After the five minutes, the students were instructed to limit other comments until after the story; the teachers then provided an oral performance of the text. Following the teacher’s performance, the remaining time was used for guided discussion using scripted questions. In the “interactive group,” teachers employed the same scripted questions as the performance group; however, the teachers encouraged students to discuss the highlighted words and concepts before, during, and after reading. Teachers in each of the three groups reread the story over three successive days; immediately following the third re-reading, teachers gave both the vocabulary and comprehension posttests. This method was then applied to the second text.

Analysis of the pre and posttest results revealed no significant differences based on gender or ethnicity of the two hundred forty six participants. Vocabulary pretest scores did however indicate a significant difference \((p < .5)\) both between first and third grade and among the three read-aloud styles for both texts. Third grade students in the interactional read-aloud group \((M= 11.32)\) knew significantly more words on the vocabulary pretest for *Call Me Ahnighito* then those in the performance \((M=9.12)\) or just-reading \((M=9.00)\) groups. There were no significant differences in the pretest scores for the text *Everglades*. However, univariate tests of between-subjects effects demonstrated read-aloud styles had statistically significant effects on vocabulary for both texts, \(F(2, 240) = 24.15\) and \(26.16, p=.00\). Similar findings were reported for comprehension for *Call Me Ahnighito*, \(F(2, 240) = 11.43, p=.00\) and *Everglades*, \(F(2, 240) = 3.58, p = .03\). Students in the interactional reading group (5.10 and 5.37) produced significantly higher mean gains in vocabulary measures than performance reading (3.66 and 3.15, \(p=.01\) and \(p=.00\)) and just reading (1.46 and 1.99, \(p=.00\)). A comparable pattern emerged from the
comprehension measures with mean correct scores for the interactional group the highest (11.84 and 9.80), performance group next highest (11.54 and 9.66), and just reading the lowest (9.72 and 8.68).

Based on analyses, the effects of read-aloud styles were statistically significant and reliable for vocabulary measures for both texts and grade levels. The interactional read-aloud style produced the most gains, performance the second most, and just-reading the least. Vocabulary scores also revealed greater effects for read-aloud styles than grade level; the researchers believed this was because word explanations are needed to improve vocabulary. The key was to have set-timed interactions during story reading as was the method in the interactional group. Scores on comprehension measures revealed the opposite, with greater effects for grade level than read-aloud style. For *Call Me Ahnighito*, interactional and performance read-aloud styles resulted in significantly higher comprehension scores than just reading. However, significant differences were not reported for *Everglades*. The researchers believed that although an interactional read-aloud style caused repeated interruptions to the story, this did not impede student comprehension. In conclusion, the researchers’ hypothesis that interactional and performance read-aloud styles were more effective than simply reading for vocabulary development and comprehension was supported by this study.

A second study by Delacruz (2013) also supported the positive impact interactional read-alouds had on primary students’ comprehension. The researcher conducted a nine-week mixed methods study and investigated the effects of planning and incorporating daily interactive read-alouds as part of a balanced literacy program in kindergarten through second grade versus a traditional basal program. The two quantitative research questions were: What was the relationship between the implementation of daily interactive read-alouds and student...
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

achievement on the Developmental Reading Assessment-2 (DRA2; Beaver, 2006); How did the results compare with students that were instructed using a basal program without daily interactive read-alouds? Additionally, the researcher posed two qualitative questions: How did teachers plan and conduct their interactive read-alouds; What strategies did teachers use to model comprehension strategies during the read-aloud? The independent variables were reading instruction: interactive read-alouds versus traditional basal. The dependent variables included the DRA-2 to measure students’ oral reading skills and comprehension. The researcher hypothesized that the students who participated in daily interactive read-alouds would perform better on the DRA2 than those instructed using a traditional basal program.

The participants for the study were derived from two elementary public schools in the Midwest that had comparable demographic populations. School A was a large, suburban, Literacy Collaborative school that housed kindergarten through third grade. Prior to the study, School A’s district Board of Education adopted Literacy Collaborative as the district’s kindergarten through sixth grade language arts curriculum. The framework of the curriculum centered on long-term professional development for School A’s teachers, most of whom completed sixty hours of Literacy Collaborative training. The school included sixteen classes of each grade level, save for third grade which had fourteen classes for a total of 1,500 students. An intentional selection of teachers at school A were recruited based on their number of literacy collaborative trained years. School B was a slightly smaller suburban school that consisted of eight classes of each grade kindergarten through second who utilized a basal reading program. Convenience sampling was employed at school B; the researcher selected the first three kindergarten through second grade teachers who responded to the invitation to participate. In
both schools, only the students who returned the parent/guardian permission slip participated in the study. No further demographic information on the students was shared.

The study was nine weeks in duration, beginning in winter 2008 and concluding in spring 2009. The researcher individually administered the DRA-2 to the participating students and collected data on oral reading fluency, word accuracy, and five different comprehension skills. The comprehension skills assessed included previewing, making predictions, retelling, making connections, and genre dependent questions; depending on the student’s level, the comprehension measures were assessed either in a written or oral format. The DRA-2 consisted of a leveled benchmark system (A-40), which corresponded with emergent readers through books at a typical third grade reading level. The researcher selected a reading level based on prior running record information and then allowed the students to choose which story they would like to read at the appropriate level. The participants’ oral reading was recorded based on words read correctly per minute. Scores for the comprehension questions were evaluated on a three level scale using exemplars from the DRA-2 Teacher’s Guide for comparison.

The scores from all of the students’ DRA-2 measures were recorded into the SPSS software program. A $t$-test was completed to statistically compare the two sets of data, both from the two different schools as well as comparing pretest results to posttest results. In addition, qualitative data was collected from teacher interviews at School A. Both kindergarten (pretest $M=2.67$; posttest $M=8.86$) and second grade (pretest $M=24.40$; posttest $M=27.60$) mean scores increased at School A with the daily interactive read-aloud. The researcher believed that first grade students’ scores did not increase because the classes initially had higher reading level means and lower reading fluency levels; this corresponded with the teachers’ explanation that they had focused more on decoding and phonics rather than fluency. However, students in all
three grade levels at School B instructed using the basal program increased their mean scores: Kindergarten (pretest $M=7.62$; posttest $M=9.00$), first grade (pretest $M=6.23$; posttest $M=24.30$), and second grade (pretest $M=33.7$; posttest $M=35.86$). The researcher found three statistically significant differences when she performed a paired sample $t$-test: Kindergarten ($p=.012$) and second grade ($p=.011$) at School A and second grade ($p=.003$) at School B. Although there was not a significant difference in the first grade students’ test scores at School A, the researcher did confirm her hypothesis of students’ instructed with a daily interactive read-aloud performed better on the DRA-2.

The researcher inquired how teachers planned for the interactive read-alouds and presented the interview results as qualitative data. Teachers shared that they based the text selection on their state’s academic content standards, grade level themes, and students’ needs. The teachers previewed the text and indicated key stopping points with Post-It notes. The Post-It notes also provided reminders to the teachers of discussion prompts that the students actively participated in through written or oral communication. Each teacher stressed the importance of focusing on a comprehension strategy while reading-aloud; five comprehension strategies emerged from the interviews: finding the big or main idea, making connections, making predictions, asking questions, and summarizing the story.

While interactive read-alouds were just one part of a balanced literacy program, they produced significant results. The researcher believed that incorporating read-alouds daily helped students acquire enduring understandings of the reading process. Interactive read-alouds also provided an opportunity for purposeful, authentic learning where teachers scaffolded strategies for students to utilize in their independent reading and writing.
A third study conducted by Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance (2004) concluded that storytelling was another part of a balanced literacy program that effected students’ comprehension, specifically their narrative retelling ability. The researchers developed an ongoing, multiphase study to determine how storytelling and story reading affect oral language development and comprehension of children aged three to five. Knowing that meaningful experiences during the early childhood years improved and sustained language growth, the researchers purpose was to determine what, if any, corresponding and complementary ways the two story methods had on the desired outcomes. The researchers recognized that story reading had significantly more of a research basis in relation to language development than its counterpart storytelling. However, storytelling was noted to include greater audience attention and participation. A formal hypothesis was not provided.

The twelve-week study was conducted at a lab school located on the East Tennessee State University campus. The thirty-eight participants were placed into one of two groups. Group A was the “story telling” group and had one randomly assigned 3-year-old class and one randomly assigned 4-year-old class. Group B was the “story reading” group and also had one randomly assigned 3-year-old class and one randomly assigned 4-year-old class. The two story presenters included an early childhood education professor and a graduate student in the storytelling program. Additional demographic information regarding the participants or presenters was not provided. The independent variables were intervention method: story telling versus story reading. The dependent variables were analyzed language transcripts from an interview and story retell and creation of a story using a wordless picture book.

The stories selected for this study were evaluated based on effectiveness of being both told and read as well as the inclusion of age-appropriate illustrations. Once approved, both the
“story telling” and “story reading” groups were provided the same twenty-four stories to use in the intervention. Both presenters narrated the story to their group A and then read the same story to their group B. Every lesson began with two questions related to the content of the story followed by a statement encouraging the children to listen for certain elements in the story. The presenters then either narrated (Group A) or read (Group B) the story. At the story’s conclusion, the presenter asked a few literal and inferential comprehension questions and introduced a follow-up activity related to the story. There were twenty-two stories presented twice a week for twelve weeks. The stories presented in the first and last weeks were only presented once for data collection.

Data was collected in two different ways. The researchers individually interviewed each participant; they first asked the child questions to help them be comfortable and then asked the child to retell the story they just heard. The second form of data collection was derived via the child’s creation of a story based on the illustrations in a wordless picture book. The individual interviews were analyzed for language complexity using the computer software program SALT (Systematic Analysis of Language Transcripts). The three variables accounted for included mean length of utterance (MLU), fluency (total number of words), and vocabulary diversity (number of different words). The language samples were then analyzed to identify what formal story elements including beginning, ending, theme, setting, moral, and narrative were included. This analysis was done by utilizing a story retelling sheet created specifically for the language samples in this study.

The researchers used mean score comparisons for both language complexity and story conventions and comprehension results for the retell. There were positive gains in language complexity with two of the three variables indicating better results for the “story reading” group:
fluency (34) versus (9.05) and vocabulary diversity (11.47) versus (4.64). Mean length of utterance had a greater gain in the “story telling” group (1.3) versus (0.46). None of the children used formal beginnings on the pretest; however, on the posttest the “story telling” group increased (0.11) and the “story reading” group increased (0.16). While all of the samples demonstrated gains, two of the story elements were higher for the “story telling” group: identifying theme (0.16) versus (0.00) and setting (0.31) versus (0.15). The other two story elements were higher in the “story reading” group: formal endings (0.11) versus (0.05) and the moral of the story (0.16) versus (0.11).

The researchers also used mean score comparisons for both language complexity and story conventions and comprehension results when analyzing the wordless picture book language samples. Both groups demonstrated positive gains in three language complexity variables, but all were higher in the “story reading” group: mean length of utterance (0.50) versus (0.34), fluency (69.00) versus (19.74), and vocabulary diversity (29.48) versus (13.84). The “story reading” group also demonstrated higher mean scores in the areas of formal ending (0.42) versus (0.16) and use of narrative (0.21) versus (0.10).

Based on the results, the researchers concluded that the “story telling” group performed better on the retelling and the “story reading” group performed better when creating the story based off the wordless picture book. The “story reading” group depended greatly on the story’s illustrations and often described them to formulate their retell. In contrast the children in the “story telling” group created and visualized their own images which they then conveyed in their retellings. The “story telling” group performed better in naming a setting and remembering characters in the story. These results demonstrate that the use of storytelling helped the children’s recollection of certain story elements. The researchers concluded that each group
performed their best when presenting the story in the same method used over the twelve week study and that both storytelling and story reading held benefits to the development of three through five-year-olds oral language development and story comprehension.

The three studies in this section discussed the positive effects interactive read-alouds and storytelling had on increasing primary grade students’ comprehension. Brabham and Lynch-Brown (2002) concluded that both performance and interactive styles of read-alouds had more of an effect on first and third grade students’ comprehension than simply reading a book without opportunities for discussion or student interaction. Similarly, results from Delacruz’s (2013) study indicated that students in kindergarten and second grade classrooms with a daily interactive read-aloud demonstrated greater comprehension gains than their peers instructed with a basal reading program. Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance (2004) compared the effects of storytelling versus story reading and concluded that storytelling produced greater gains in oral language as well as story comprehension. The following section focused on narrative story structure and the explicit teaching of story grammar elements.

**Narrative Story Structure**

The skills it requires to tell a coherent, organized story are ones that can be learned through repeated interaction with narrative story-books and explicit teaching of story grammar elements. The ways in which narrative stories are presented to students can vary from an active student choice (Khan, Nelson, and Whyte, 2014) to use of stimulus pictures (Green and Klecan-Aker, 2012) to singing (Kouri and Telander, 2008).

In this section, the researchers utilized all three means to determine the effect on students’ narrative skills. The first study conducted by Khan, Nelson, and Whyte (2014) determined the differences in narrative skills between students who had an active choice in the

Khan, Nelson, and Whyte (2014) conducted a study to measure the effectiveness of a narrative intervention with an active-choice component on preschool students. The purposes of the study were to determine if explicit and engaging instruction of narrative story structure quickened narrative development and whether or not this further assisted when students made active choices throughout the story. The researchers hypothesized that students assigned to the active-choice condition would score higher on all narrative post testing assessment measures compared to the students assigned to the no-choice intervention. The independent variables were narrative intervention: choice versus no-choice. Dependent variables included the Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOW, Gardner, 1990), the Recalling Sentences subtest of the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamental-Preschool (Wiig, Secord, & Semel, 1992), a wordless picture book used to measure story-telling ability, prompted comprehension questions (Paris & Paris, 2001), and a standardized story retelling task adapted from the Bus Story (Glasgow & Cowley, 1994).

The twenty-nine participants were recruited from two local daycares which mostly serviced children of staff, faculty, and students at the researchers’ university. The fourteen males and fifteen females ranged in age from 3.1 to 5.4 with an average age of 3.86. The majority (76%) of the participants were Caucasian. Due to attrition of the sample across the study, complete data for only twenty-six participants was gathered at post testing. Fourteen students were assigned to the choice group and twelve were assigned to the no-choice group; they were
matched for gender and age within the two groups. All assessments and interventions were conducted at the students’ daycares.

Eight different story sets were created for the intervention, each consisting of two possible choices for the six story grammar elements (setting, character, initiating event, problem, solution, and resolution). Picture cards with clipart images were then designed to match each story grammar element for the eight different stories. Both intervention groups were instructed with a total of sixteen stories over eight sessions; the sessions were ten to fifteen minutes in duration over the course of four weeks. During the second half of the sessions new stories created from the eight sets of story materials were presented. This ensured each student viewed and listened to the same storyline once. The students in the choice group were provided a choice at six different places in the story in connection with the story grammar elements being taught. The researcher would instruct the student to choose one of two picture cards. For example, “Next we need to choose a problem for our story. Do you want the problem to be that the beehive is too high for the bear to reach or…that the beehive is guarded by angry looking bees?” (p.955). Once all six of the picture cards were selected, the researcher then read the student the pre written story that matched the cards. Students in the no-choice group followed the same procedure except the story grammar elements were already preselected and the researcher created the story, telling the student what the picture card depicted. Then the researcher read the pre written story. In both groups, narrative story elements were represented and repeated in many ways including labeling, pictures, and story reading.

Several assessments were administered to determine students’ narrative capabilities; all assessments were administered on an individual basis. The Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test was used to measure students’ expressive vocabulary. The Recalling Sentences
subtest of the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamental-Preschool was utilized to measure understanding of syntax. Students created a page-by-page narrative picture walk of two wordless picture books, *A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog* (Mayer, 1967) and *One Frog Too Many* (Mayer, 1975) to measure their story-telling abilities. Transcripts were coded for story grammar elements including initiating event, problems, attempts, consequences, and reactions. A score was assigned for the number of times these elements appeared in the students’ story. Following the student-created story, the researcher asked seven comprehension questions about the picture book, five explicit and two inferential. Paris & Paris (2001) created the two-point rubric utilized and two points were assigned for a correct response, one point for a partial response, and zero points for an incorrect response. Finally, the students’ story retelling ability was measured utilizing the adapted version of the *Bus Story* (Glasgow & Cowley, 1994). The story contained twelve pictures as well as a 168-word script that was read to the students. The students were then instructed to retell the story with the help of the twelve pictures. Students were assigned one or two points for each item they retold correctly, with a possible 53 total points. Analysis of pre and post testing data was completed employing paired t-tests and ANOVA.

The results of the data were overwhelming in favor of the participants assigned to the choice intervention group. Students in the choice group included more story components in their narratives ($M=15.50$, $SD=2.82$) than those in the no-choice group ($M=11.25$, $SD=3.57$). Specifically, the students in the choice group included a greater number of problems ($M=3.57$, $SD=1.16$) versus their no-choice peers ($M=2.00$, $SD=1.04$) as well as a greater number of attempts ($M=2.50$, $SD=1.09$) compared to the no-choice group ($M=1.00$, $SD=0.60$). A paired $t$-test demonstrated that students in both groups significantly improved their comprehension scores from pretest to posttest; however, students in the choice group had significantly higher posttest
mean scores ($M=10.00$, $SD=2.48$ versus $M=6.33$, $SD=2.90$). Students in the choice group also scored significantly higher on the story grammar comprehension of an unfamiliar picture book ($M=11.29$, $SD=2.01$ versus $M=9.33$, $SD=2.87$). Scores for the story retelling task indicated a significant difference in pre ($M=95.46$, $SD=15.33$) versus post ($M=112.31$, $SD=13.39$) test for students in the choice group. Students in the no choice group did not differ significantly on this measure.

The researchers’ hypothesis of students in the choice group demonstrating greater gains than their no choice peers on narrative post testing assessment measures including story elements and comprehension questions was confirmed. This advantage was demonstrated in the students’ story-telling ability for an unfamiliar, wordless picture book; specifically in the greater number of problems and attempts the students included. Students in the choice group also improved their scores on the story-retelling task from pre to posttest, while students in the no choice group did not. Finally, students in the choice group scored significantly higher on the comprehension questions, which assessed both literal and inferential comprehension. In conclusion, explicit and engaging instruction of story grammar elements paired with student choice had a positive effect on the narrative skills of preschool aged students.

Green and Klecan-Aker (2012) also employed explicit instruction of story grammar elements in their quantitative study investigating the effectiveness of teaching narrative story structure to improve the oral narrative skills of young children with language learning disabilities. The researchers hypothesized that the developmental story level of students would increase after the narrative intervention. This study used a single-group pretest/posttest design with narrative skills analyzed by number of T-units as well as developmental story level. The researchers wanted to employ a design that could be easily duplicated in a classroom setting.
The independent variable was the narrative intervention. The dependent variable was audiotaped, transcribed oral narratives from each participant.

The study chose twenty-four students with language learning disabilities from an on-campus laboratory school run by the College of Education of a major university. The participants included fourteen boys and ten girls, ranging in age from 6.3 years to 9.6 years old. The school does not designate by grade level, rather by academic levels determined by students’ achievement test scores. Levels I and II (academically correspondent to first and second grades) were utilized for this study. While the students all scored in the average or above average range on an intelligence test, there was a gap between the scores and the students’ achievement scores. Approximately 80% of the school’s total population demonstrated deficits in expressive language, language comprehension or both; the twenty-four participants were all part of that majority. The classroom teachers viewed the narrative intervention as necessary and the participants’ families provided their informed consent.

The intervention utilized the expression connection (Klecan-Aker and Brueggeman, 1991) as a criterion-referenced measure of narrative ability and a well-structured story grammar instruction program for students with language disabilities. The program involved a narrative elicitation process including five model stories and complementing pictures, a method for transcribing and analyzing the stories, and an intervention program. The study was thirteen weeks in duration with small group intervention provided twice a week for thirty minutes by speech-language pathology graduate students. The participants were randomly assigned to groups of eight with one graduate student leading each group. The small group size allowed for more hands-on instruction and greater opportunities for student participation. The first three weeks centered on teaching the concepts of the three story grammar elements that comprise a
Level 3 story including initiating event, action, and consequence. Level 3 was selected as the starting point because the participants’ pretest mean developmental story level was 2.1. All story elements were reviewed using highly engaging activities. The next three weeks participants completed multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank story activities. The initial story and four choices were read to the students who were then instructed to choose the most appropriate answer. The group progressed to fill-in-the-blank activities once eighty percent of the multiple choice were completed successfully. In the fill-in-the-blank section, students were read the initial story and had to record answers about the action and consequence. Once again, when eighty percent were completed successfully, the group moved on to learning about internal responses. In weeks seven through nine of the intervention, seven different feelings were introduced and taught to the participants. Each feeling was explained with a picture of a person demonstrating that emotion and many examples were provided. Then the students were instructed to discuss personal times when they experienced the emotions. When the students demonstrated proficiency at identifying and explaining target emotions, they transitioned into the multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank activities for Level 4. Once a group successfully completed eighty percent, the element of setting was introduced. Instruction focused on setting included the concepts of ‘who,’ ‘when,’ and ‘where’ in the story. After multiple examples were provided, different members of each group were instructed to create examples of each setting element. The last week of intervention was devoted to Level 5 multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank activities.

Data collection was completed using a pretest/posttest method of narrative assessment. The examiner assessed each participant individually in a small, quiet room. A model of a Level 5 story from the expression connection was presented to the student with the following instructions, “I am going to tell you a story. Listen to me carefully so that you will know what a
story is. Then I’m going to ask you to look at a different picture and make up a story of your own.” (p. 267). The examiner then randomly selected a different picture from the Level 5 category and began audiotaping the student, giving him/her as much time as necessary to tell his/her story. All participant stories were transcribed orthographically without capital letters or punctuation marks. The second researcher then analyzed the narratives using the same procedures outlined in Klecan-Aker and Brueggeman (1991). Initially, the stories were divided into T-units or simple or complex sentences. Each T-unit then was labeled according to its story grammar component. The labels established the developmental story level of the narrative. The total number of T-units, words per T-unit, and words per clause per T-unit were all calculated.

On the pretest, the number of T-units for all participants ranged from 3 to 14, $M=5.33$ ($SD: 2.23$). On the posttest, the number of T-units ranged from 5 to 14, $M=7.37$ ($SD: 1.74$). A paired sample $t$-test calculated a significant difference in the pre and posttest results ($t (23) = -6.1$, $p<.001$). Pretest measures also included words per T-unit $M=8.5$, words per clause $M=7.3$, and clauses per T-unit $M=1.15$. Posttest results were not significantly different ($p>.05$) with words per T-unit $M=7.9$, words per clause $M=6.64$, and clauses per T-unit $M=1.18$. The initial range of developmental story level was 1-3, $M=2.1$ ($SD: .65$). After the intervention, the developmental story level ranged increased from 3-5, $M=4.33$ ($SD: .64$). A paired sample $t$-test calculated a significant difference between the two results ($t (23) = 13.01$, $p<.001$).

This study presented evidence that an intervention targeting oral narrative skills in a small group setting using a well-structured program such as the expression connection can have a significant effect on students’ storytelling performance. Two results supported this conclusion including the increase in the mean number of T-units as well as the increase in the mean developmental story level. As students developed an understanding regarding story grammar
elements, they used more of them in their own stories. Additionally, the students overall narrative complexity increased as they were exposed to higher levels of stories. While the study did not include a control group, the results demonstrated that children with language learning disabilities could benefit from the type of intervention used in this study.

Kouri and Telander (2008) conducted another study that utilized participants with speech and language delays. The researchers sought to determine if prerecorded sung story-book readings would improve narrative re-telling, comprehension, and story participation levels with kindergarten and first grade students at risk for developing significant reading delays. The independent variables were story condition: sung versus spoken and the dependent variables included story narratives, comprehension questions, and participation behaviors.

A total of thirty kindergarten and first grade students participated in this study, ranging in age from 5 to 8 years old with a mean of 6.3 years. All students had an existing or past speech and language delay and weak phonological awareness skills; therefore, they were considered at risk for developing reading delays. A university speech and hearing clinic in Northeastern Iowa and local Area Education Agency referred the participants based on present or past enrollment in speech and language therapy or remedial reading interventions. Additional demographic information regarding the participants was not provided.

Each participant attended either three or four intervention sessions, located at their elementary school or a university speech and hearing clinic. The Comprehensive test of phonological processing (CTOPP; Wagner, Torgesen, and Rashotte, 1999) was administered during the first session or two; this information was utilized to determine the student’s phonological processing and expressive language abilities. The other two sessions involved the reading or singing of two different story books. The researcher always began by asking the
running head: effects of interactive read-a-louds

Student if s/he had read either of the books before. If so, a back-up book was selected. If not, the first book was either spoken (read aloud) or sung (pre recorded). The same format was employed for the second session, save for the order of spoken or sung book readings. The sixteen children’s books selected for the intervention utilized the following criteria: identified for kindergarten and first-grade reading levels, a story line with a recognizable theme, main characters with an objective to accomplish, illustrations matching the text, and an approximate word count of 350-375 words. Twelve of the books were selected for use during intervention sessions. The other four were classified as “backups” in case a participant had previously read one of his/her selections; “backups” were utilized with seven different participants. Eight books were set to each the melodies of “The More We Get Together” and “She’ll Be Comin’ Round the Mountain” (Beall and Nipp, 2002) for the sung versions of the story-books. The two melodies were selected for their common time signature, repetition, rhythm, and limited range of notes. Spoken and sung readings were randomly assigned across participants. Story-book selection was counterbalanced to ensure each book was utilized an equal number of times in both conditions.

After the book was spoken or sung, the researcher assessed for retelling by instructing the participant “Now I want you to pretend that I have never heard that story and tell it back to me.” All participants’ retells were audio recorded and rated for text-based comprehension, reader response, and language use (Irwin and Mitchell, 1983). Text-based comprehension provided information stated explicitly in the text, general content related to the text, or any information that could be inferred. Reader response was the participant’s ability to make connections, both text to self and text to world, and summarize what was heard. Language use was a participant’s ability to organize his/her ideas properly to communicate. Participants could earn up to 32 points
each of the three categories for a total retelling score of 96 points. In addition, the researchers measured Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) and Type-Token Ratio (TTR) during participants’ retellings.

Next, the researcher asked the participant eight comprehension questions, general and specific, related to the story’s content. All questions followed a narrative story grammar sequence and were scored using a 0-3 point system. Three points were assigned to participants if all elements that related to the question were correctly identified. Two points were assigned if most of the elements were correctly identified. One point was assigned if the answer did not completely relate to the question. Zero points were assigned if the answer was erroneous or no response was given. Twenty-four points were possible for each story-book comprehension questions set.

Finally, the researcher observed participant’s behavior during the story including attention level, disposition, on-task behavior, and interest level. The behaviors were rated on a researcher created five-point scale (except for one question on a four-point scale) in which participants could score up to 34 points for maximum positive behavior.

The researchers analyzed their data using a series of one-and two-way, within-subjects ANOVAS. Participants’ comprehension of the stories was assessed through their retellings; sung versus spoken story condition and narrative criteria (language versus reader response versus text-based) were analyzed. There was no significant difference for story condition; however, a significant difference was demonstrated between each of the three narrative criteria [F (2, 29) = 142.46, p<0.001]. Language scores (M=11.97, SD=6.74) were significantly higher than text-based (M= 9.62, SD= 6.61) and reader response scores (M=1.6, SD=2.25). A significant difference was also demonstrated in participants’ average TTR in retelling of sung (M=.65,
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

SD = .13) versus spoken stories (M = .59, SD = .12). There was no significant difference reported for participants’ average MLU in sung (M = 5.88, SD = 1.53) versus spoken stories (M = 6.02, SD, 1.90). A significant difference was not identified between conditions for total comprehension question points earned [F (1, 29) = .03, p = .866] or for percentage of questions answered correctly [F (1, 29) = .03, p = .867]. The researchers did identify a significant difference for condition when analyzing student behavior [F (1, 29) = 10.13, p = .003). Participants were more attentive and demonstrated more on-task behavior when stories were spoken (M = 30.43, SD = 1.75) versus sung (M = 29.41, SD = 2.15).

The researchers concluded that the participants’ ability to retell narrative stories and their mean lengths of utterances did not change with differing conditions (sung versus spoken). However, participants’ type-token ratio average scores increased in the sung condition, which indicated that the participants had a stronger vocabulary when retelling stories they heard sung. Their memory for story vocabulary could have been assisted by the repeated melodic presentation of the text. Data analysis was not conclusive on participants’ ability to answer comprehension questions more accurately in one of the two conditions. Music cannot be attributed to participants’ success or failure on answering “Wh” questions. In fact, the music in the sung condition could have provided more information for the participants to process, leaving limited processing available for comprehension of the story. The music and/or cassette player also could have been viewed as a distraction which accounted for participants’ lower behavioral scores in the sung condition. Data analysis results demonstrated that participants were more attentive and on-task, displayed increased levels of positive dispositions and interest when story books were spoken. In conclusion, the researchers determined that while audio recorded sung stories may be helpful in enhancing student vocabulary, they do not enable retelling and
comprehension of narrative texts in kindergarten and first-grade students who are at risk for significant reading delays.

The three studies in this section highlighted the significance of narrative story structure interventions on students’ early literacy skills. Khan, Nelson, and Whyte (2014) concluded that providing students an active choice in the story elements presented led to greater gains in preschoolers’ narrative skills. Green and Klecan-Aker (2012) determined that explicit, small-group instruction in story grammar elements increases students’ oral narrative abilities. Kouri and Telander (2008) compared the results of sung and spoken stories on emergent readers at risk for reading delays. The following section discussed the important elements of read-alouds and how they were implemented in the classroom.

**Read-alouds**

The benefits of read-alouds for students of any age were numerous. Previous sections in this chapter have demonstrated the effects on print concepts (Justice et al., 2009), language development (Wasik & Bond, 2001), and comprehension (Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Delacruz, 2013). However, most of the research conducted on read-alouds focused on the results rather than the methods teachers used to implement successful read-alouds (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey, 2004). The way teachers conducted their read-alouds had a significant effect on student achievement, particularly on meaning making and oral language (Wiseman, 2011; Pantaleo, 2007).

In this section, researchers analyzed the essential components of read-alouds and how they are implemented in the classroom. Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) identified seven components expert teachers utilized to implement a successful interactive read-aloud. In the second study, Wiseman (2011) investigated one kindergarten classroom to observe how the
teacher employed interactive read-alouds to help co-create meaning with her students. Maloch and Beutel (2010) explored the quality of second-grade students’ initiations during interactive read-alouds. Pantaleo (2007) studied first-grade students’ responses to and interpretations of a variety of picture books.

Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) conducted a qualitative study to determine if there was a common set of procedures utilized by teachers when they performed interactive read-alouds. The researchers noted that while research regarding both the benefits as well as the results of interactive read-alouds were abundant, there has not been much research conducted to determine the actual procedures of the read-aloud process. Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey attempted to answer the following question: What were the elements that make an interactive read-aloud effective? They also wondered if merely reading a story aloud was enough or if particular procedures had to be implemented for it to be truly effective with students.

In Phase One of the study, the researchers sent letters to sixty-five district and site administrators from San Diego County and requested that they recommend one classroom teacher they viewed as an “expert” in read-alouds. Of the sixty-five letters, forty-five administrators recommended an expert teacher. From that pool, twenty-five teachers were picked randomly, all of whom worked in a different urban school. Additional demographic information on the teachers was not provided. Before the scheduled observations began, the researchers watched one of the recommended “expert” teachers conduct a read-aloud. This established both interobserver reliability as well as reliability of the read-aloud components being noted during observations.

One hundred twenty teachers from fifteen different schools were randomly selected for Phase Two of the study. These teachers were often used as cooperating teachers for student
teachers from San Diego State University. All 120 taught grades three through eight and had at least three years teaching experience, with an average of 8.3 years. One hundred three of the one hundred twenty teachers were female and fifty-four of them had master’s degrees. The procedures of the teachers’ read-alouds were coded and compared to the procedures of the “expert” teachers in Phase One.

To compare the teachers’ read-alouds, the researchers used observational data. When the researchers observed an “expert” teacher from Phase One, they gathered anecdotal notes to distinguish the elements of an effective read-aloud. Then in Phase Two, the researchers observed read-alouds and employed a Likert-type scale rating on all of the elements identified in Phase One. After all of the observations were completed, a random sample of eighteen teachers (three from each grade level) from Phase Two were asked to join in an individual or group interview where they shared the elements and sequence of an interactive read-aloud lesson and their rationale for each. The researchers facilitated a discussion of why the teachers did or did not utilize the same elements as the “expert” teachers from Phase One. The observational data from the “expert” teachers was then analyzed by the researchers and used to create a rubric that included the essential elements of a read-aloud. The researchers computed measures of central tendency with all the teacher participants using the rubric. From this rubric, the researchers generated seven essential elements of an effective interactive read-aloud; all of the “expert” teachers incorporated all seven of these elements in their read-alouds.

The first element was the importance of text selection. The researchers determined that the books chosen to be read aloud were “high-quality children’s literature and based on the interests and needs of the students in the class” (p. 11). The second element presented was the teachers previewed and practiced the text which allowed for a model of fluent reading as well as
rehearsed stopping points for discussion. “Expert” teachers also were observed to set a distinct purpose for the read-aloud which often connected to a reading strategy or content area goal. The fourth element connected back to the second; teachers who practiced the book ahead of time were able to provide a model of fluent reading because they knew what to expect from the text.

In addition to fluent reading, “expert” teachers also showed animation and expression in their read-alouds by changing their voice to reflect different characters or different emotions and employing hand/body movements, facial expressions, or even props to make the text come to life. A sixth essential element observed by the researchers happened before, during, and after the read-aloud as the teachers led discussions of the text. Teachers posed both efferent and aesthetic questions and provided students a chance to confer with one another about the read-aloud.

Finally, an element of an interactive read-aloud that all the “expert” teachers employed was relating it to the students’ independent reading or writing. Rather than the read aloud acting as a detached part of the day, it became one element of their integrated, balanced literacy instruction.

In conclusion, the data implied that classroom teachers were proficient at utilizing some of the seven elements of an effective interactive read-aloud as modeled by the “expert” teachers. The elements that the teachers in Phase Two of the study showed inconsistently were the preview and practice of the text and the relation of the read-aloud to other reading and writing instruction. The absence of practice also led to teachers who were challenged with a fluent reading of the text. The researchers recognized the significance of read-alouds in children’s literacy growth, specifically the need for a fluent model. Therefore, Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) concluded “teachers need to be well practiced because their voices are the vehicles that so fluidly convey the story and enable student listeners to develop their personal images and responses” (p. 15). The researchers also noted that when teachers were more rehearsed they can
focus their energy on setting a clear purpose for the read-aloud connected to the students’ reading or writing. One of the most important purposes should be enjoyment of the text and students need to be told this explicitly. Simply stated, the researchers concluded that when all seven of the elements were present in an interactive read-aloud, it can and should be considered effective.

Most of the seven elements Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) identified as essential to conducting an interactive read-aloud were also present in Wiseman’s (2011) study of a kindergarten teacher who used read-alouds to co-create meaning with her students. The researcher conducted a nine month ethnographic study to demonstrate how one kindergarten teacher’s interactive read alouds created a classroom climate where students and teacher alike were working and learning to create meaning from the text. Interactive read alouds were particularly significant for emergent readers because they offered an opportunity for explicit reading strategy instruction as well as open-ended responses that enabled the students to react to the read aloud while utilizing their background knowledge. The idea of co-constructing knowledge with the students led to higher level thinking and learning; students had a sense of ownership and responsibility for sharing their literary knowledge with the class. The purpose of Wiseman’s study was to investigate how teachers can support student learning by employing the interactive read aloud as one part of a balanced kindergarten literacy program.

Wiseman studied one kindergarten classroom in an urban public school in a large city in the Northeast. The twenty-one students in the Kindergarten class were African American and 95% of the students had free or reduced lunch status. Their teacher was a Caucasian American female who had been teaching for ten years. She utilized a balanced literacy approach to both reading and writing instruction to deliver a well-rounded literacy experience with necessary skill
and strategy instruction. A fundamental part of the teacher’s literacy instruction was the
interactive read aloud in which she read a picture book and engaged the students in conversation
and meaning making. In this classroom, the teacher focused on multi-cultural children’s
literature, especially African American stories and was conducting her doctoral research
regarding the use of African American picture books and culturally relevant instruction at the
time of the study. The teacher used interactive read alouds for a variety of purposes including to
model fluent reading, encourage conversations regarding the picture books, and make
connections to students’ personal reading and writing.

This enabled Wiseman and her two research partners to collect the necessary data.
During the nine-month study (October through May), the researcher utilized participant-
observation methods comprising of recorded notes on the teacher’s lesson, students’ interactions,
and reactions to the read alouds. The researcher observed four times each week while the class
participated in the interactive read aloud, responded to a partner, and wrote in their journals. In
total, fifty-four read alouds were audio-taped and transcribed. Other forms of data collected
included student’s writing journals and interviews with students and teachers. Analysis of the
data led to the researcher formulating four categories of teacher response: confirming, modeling,
extending ideas, and building meaning. The researcher used NVivo software to code her
transcripts and notes, create the categories, and analyze the data.

The researcher noted that the teacher had a regular routine for introducing the read
aloud. This routine began by discussing the cover of the text, reading the dedication and
copyright pages, and finally guiding the students in a discussion regarding the parts of the text
and permitting them to make predictions. The teacher modeled for the students how the pictures
and the words could assist in forming predictions. She encouraged students to form predictions
and reminded them frequently that meaning is what one thinks so there was no right or wrong answer. Once the interactive read aloud began, the teacher encouraged discussion by supporting students in their thinking and guiding their responses. She understood the children’s literature being read while simultaneously advancing student learning regarding the text and its features. Every time the teacher finished a read aloud, she directed her students to turn and talk to a partner about what they thought about the text. Then the students immediately went to their tables and wrote a response in their writing journals about the story, but this was not a requirement. The researcher observed that most often the story did provide students a foundation for their writing.

When selecting stories for an interactive read aloud, the teacher chose children’s literature that was socially and developmentally appropriate and matched the interests of her students. The teacher’s goal was to expand her student’s literary knowledge while sharing authentic children’s literature with them. The researcher observed that the teacher employed four ways of co-constructing knowledge with her students: confirming, modeling, extending, and building meaning. When the teacher confirmed student responses, she created a positive classroom environment and affirmed what the students had to say by offering both feedback and encouragement. In modeling, the teacher provided think alouds where Wiseman noted “she showed how she came up with predictions, questioned the characters or events in the story, or articulated points she did not understand or wanted to find out more about” (2011, p. 436). When the teacher extended the conversation, she utilized the students’ background knowledge and led them to an even higher level of thinking about the text. Finally, the researcher observed the teacher offering opportunities for all students to contribute to the discussion which ultimately led to the students learning and building meaning together.
The ability to build meaning together was one important aspect of the interactive read aloud. Ultimately, the researcher discovered two significant instructional effects in relation to the interactive read aloud. First, the read alouds provided students an opportunity to share their knowledge and connect to the text to develop deeper understandings. The teacher served as a facilitator rather than leader of the discussion. Second, the text itself was essential for promoting student response. The teacher utilized texts that students were able to relate to and were engaged by; she wanted students to be able to connect the text with their own lives so she could model the necessary skills and strategies. Children’s literature has been demonstrated to be a powerful tool to engender conversations. Interactive read alouds offered a venue to have those conversations as well as grow literacy skills and create meaning together as demonstrated by this one kindergarten classroom.

Similarly, Maloch and Beutel (2010) conducted a five month qualitative study that investigated student initiations during interactive read-alouds as well as teacher responses during the same read-aloud event. The two research questions studied were: In what ways did the student initiate/contribute during read aloud events? and What role did the teacher play in acknowledging, inviting, and building on these contributions? The observed classroom participated in interactive read-alouds every day, immediately after the morning announcements. The students gathered on the carpet to listen, talk back-to-back, answer, and ask big questions related to both fiction and nonfiction read-alouds.

The fifteen students in the second grade class were comprised of eleven Hispanic students, two African-Americans, and two European Americans. There were nine boys and six girls in the class. The population with mostly working-class to lower-income socio-economic statuses was typical of the greater school population and surrounding neighborhoods. The
The teacher observed was in her second year of teaching and was referred to the researchers as “an exemplary teacher.”

The researchers collected data in a number of ways including observations in the classroom that were video/audiotaped, interviews with the students and teacher, field notes, lesson plans, student work samples (including student writing), and classroom assessments. Data analysis was inductive and utilized the constant-comparative method and discourse analysis of interaction patterns during classroom events. In the first phase of analysis, the researchers analyzed all read-aloud events to categorize student initiations using constant-comparative methods. The result was a list of preliminary categories and sub-categories for student initiations. Maloch and Beutel defined an initiation as “a remark not solicited by the teacher or another student and introduced a different topic or added new information from outside the text” (pp.21-22). In the second phase of data analysis, the researchers transcribed six read-alouds, three fiction and three nonfiction, and employed discourse analysis to identify and categorize student initiations. The researchers then improved the categories to better match their data. Finally, student turns preceding and following the initiations were analyzed to investigate the factors that may lead to an initiation and what impact the initiations had on further discussion.

The researchers discovered six types of student initiations present in the interactive read-aloud discussion; the initiations reflected both students’ engagement with the text as well as meaning-making. The six initiations included: predictions, observations, connections, clarifying, entering story world, and meta-process questions/comments. In a prediction initiation, students simply made predictions about future story events. When making an observation initiation, students made observations related either to the text or illustrations in the story while listening. Students made a variety of connections from the text itself to personal experiences, other texts,
the world, future experiences, or shared class experiences. When clarifying unclear or confusing information in the text, students asked about vocabulary, details, the storyline, or truth value. If a student entered story world, they related to the characters, acted as if they were in the story, or made suggestions as to what they would change in the story. In the final category of meta-process questions/comments, students asked or commented on how to arrange the activity. Two major differences occurred between student initiations between fiction and nonfiction texts. Making predictions and entering story world were observed almost exclusively in the reading of fiction texts. Connections and clarifying were the two most common student initiations employed during nonfiction read-alouds.

The researchers’ data analysis led to three implications related to the teacher’s role in fostering student initiations during read-aloud discussions. First, the teacher created a low-risk environment where students were welcomed and encouraged to contribute to class discussions. The teacher also had an active stance towards reading where the students were invited to “stop and think” about the text being read so they could then transfer the strategies to their own independent reading. Finally, the teacher responded to student initiations utilizing a range of pedagogical techniques that included: validating and acknowledging students’ initiations, re-voicing students’ comments, identifying the students’ meaning-making strategy, and reflecting students’ questions and comments back to the class for further discussion.

In the classroom studied, interactive read-alouds became a time when students could openly experiment with co-constructing meaning and trying out different comprehension strategies where there was immediate feedback from a peer and/or teacher. The second grade students were clearly engaged with the text in a whole group setting and the teacher encouraged their contributions through prompting, validating, and scaffolding.
Pantaleo (2007) investigated similar student contributions to an interactive read-aloud conducted in a small group setting while studying the oral language of first-grade students. The researcher employed the word interthinking to refer to the idea of “using talk to think collectively, to engage with others’ ideas through oral language” (p. 439). The purpose of the study was to investigate first grade student’s responses to and interpretations of picture books and use of metafiction techniques. During the course of the nine week study, the first grade students listened to the researcher read eight different picture books; they participated in both whole class and small group interactive read-alouds. Small group sessions occurred once a week for approximately 25 minutes and consisted of heterogeneous groups of three or four students that changed with each new picture book. Before the small groups met, the researcher re-read the picture book to the whole class. At the conclusion of the whole class interactive read-aloud, the students were instructed to draw their responses to the picture book; they could choose to draw about what they were thinking or feeling, wondering or questioning, or imagining as the story unfolded. The researcher and classroom teacher then wrote sentences dictated by the students that matched their pictures.

The first grade students were part of a K-7 elementary school located in a central city in western British Columbia, Canada. Most of the school’s 155 students were from families with lower socio-economic status. With the exception of one student, all eleven girls and nine boys in the first grade class received informed consent to participate in the study. Two of the nineteen students spoke a language other than English at home. Three students were of First Nations ancestry, one boy was from Romania, one girl was from Uruguay, one girl was of African-Canadian ancestry, and the remaining thirteen students were from European-Canadian ancestry. Three students in the class received Speech and Language therapy once per week. Seventeen of
the nineteen students were within the average academic range for literacy skills at the beginning of first grade; two boys were performing significantly below grade level in both reading and writing.

The primary source for data collection was obtained from audio recordings of the interactive read-alouds. Each of the eight picture books used in the study were read by the researcher six times, once with the whole class and five times with each small group. In addition, during the whole class read-aloud, the classroom teacher compiled notes, documenting students’ comments, and observing body language and facial expressions. Four of the small group sessions were transcribed for evidence and analysis of interthinking. The first small group discussion focused on the picture book *The Three Pigs* (Wiesner, 2001). The researcher noted exploratory talk utilized by the students as they helped each other understand the unique frame breaking structure of the story. The students also asked questions, provided explanations and interpretations of the pictures, used their background knowledge of the original story, and imagined the thoughts of the wolf. The second picture book, *Tuesday* (Wiesner, 1991), also engaged students in exploratory as well as expressive talk. Students in one small group made text-to-self connections utilizing their own personal experiences; some made comparisons about both the behavior and appearance of the different frogs while others contributed observations and inferences about the facial expression of one specific frog. *Shortcut* (Macaulay, 1995) once again provided an avenue for students to use exploratory talk to co-reason and understand the importance of one character (June’s) actions. Students in this small group acted out her behavior and made predictions of what was to come. They also used the illustrations to share details and create an extended storyline. The final transcript was derived from the reading of *Voices in the Park* (Browne, 1998) where students once again used exploratory talk to explain and interpret.
the illustrations. Students in this small group also posed questions, made connections, and worked together to create an extended storyline for one character.

The four transcripts of small group interactive read-alouds demonstrate how first grade students used oral language to think collectively as well as experiment, process, and reflect on their own ideas. The students were able to listen to themselves and their peers to help develop important language and literacy skills and learn how to participate in a small group discussion. With the introduction of a new picture book every week, the researcher noticed how students were evolving in their knowledge of literature and how to discuss literature with their peers. Each individual student’s language had an effect on the whole class and the whole class discussions also affected individuals. The researcher’s selection of picture books was intentional; each had a slightly different format which allowed for students to make connections, discuss multiple perspectives, recognize familiar narrative structure, and allow for different interpretations of meaning. For interthinking to work successfully, the researcher suggested that teachers always value student contributions, celebrate diverse interpretations of the text, recognize reading as an enjoyable activity, actively involve students in the co-creation of meaning, and provide a model of appropriate oral language behaviors.

The four studies in this section provided insight into the essential components of interactive read-alouds and their implementation in the classroom. Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) studied expert teachers conducting effective interactive read-alouds and recognized seven essential components present in all of them. Wiseman (2011) observed one kindergarten teacher’s practices during interactive read-alouds that helped her students continue to grow in their meaning-making. Maloch and Beutel (2010) explored the nature of second-grade student initiations during interactive read-alouds. Pantaleo (2007) concluded that small group
discussions during interactive read-alouds could help students develop both their oral language and literacy skills.

**Summary**

Read-alouds were a hallmark of high-quality reading instruction in any grade. Their effects were wide-ranging and abundant based on the targeted population. Read-alouds were used to study concepts of print and further develop language in emergent preschool classrooms (Justice et al., 2009; Wasik & Bond, 2001). They have also demonstrated tremendous effects on the comprehension skills of both emergent and early readers (Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Delacruz, 2013; Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance, 2004). More specifically, when studying narrative story structure, there were positive effects generated through active choice, explicit instruction, and spoken story books (Green and Klecan-Aker, 2012; Khan, Nelson, and Whyte, 2014; Kouri and Telander, 2008). For the results to be conclusive, however, the type and implementation of read-aloud needed to be studied. According to Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey (2004) effective interactive read-alouds included seven essential components and helped advance student meaning-making abilities (Wiseman, 2011). In addition, student initiations in a whole-class interactive read-aloud (Maloch and Beutel, 2010) as well as discussions during a small group intervention (Pantaleo, 2007) contribute to primary students’ construction of literacy skills. Read-alouds were a significant part of reading instruction. Researchers have demonstrated that when implemented correctly in emergent literacy instruction read-alouds, especially interactive ones, can significantly improve student comprehension of text.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter discussed the sample population, procedures, and data collection process of the action research study designed to determine the impact of interactive read alouds on the narrative comprehension skills of emergent readers. This quantitative study investigated how daily interactive read alouds of developmentally appropriate literature influenced the knowledge of narrative story grammar elements and the retelling abilities of seven senior kindergarten students. The areas involved in the study included: character, setting, sequence of events (beginning, middle, and end), and problem/solution. Information about the study’s design, selection of participants, intervention materials, pretest and posttest assessments, and data analysis follow.

Sample Population

This quantitative study was conducted in a suburban elementary school the Midwest. The school, which services students in K4 through fifth grades was comprised of three hundred sixty-three students. Fifty-seven percent of the students were Caucasian, twenty-nine percent were Hispanic, seven percent were African American, five percent were Asian, and two percent were American Indian. Forty-four percent of the school’s population was reported as economically disadvantaged and qualified for free or reduced lunch status. Students with disabilities comprised of eleven percent of the population and five percent of students were classified as having limited English proficiency. The study itself included seven senior kindergarten students from two different classrooms. Five of the participants were male and two were female. The students’ were all five years old at the beginning of the study with the mean age of 5.4. Five of the students were Caucasian and two of the students were African American. All of the students who participated in this study were a part of the regular education classroom.
The school in which this research was conducted has an intervention block for each grade level, referred to as W.I.N. (What I Need) time. This daily thirty minute block provided an opportunity for students to receive small group, differentiated instruction from classroom teachers, Title 1 teachers, the reading specialist, and instructional aides. At the on-set of a new six week round of W.I.N., pre assessments were administered to group students according to their area of need. The participants in this study were selected based on their Concepts about Print (CAP; Calkins, 2015) assessment scores as well as their solid letter and sound identification abilities. The Concepts about Print assessment determines students’ basic book handling skills including left to right directionality, concept of a letter versus a word, return sweep, and more. All seven of the participants received and returned the informed consent form.

**Procedures**

Prior to the start of the study, the researcher selected four narrative story elements and accompanying storybooks. The story elements which consisted of character, setting, sequence of events, and problem/solution were selected based on their developmental appropriateness as well as connection to the Common Core State Standards for Kindergarten Reading: Literature (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA Center] & Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2010). The storybooks were novel to the study’s participants and according to Linda Hoyt’s (2007) *Interactive Read-Alouds* were strong representations of the story elements addressed. Storybooks selected for discussion of character in week three included *Swimmy* (Lionni, 1963) and *No, David!* (Shannon, 1998). The instructional focus in week four was setting and the storybook used was *The Art Lesson* (de Paola, 1989). The storybook *Tops and Bottoms* (Stevens, 1995) was selected for week five and was used to teach sequence of events. Instruction in week six focused on problem/solution with *The Teeny Tiny Ghost*.
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

(Winters, 1997). The researcher reviewed the story elements during week seven by utilizing *Miss Nelson is Missing* (Marshall, 1977).

The first week of intervention was utilized to complete all pre assessments. The researcher conducted each assessment with the seven participants individually. The Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 (QRI-5, Leslie & Caldwell, 2011), an informal reading inventory contained narrative and expository passages at preprimer through high school levels. All were self-contained selections highly representative of the structure and topic of materials found in basal readers and content-area textbooks. The researcher read a narrative primer passage of the QRI-5 aloud to the participants and then asked four literal and two inferential comprehension questions. Participants received one point for each correct answer. A total score of six indicated this passage was at his/her independent level, a total score of four or five indicated an instructional level, and a total score of zero through three indicated a participant’s frustration with the passage. Using the same narrative primer passage, the researcher then asked a series of questions related to the narrative story grammar elements including main characters, setting, problem, solution sequence of events, and theme. The researcher scored student responses with a narrative story retelling rubric from ReadWriteThink (IRA/NCTE, 2011) that awarded students two points for a correct unprompted answer, one point for a prompted answer, and zero points for an erroneous answer or unanswered question (see Appendix B). The researcher also administered the listening comprehension sub-test of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, Third Edition (WRMT-III, Woodcock, 2011) as a standardized test measure. During week two of the intervention, the researcher led the students in an interactive read aloud of *Ira Sleeps Over* (Waber, 1972), introducing each of the narrative story elements one at a time. Each student completed a story map with words and illustrations that depicted the main characters, setting,
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

problem, and solution. During weeks three through seven the researcher led interactive read-alouds that followed a predictable format and focused on a single narrative story element each week. The lessons began with an explicit think-aloud that introduced the participants to the narrative story element with a specific example. The researcher then began the read-aloud with clear stopping points for both teacher modeling and participant opportunities to turn and talk. Each read aloud concluded with an end of the story reflection where the participants revisited the week’s story element and its connection to other texts. Once a week, participants were instructed to complete the researcher-created retelling graphic organizer to demonstrate and assess their knowledge of the week’s narrative story element. Week seven of the intervention provided a review of each of the four story elements with a variety of activities. Post assessments, similar to the pre assessments, were administered week eight.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted before the six-week intervention began. Participants’ narrative listening comprehension was assessed using the Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 (QRI-5; Leslie & Caldwell, 2011), an informal reading inventory (see Appendix A). To determine prior knowledge, the students were asked three concept questions before the passage was read. Examples of concept questions included “What are seeds?” and “What do gardens need to grow?” Then the Primer level passage “Fox and Mouse” was read aloud to each student. This passage was chosen because of its explicit narrative story grammar elements. Following the story, the students were instructed to answer six comprehension questions-four explicit and two implicit. An explicit question such as “What did fox want to do?” had an answer directly stated in the passage. Conversely, an implicit question such as “Why did Mouse help Fox plant the garden again?” enabled students to make an inference. The students were then asked a series of
questions related to the passage’s narrative story grammar elements. A rubric from ReadWriteThink (IRA/NCTE, 2011) (see Appendix B) was utilized for scoring. Points were assigned based on students’ identification of the main characters, setting, important events in the story, problem, resolution, story sequence, conclusion, and theme. Students received more points for an unprompted response than a prompted one with a maximum of twenty possible points.

The second assessment administered before the intervention began was the listening comprehension subsection of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Third Edition, Form A (WRMT-III; Woodcock, 2011). The researcher administered this assessment to each student individually. This standardized testing measure was used to determine students’ ability to draw conclusions based on the auditory information provided. The first six questions displayed four pictures and instructed students to identify the one that matched the statement. For example, “Which picture shows a zebra following an elephant to a pond?” The next six questions instructed students to listen to a short story and answer a question based on the information provided. The questions continue to gradually increase in difficulty; therefore, the assessment was discontinued after four consecutive incorrect responses. Students receive one point for a correct response and zero points for an inaccurate, incomplete, or lack of response. The points were totaled for a maximum raw score of twenty-seven.

Throughout the six week study, the research also utilized a retelling graphic organizer (see Appendix C) in which the students drew pictures of the narrative story element being taught at the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Students then dictated who/what was in the pictures for the researcher to record and analyze for accuracy. For example, when the researcher’s instruction focused on characters, the students were expected to correctly identify
one or more characters from the beginning of the story, middle of the story, and end of the story. This graphic organizer also served as a continual reminder to students of the importance of a story’s sequence of events.

**Summary**

Seven senior kindergarten students participated in an eight-week long intervention that utilized interactive read-alouds to explicitly teach narrative story grammar elements. The elements included characters, setting, problem/solution, and sequence of events. The researcher employed the QRI-5, a retelling rubric from ReadWriteThink, and the listening comprehension sub-test of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test as both pre and post assessments. Scores from the assessments were analyzed to determine if the intervention was effective at improving students’ narrative comprehension. The next chapter discussed results of the data as well as the researcher’s conclusions.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This research study included a six week intervention on interactive read-alouds with a focus on narrative story grammar elements. Prior to the intervention, students were administered three different assessments. The first assessment was the Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 (QRI-5; Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). In conjunction with the QRI-5 passage, the researcher also utilized a narrative story retelling rubric from ReadWriteThink (IRA/NCTE, 2011). The third assessment administered was the listening comprehension sub-test of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, Third Edition (WRMT-III; Woodcock, 2011). The six week study was separated into weekly sessions. The first week of instruction students were provided an overview of the story grammar elements including characters, setting, problem/solution, and beginning, middle, and end. The second through fifth weeks of instruction the researcher presented each of the elements individually through the lens of interactive read-alouds. The final week was utilized to review the story grammar elements again. The researcher followed a predictable structure for each interactive read-aloud including an explicit think-aloud introducing students to the week’s story element, clear stopping points for students to turn and talk as well as researcher modeling, and an end of text reflection. After the intervention was completed, the researcher re-assessed students using the same measures as the pretest. The results of all assessment measures are presented in the next section of the chapter.

Data Analysis

The first assessment administered by the researcher was a narrative Primer passage of the QRI-5 (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). This was administered to each student individually. Three concept questions were asked prior to the passage being read to determine students’ background knowledge. Students were then invited to follow along and look at the pictures as the researcher
read the passage aloud. The pre assessment story was entitled “Fox and Mouse” and the post assessment story was “The Pig Who Learned to Read” (see Appendix A). Both passages were selected by the researcher because of the presence of identifiable narrative story grammar elements as well as their appropriate content for emergent readers. After completion of the story, the researcher asked the students six questions, four literal and two inferential to assess their comprehension of the story. Students received one point for a correct answer and zero points for an erroneous answer or unanswered question.

Students’ score on the comprehension questions demonstrated their level of comprehension with the narrative passage. A score of zero to three indicated that the student’s comprehension was at a frustration level for the passage. A score of four or five indicated an instructional level of comprehension. A score of six indicated an independent level of comprehension for the passage.

The pre assessment results were as follows: one student scored three points on the comprehension questions, three students scored four points, and three students scored five points. The mean score of the QRI-5 comprehension question pretest was 4.3. The mean score was in the instructional range of comprehension on a Primer passage which was developmentally appropriate for senior kindergarten students.

The post assessment results indicated both decline (Students Three and Seven) and growth Students One, Two, Four, Five, and Six in scores: one student scored two points, one student scored four points, three students scored five points, and two students scored a perfect six points. The mean score of the QRI-5 comprehension question posttest was 4.7. This score was an increase of 0.4 from the pretest results; however, the mean score still remained in the
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

instructional range of comprehension. Figure 1 displayed the results of the seven students’ pre and posttest comprehension scores on the QRI-5.

![QRI-5 Comprehension Scores](image)

Figure 1. Pre and Posttest Results for QRI-5 Comprehension Question Scores

In Table 1 a comparison of the participants’ comprehension level from pretest to posttest was displayed. The results revealed that one or 14% of the participants remained at a frustration level while two or 29% of the participants increased their comprehension level from instructional to independent.

A one-tail dependent t-test was used to test the researcher’s hypothesis that students’ comprehension would improve on the QRI-5 comprehension posttest, compared with their pretest scores. There was no significant differences in the mean scores on the QRI-5 comprehension questions in the scores for pretest ($M=4.3$, $SD=0.76$) and the posttest ($M=4.7$, $SD=1.4$); $t(6)=0.099811$. The results disproved the researcher’s hypothesis.
Table 1

*Pre and Posttest Results for QRI-5 Total Comprehension Levels*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehension Level</th>
<th>Number of Students Pretest</th>
<th>Number of Students Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frustration (0-3 points)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional (4-5 points)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent (6 points)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrative Retelling Rubric Results**

The second assessment administered directly followed the QRI-5 comprehension questions. Students were asked a series of questions related to the passage’s narrative story grammar elements. Points were assigned based on students’ identification of the main characters, setting, important events in the story, problem, resolution, story sequence, conclusion, and theme. A rubric from ReadWriteThink (IRA/NCTE, 2011) was utilized for scoring (see Appendix B). Students were awarded more points for an unprompted answer than a prompted one. An unprompted answer demonstrated the student could recall the information on his/her own, while a prompted answer indicated scaffolding by the researcher. The number of possible points on the rubric was twenty.

The pre assessment results were as follows: two students scored eleven points or 55%, two students scored twelve points or 60%, and three students scored sixteen points or 80% (see
The mean for the pretest narrative retelling rubric was 13.4. The two questions that students were unable to answer in the pretest regarded the setting and theme of the story. Students openly admitted to the researcher that they did not know what either of the terms meant.

The post assessment results demonstrated an increase in six of the students’ scores on the narrative retelling rubric. One student scored fourteen points or 70%, one student scored fifteen points or 75%, four students scored seventeen points or 85% and one student scored eighteen points or 90%. Six students (86%) were able to identify the setting of the story on the post assessment. The mean of the posttest scores on the narrative retelling rubric was 16.4, an increase of 3.0 from the pretest.

A one-tail dependent t-test was used to test the researcher’s hypothesis that students’ knowledge and application of story grammar elements would improve on the narrative retelling rubric posttest, compared with their pretest scores. There was a significant difference in the mean scores on the retelling rubric in the scores for pretest ($M=13.4$, $SD=2.4$) and the posttest.
The results suggested that the intervention was successful in improving students’ ability to retell story grammar elements of a narrative text.

**Listening Comprehension Results**

The third assessment each student completed individually was the listening comprehension sub-test of the WRMT-III (2011). This standardized assessment was administered to students by presenting four pictures and instructing them to identify the one that matched the oral description provided. If a student answered three or more of the first six questions correctly, the assessment transitioned to a short paragraph read aloud followed by a question for the student to answer. The listening comprehension assessment included both narrative and expository selections as well as literal and inferential questions. Students were awarded one point for a correct answer and zero points for an unanswered or erroneous answer. A discontinue rule was implemented after four consecutive scores of zero. Students’ raw scores were calculated by adding the number of test items answered correctly to the number of unadministered items below the student’s grade level. The maximum raw score is 27. An average midyear first grade student’s expected raw score is six.

The pre assessment results indicated two students a raw score of four, four students a raw score of five, and one student a raw score of seven. The mean and the mode for the pre assessment was 5.0.

Six students or 86% increased their raw score on the post assessment results. Three students had a raw score of six, one student had a raw score of seven, and three students had a raw score of eight. The mean for the post assessment was 7.0, an increase of 2.0. This mean was also one point higher than the midyear first grade average. The results of the students’ pre and posttest raw scores on the listening comprehension subtest are displayed in Figure 3.
A one-tail dependent *t*-test was used to test the researcher’s hypothesis that students’ listening comprehension would improve on the posttest compared with their pretest scores. There was a significant difference in the mean scores on the retelling rubric in the scores for pretest ($M=5.0$, $SD=1.0$) and the posttest ($M=7.0$, $SD=1.0$); $t(6)=0.004802$. The results suggested that the intervention was successful in improving students’ overall listening comprehension.

![Figure 3](image)

*Figure 3. Pre and Posttest WRMT-III Listening Comprehension Raw Scores*

**Narrative Listening Comprehension Results**

While the mean scores indicated a significant difference in the students’ overall raw scores, the researcher wanted to further investigate the students’ scores specifically on the narrative questions administered. As the six week intervention focused exclusively on narrative text, the researcher wondered if the students’ scores demonstrated any increases in their narrative listening comprehension. The number of narrative questions answered correctly, the total number attempted, and the calculated percentage were displayed in Table 2. The results demonstrated
every student improved the percent of narrative questions they answered with the means increasing from 56% on the pretest to 74% on the posttest.

Table 2

*Comparison of Narrative Listening Comprehension Questions on WRMT-III*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th># Correct Pretest</th>
<th>Total # Pretest</th>
<th>% Correct Pretest</th>
<th># Correct Posttest</th>
<th>Total # Posttest</th>
<th>% Correct Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

This chapter contained an explanation and analysis of the research data collected which both challenged and supported the action research question: Do interactive read-alouds have an effect on the narrative comprehension skills of emergent readers? The data collection for this action research project through the use of two different pre and post assessments determined that the explicit teaching and modeling of narrative story grammar elements though the lens of interactive read-alouds did improve senior kindergarten students’ ability to retell as well as their listening comprehension skills. The narrative retelling rubric assessment results suggested that after a six week intervention, students increased their ability to retell specific story grammar
elements after a narrative was read aloud. Additionally, students increased their overall listening comprehension skills as assessed on the WRMT-III. However, the QRI-5 comprehension question results were not significant in demonstrating student growth. The final chapter of this action research project included connections to existing research and the Common Core State Standards, a comprehensive explanation of the data results, strengths and limitations within the study, and the researcher’s personal recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

The action research conducted determined the effects of interactive read-alouds on senior kindergarten students’ narrative comprehension. Informal observations and assessments from 24 half hour intervention sessions suggested growth in the students’ comprehension and knowledge of story grammar elements. Scores on two different summative pre and posttests also demonstrated an improvement in students’ ability to retell narrative story grammar elements as well as students’ overall listening comprehension. The seven senior kindergarten students who participated in the study all attended a public elementary school in the Midwest. The students were selected based on beginning of the year assessment scores for letter and sound identification and Concepts about Print (Calkins, 2015). While the students were not reading conventionally, they demonstrated a readiness to discuss narrative story structure and its elements. Chapter Five connected the intervention to the Common Core State Standards, existing best practices research, and included an explanation of the results. Strengths and limitations for the study were discussed, in addition to recommendations for further study.

Connection to the Common Core State Standards

Emergent readers may not have read on their own yet; nonetheless, they were held to high expectations for narrative comprehension. According to the Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA Center] & Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2010) kindergarten students need to be (with prompting and support) retell familiar stories, including key details, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story, and actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding. Understanding that students at this age were very social and had a need for interaction, the standards also included participation in collaborative conversations with diverse partners.
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

regarding kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups, understanding of a text read aloud by asking and answering questions about key details, and using words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts. Throughout the six-week intervention, the researcher focused on the standards, providing students time to identify the narrative story elements as well as engage in discussions (turn and talks and whole group) with their peers about the texts being read. The discussions provided opportunities for students to retell parts of the story and utilize narrative story structure language accurately.

Connection to Existing Research

The Common Core State Standards provided one avenue for the researcher to formulate her goal of exposing emergent readers to high quality, developmentally appropriate literature while simultaneously and explicitly teaching the important elements of narrative story structure through interactive read-alouds. Several researchers including Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, and Hunt (2009) and Wasik and Bond (2001) had already demonstrated the significance of interactive read-alouds in early childhood settings. Justice et al. (2009) concluded that using a print referencing style when completing a shared reading improved both students alphabetic and print concept knowledge. Wasik and Bond (2001) demonstrated that interactive book reading, when coupled with multiple opportunities to be exposed to and use the targeted vocabulary words increased preschool students’ language development.

Language development, while crucial in early childhood settings, was not one of the sought after benefits of this action research. The researcher was more interested in the positive effects interactive read-alouds had on increasing comprehension that Brabham and Lynch-Brown (2002), Delacruz (2013), and Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance (2004) all described. They
discovered that when students had an active role in the discussion of text and when the interactive read-alouds occurred on a daily basis, student comprehension improved. The researcher observed similar results in her intervention which employed a daily interactive read-aloud and engaged students in active partner discussions as well as whole group discussions.

In addition to student discussion, research has demonstrated that other factors can also impact comprehension of text. Khan, Nelson, and Whyte (2014) concluded that providing students an active choice in the story elements presented led to greater gains in preschoolers’ narrative skills. The researcher did not provide a choice in the story elements studied because she wanted to focus on the ones addressed in the Common Core State Standards knowing that they would be developmentally appropriate for senior kindergarten students. However, similar to the findings of Green and Klecan-Aker (2012), the researcher determined that explicit, small-group instruction in story grammar elements increased students’ oral narrative abilities. This finding was supported by students’ increased scores on the narrative retelling rubric.

In the planning and preparation of explicit instruction for the intervention, the researcher purposefully utilized the seven components identified by Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) to implement a successful interactive read-aloud. Additionally, the researcher was cognizant of Wiseman’s (2011) observations of a kindergarten teacher who helped co-create meaning with her students through interactive read-alouds. Although Maloch and Beutel (2010) explored the quality of second-grade students’ initiations during interactive read-alouds, the researcher continuously reflected on how she could improve her kindergarten students’ initiations. Prompts such as “what makes you say that,” “tell me more,” and “find a place in the book that shows your thinking” helped with students’ initiation and development of oral narrative skills. The researcher observed what Pantaleo (2007) concluded that small group discussions, driven by
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

teacher scaffolding and prompts, during interactive read-alouds helped students develop both their oral language and literacy skills. The skills were reflected not only in the intervention sessions, but on higher posttest scores on the narrative retelling rubric and listening comprehension subtest of the WRMT-III.

**Explanation of Results**

The results of this action research suggested that after the interactive read-aloud intervention, the majority of students’ retell of narrative story grammar elements, overall listening comprehension as well as narrative listening comprehension improved. The six week study was divided according to specific story grammar elements. The first week the researcher provided a preview of what would be studied. Weeks two though five were devoted to one narrative story element: characters, setting, problem/solution, and beginning, middle, and end. Each interactive read-aloud followed a predictable format of an explicit think-aloud by the researcher that introduced the students to the specific story element being studied. Once the read-aloud began, the researcher had pre-determined pages for modeling and opportunities for the students to turn and talk with one another. The interactive read-aloud ended with a reflection of the story element. In addition, the students completed a researcher-created retelling graphic organizer (see Appendix C) to formatively assess their knowledge of the week’s narrative story element. Students were able to use their graphic organizers to successfully identify characters and settings from the beginning, middle, and end of the texts. The week that instruction focused on beginning, middle, and end, while students provided accurate retellings, they were challenged by selecting one event from the text to illustrate in a graphic organizer. The students were unsure of how to determine which single event was the most important from the beginning,
middle, and end of the story. This was not surprising to the researcher as that was a skill addressed in the Common Core State Standards for first grade.

The graphic organizer provided the researcher a weekly formative assessment to assess student progress. Two of the three summative assessments the researcher administered demonstrated progress as well. Six students or 86% increased their overall score on the listening comprehension section of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test III (WRMT-III; Woodcock, 2011). The one student whose score decreased only did so by one point and the raw score of six was comparable to that of a midyear first grade student, a full year above his current grade level. All seven students increased the percentage of narrative listening comprehension questions answered correctly from pretest to posttest. This increase could be attributed to the six week intervention focusing exclusively on narrative text and students’ practice with answering questions about the text which, similar to the assessment, was always read aloud to them.

The second pre and posttest that was read aloud to the students was a narrative primer passage of the Qualitative Reading Inventory 5 (QRI-5; Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). After the story was read aloud, the researcher asked the students six comprehension questions. Five students or 71% answered more comprehension questions correctly on the posttest QRI-5 passage then the pretest. Student Seven’s score decreased from five questions answered correctly to four; but the four correct answers still placed his total comprehension score in an instructional range. Student Three had a drastic decrease in score, beginning with five correct answers and decreasing to two on the posttest. While Student Three’s total comprehension score was instructional on the pretest, his posttest scores demonstrated frustration level comprehension. The researcher was uncertain of what factor(s) accounted for Student Three’s decline in score. Although five students’ comprehension scores increased, there was not a significant difference in the means for
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

the pre and posttest. A one-tail dependent \( t \)-test was used to determine significance on the QRI-5
comprehension questions for pretest (\( M=4.3, SD=0.76 \)) and the posttest (\( M=4.7, SD=1.4 \));
\( t(6)=0.099811 \).

The third summative assessment, the narrative retelling rubric (see Appendix B) provided
an opportunity for students to answer a greater number of questions. Six students or 86% 
increased their scores on the narrative retelling rubric from pretest to posttest. The researcher
observed students answering questions related to the narrative story grammar elements explicitly
taught during the intervention with far more confidence in the posttest. For example, the
majority of students expressed to the researcher during the pretest that they did not know what
the word setting meant. On the posttest retelling rubric, six students were successfully able to
identify the setting. The researcher’s findings aligned with Green and Klecan-Aker’s (2012) that
explicit teaching of narrative story grammar elements in a small group led to oral language
growth and development.

**Strengths**

The researcher identified strengths that contributed to the students’ improvement
throughout the study. The interactive read-alouds conducted by the researcher were designed to
follow a predictable format. Even when the narrative story grammar element changed weekly,
the students knew the structure of the lesson and what to expect. The students understood to
listen for cue words to read with the researcher and when to demonstrate certain actions or
emotions of characters in the text. The students also knew that whoever they were sitting next to
would be their discussion partner for the day. That expectation, established in week one, helped
lessen transition time and enable more time on-task. Similarly, a researcher initiated count down
from five to zero before the end of each “turn and talk” signaled students to conclude their conversation and be prepared to listen to more of the read-aloud.

Another strength of the intervention was the consistency of time and space. The researcher instructed the students at the same time every day. The half hour was devoted specifically for senior kindergarten’s W.I.N. (What I Need) time, the schools’ intervention block. All students in both senior kindergarten classes were a part of W.I.N. time so the researcher’s students were not being removed from regular classroom instruction to participate. In addition, the researcher was able to utilize her own classroom for the intervention; this provided a comfort level for the researcher and subsequently the students.

One reason the researcher was able to utilize her own classroom was due to the small number of students in the study. The kidney shaped table in the researcher’s room sat eight students comfortably and she only had seven for the intervention. Other positive effects of the small group size included being able to understand each of the student’s learning styles, strengths, and areas of growth. Therefore, the researcher was able to provide more individualized attention to the students. The small group size also enabled students to feel safe participating in both during “turn and talk” and whole group conversations as there was less risk involved than sharing in front of a whole class.

Limitations

While having only seven students in the intervention provided many benefits, one limitation was that students’ turn and talk partners were limited. If there were more students involved, there would have been more opportunities to hear diverse thoughts and opinions on the text as well as getting to know more students. The same was true for the whole group conversations. More students could have led to other insights not expressed.
A second limitation of the study was the physical size of the read-aloud text being used. The researcher utilized standard sized picture books for all of the read-alouds and it was a challenge to ensure every student could view the pictures. It would have been beneficial to have access to big book versions of the texts so instead of stopping to present each picture, the researcher could have placed the big book on an easel for easier viewing.

A final limitation of the study was the limited time frame. Six weeks was not enough to provide multiple examples of interactive read-alouds on the given narrative story grammar element. Most weeks, the researcher was able to only complete one text. She worried about students generalizing what they learned about the story grammar element from that one text to all narratives. A longer intervention would have provided an opportunity for the researcher to complete more interactive read-alouds and the students to make text to text connections.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Based on the previously discussed strengths and limitations and the students’ post assessment results, there were a few recommendations the researcher made to the intervention design as well as the research behind it. The research base for the intervention was limited to early childhood through second grade classrooms. While the researchers demonstrated a variety of benefits interactive read-alouds had on students, the researcher was curious if the same benefits would occur with older students in the elementary grades (third through fifth). Similarly, it would be interesting to attempt this action research study on an older group of students to determine if the results might change. However, students in the elementary grades should know the basic narrative story grammar elements addressed in the action research (character, setting, problem/solution, beginning, middle, and end), so the interactive read-alouds would require a different focus.
Another recommendation included students stopping to complete their graphic organizer as the story progressed rather than waiting until the end to complete it in its entirety. The researcher occasionally found that by the story’s conclusion, students needed a reminder of what happened at the beginning of the story. This also was likely due to the fact that most of the researcher’s interactive read-alouds were a few days of instruction. Having to reflect a day or two later proved difficult for some students.

The researcher also wondered how a change in the text genre would impact the research. Instead of narrative stories, what effect would interactive read-alouds with expository texts have on students’ comprehension? To align with the Common Core State Standards, the research could center on main idea and details, unknown vocabulary words, and similarities and differences noted about the same topic in different texts.

**Summary**

The researcher’s findings suggested that an explicit teaching of narrative story grammar elements through the lens of interactive read-alouds did improve the narrative comprehension of senior kindergarten students. Both the Common Core State Standards and previous research identified the importance of instruction in narrative story structure, the utilization of interactive read-alouds as an instructional best practice for emergent readers as well as its benefits on students’ reading comprehension.

Based on analysis of the data acquired, the six-week intervention was successful at improving students’ ability to retell narrative story grammar elements and their listening comprehension, specifically with narrative text. The increased pretest to posttest scores on the narrative retelling rubric and listening comprehension section of the WRMT-III supported this claim.
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

The researcher determined strengths of the intervention to be consistency of time and space for the intervention and a predictable lesson format. Limitations for the intervention included physical size of the text and time frame allocated. The small size of the group could be viewed as both a strength and limitation. With all of the factors accounted for, the researcher has made an addition to the research base on interactive read-alouds by investigating their effects on the narrative comprehension of emergent readers. This intervention could be utilized as a beginning point for future research to continue seeking benefits for purposefully reading aloud to the students who cannot yet read themselves.
RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS

References


RUNNING HEAD: EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS


RAND Reading Study Group (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D Program in reading comprehension*.


Level: Primer

Narrative

Concept Questions:

What are seeds?

What do gardens need to grow?

What do mice eat?

Score: 9 = ___ %

PAM ______ UNPAM

Prediction:

The seed looked good to eat.

"It is only one seed," thought Mouse.

"Fox will not know who ate the seed."

The next night Mouse went to the garden again.

He dug up one seed and ate it.

He did this every night.

After a few weeks all the seeds were gone.

"I wonder why the seeds didn't grow," said Fox.

Mouse didn't say a word.

So Fox planted more seeds.

And Mouse helped him. (122 words)

Number of Total Miscues

(Total Accuracy)

Number of Meaning-Change Miscues

(Total Acceptability)

Total Accuracy

Total Acceptability

0-3 miscues ___ independent ___ 0-3 miscues

4-12 miscues ___ instructional ___ 4-6 miscues

13+ miscues ___ frustration ___ 7+ miscues

Rate: 122 × 50 = 7,320 ___ seconds = ___ WPM

Correct WPM: (122 - ___ errors) × 60 = ___ _____ ___ seconds = ___ CWPM

Retelling Scoring Sheet for "Fox and Mouse"

Setting/Background

___ Fox wanted to plant a garden.

___ Mouse helped him.

___ They put seeds

___ in the ground.

___ They watered the seeds

___ Then they waited.

"Fox and Mouse"
Level: Primer

Goal
___ One night
___ Mouse went to the garden.
___ He dug up one of the seeds.
___ He wanted to see
___ if it was growing.

Events
___ The seed looked good to eat.
___ "It is only one seed,"
___ thought Mouse.
___ "Fox will not know
___ who ate the seed."
___ The next night
___ Mouse went to the garden again.
___ He dug up one seed.
___ and ate it
___ He did this
___ every night.
___ After a few weeks
___ all the seeds were gone.

Resolution
___ "I wonder
___ why the seeds didn't grow?"
___ said Fox.
___ Mouse didn't say a word.
___ So Fox planted more seeds.
___ And Mouse helped him.

30 Ideas
Number of ideas recalled ________
Other ideas recalled, including inferences:

Questions for “Fox and Mouse”

1. What did Fox want to do?
   Explicit: to plant a garden

2. What did Fox and Mouse do?
   Explicit: put seeds in the ground and watered them. If child says only one part, “What else did they do?”

3. Why did Mouse dig up the first seed?
   Explicit: to see if it was growing

4. What did Mouse do with the first seed that he dug up?
   Explicit: ate it

5. Why didn't the garden grow?
   Implicit: because Mouse ate all the seeds in the garden

6. Why did Mouse help Fox plant the garden again?
   Implicit: because he had eaten all the seeds; or he felt bad; or he was Fox's friend; or so he can have more seeds to eat

| Number Correct Explicit | __________ |
| Number Correct Implicit | __________ |
| Total:                  | __________ |
| Independent: 6 correct  | __________ |
| Instructional: 4-5 correct | __________ |
| Frustration: 0-3 correct | __________ |
Level: Primer

Narrative

Concept Questions:
What is doing something new?

What is learning to read?

What does it mean where people read stories to you?

Score: ___ / ___ %
FAM UNFAM

Prediction:

"The Pig Who Learned to Read"

Once there was a pig. His name was Pete. He lived on a farm. He was not like other pigs. He was special. He wanted to learn to read. His father said, "But pigs can't read!" "I don't care," said Pete, "I want to read."

One day Pete went to a boy who lived on the farm. "Teach me to read," he said. The boy said, "But you're a pig. I don't know if I can. But I'll do what my mother and father did with me." Every night before bed, the boy read to the pig. The pig loved the stories. He liked one called "Fat the Bunny" best. A week later Pete asked to take the book to the barn. He looked at the words. He thought about what the boy had said. He did that every day. One day he read a story to the boy. He was so happy! After that he read to the other animals every night. The boy was happy too, because he'd taught his first pig to read. (176 words)

Number of Total Misses
(Total Accuracy) ______

Number of Meaning Change Misses
(Total Acceptability) ______

Total Accuracy

Total Acceptability

0-4 misses ___ Independent ___ 0-4 misses

5-10 misses ___ Instructional ___ 5-9 misses

10+ misses ___ Progresion ___ 10+ misses

Rate: 176 x 60 = 10,560/___ seconds = ___ WPM

Connect WPM: (176 - ___ errors) x 60 =

___ / ___ seconds = ___ CWPM

Retelling Scoring Sheet for "The Pig Who Learned to Read"

Setting/Background

There was a pig named Pete.
Level: Primer

Goal
- He wanted to learn to read.
- His father said, "Pigs can't read."
- Pete said, "I don't care."

Events
- He went to a boy who lived on a farm.
- He said, "Teach me to read."
- The boy said, "I'll do what my mother and father did."
- Every night before bed, the boy read to the pig.
- The pig loved the stories.
- Pete took the book to the barn.
- He looked at the words every day.
- One day the pig read a story to the boy.
- He was so happy.

Resolution
- He read to the animals every night.
- The boy was happy.
- He taught the pig to read.

Questions for "The Pig Who Learned to Read"

1. Who was this story about?
   Explicit: Pete the pig

2. What did Pete want?
   Explicit: to learn to read

3. What did Pete do to get what he wanted?
   Explicit: he asked the boy who lived on the farm to teach him

4. Why was the boy not sure he could teach the pig to read?
   Implicit: because pigs didn't learn to read or because the boy had never taught anyone to read before

5. What did the boy do to teach Pete to read?
   Explicit: he read to him every night

6. What did the pig do in order to learn how to read?
   Implicit: he matched the words with what the boy had said. He did that every day.

Number Correct Explicit: ____
Number Correct Implicit: ____
Total: ____
   __ Independent: 6 correct
   __ Instructional: 4–5 correct
   __ Frustration: 0–3 correct

36 Ideas
Number of ideas recalled ______
Other ideas recalled, including inferences:
Appendix B

Narrative Story Retelling Rubric

---

**Narrative Story Retelling Rubric**

Student’s Name: ______________________ Age: ________

Name of Story: _________________________________________

Date: ____________________

How Story Was Read: (circle one)

- **Orally**
- **Silently**
- **Read to Student**

Directions: Score each story element based on the student’s retelling. Point values are included next to each element. The student will receive more points if the student directly states the answer within the retelling without being prompted.

\[ P = \text{Prompted Response} \quad \text{UP} = \text{Unprompted Response} \]

A. Names main character [2 points unprompted (UP); 1 point prompted (P)]:

B. Names other important characters [2 points UP; 1 point P]:

C. Names setting [2 points UP; 1 point P]:

D. Includes important events in the story (All = 4 points UP; Most = 3 points UP; Few = 2 points UP; 1 = point P):

E. States problem [2 points UP; 1 point P]:

F. States resolution [2 points UP; 1 point P]:

G. Tells story in sequence (Yes = 3 points UP; Partially = 2 points UP; 1 point P):

H. Concludes story [2 points UP; 1 point P]:

I. States story theme or moral [1 point P]:

Highest Score Possible: 20   Student’s Score: __________
Appendix C

Narrative Story Retelling Graphic Organizer

Name (pseudonym) ______________________ Date________________

Title of Interactive Read-aloud

__________________________________________________________________

Author/Illustrator

__________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Student illustrations here</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Researcher recorded dictations of student explanations</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>