

**Secondary Students' Reading Attitudes and Achievement in a
Scaffolded Silent Reading Program versus Traditional Sustained Silent Reading**

by

Chandra Lorene West

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Auburn, Alabama
August 9, 2010

Keywords: sustained silent reading,
attitude, achievement, secondary

Copyright 2010 by Chandra Lorene West

Approved by

Bruce Murray, Chair, Associate Professor of Reading Education
Marie Kraska, Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology
Kevin Roozen, Assistant Professor of English

Abstract

This study explored the reading attitudes and achievement, as well as genre knowledge, of tenth, eleventh, and twelfth-grade students who participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading, Sustained Silent Reading, or a control group. The Reading and You attitude survey, Degrees of Reading Power achievement measure, and Genre Assessment were administered to 66 secondary students enrolled in English classes at a high school in the southeastern United States. Their attitudes toward reading, reading achievement, and knowledge of genre were assessed at the beginning of the course and again at the end of the course to compare any changes.

The research questions that guided this study were: 1) To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in attitudes toward reading books than students participating in Sustained Silent Reading or in a control group? 2) To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in reading achievement than students participating in a control group? 3) To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in knowledge of the following genres—autobiography, biography, fantasy, fiction, historical fiction, horror, mystery, nonfiction, poetry, romance, science fiction, and sports—than students participating in Sustained Silent Reading or in a control group?

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank all of the faculty members who made this dissertation possible, especially Bruce A. Murray, who provided the Reading and You attitude survey which was used in this project and whose assistance was invaluable. Secondly, the author wishes to acknowledge the valued input of Marie Kraska and Chih-Hsuan Wang, who provided much-needed guidance with statistical analyses. Thirdly, the author also wishes to thank Kevin Roozen, who reviewed many a draft and provided extremely valuable feedback and Maria Witte, my outside reader, who stepped in at the last minute and allowed me to complete this process. Finally, the author wishes to express her deep and abiding love for her family and friends who supported her throughout this long and arduous process.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
List of Abbreviations	x
Chapter I - Introduction to Research.....	1
My reading and teaching experiences.....	1
My experiences with sustained silent reading	4
My students' experiences with sustained silent reading.....	7
My experiences with secondary readers	9
Pilot study	11
Pilot study survey instruments	12
Student attitude survey toward DEAR.....	12
Reader's autobiography questionnaire.....	13
Quickwrites	14
Observations and realizations	16
Scaffolded silent reading.....	17
Statement of the problem.....	18
Purpose of the study.....	19
Significance of the study.....	20

Limitations of the study	21
Definitions of terms	22
Research questions.....	23
Summary.....	23
Chapter II – Review of Related Literature.....	25
Introduction.....	25
In-school and out of school reading.....	25
A program of in-school reading: The history of sustained silent reading.....	32
Experimental studies of sustained silent reading	35
Quasi-experimental studies of sustained silent reading	41
Case studies of sustained silent reading.....	47
Teacher research of sustained silent reading	50
Reviews of sustained silent reading research.....	57
Scaffolded silent reading: An adaptation of sustained silent reading.....	60
Sustained silent reading and attitude toward reading	64
Attitude toward reading and reading achievement	70
Summary.....	75
Chapter III - Methods.....	76
Introduction.....	76
Participants and setting	77
Study design.....	78
Description of treatment groups.....	81
Sustained silent reading	81

Scaffolded silent reading.....	82
Control group.....	82
Description of survey instruments	83
Reading and you attitude survey.....	83
Genre assessment.....	84
Student genre writing.....	86
Degrees of reading power	87
Data collection	89
Data analysis	90
Validity, reliability, generalizability, and triangulation.....	92
Summary.....	94
Chapter IV - Findings	95
Introduction.....	95
Results.....	96
Reading and you attitude survey.....	97
Reading achievement measure: Degrees of reading power	103
Genre assessment.....	107
Summary.....	115
Chapter V - Discussion.....	116
Introduction.....	116
Conclusions.....	116
Implications.....	119
Limitations	120

Recommendations for future research	120
References	122
Appendix A – Reading and you attitude survey	132
Appendix B – Genre assessment.....	135
Appendix C – DEAR contract	138

List of Tables

Table 1 – Reliability of reading and you attitude survey.....	100
Table 2 – Reading and you attitude survey.....	102
Table 3 – Reading achievement: Degrees of reading power	104
Table 4 – Genre assessment.....	111

List of Figures

Figure 1 – Wide Writing Genre Wheel	85
Figure 2 – Student Example of Genre Pie Chart.....	139

List of Abbreviations

AHSGE	Alabama High School Graduation Exam
DEAR	Drop Everything and Read
DRA	Developmental Reading Assessment
DRP	Degrees of Reading Power
ESL	English as a Second Language
GROR	Guided Repeated Oral Reading
HIP	High Intensity Practice
IRA	International Reading Association
NCTE	National Council of Teachers of English
ScSR	Scaffolded Silent Reading
SSA	Self-Selected Activities
SSR	Sustained Silent Reading
SSW	Sustained Silent Writing
USSR	Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

My Reading and Teaching Experiences

When I was a high school student, I was a voracious reader. In fact, teachers would complain that I read too much. What they meant was that I read for pleasure instead of paying attention in class. As a high school teacher, it appeared that I didn't teach the kind of student that I was in school. My students—sophomores, juniors, and seniors in high school—didn't read books for pleasure, at least not that I observed in the classroom. I didn't notice any student so engrossed in any book during class that I had to pry him or her away from it. Nell (1988) refers to this state of being lost in a book as “ludic” reading—from the Latin *ludo*, which means “I play.” He defines pleasure reading as the kind of reading one does for fun and relaxation. I suspected that my students did not read books for fun or relaxation, although they sometimes read newspapers and online text. They certainly did not seem to want to read books assigned to them in English classes, but I was curious to find out if they would read books in school if given a choice of reading material.

When I first began teaching high school English in 1994, I was assigned to teach a course of Remedial Reading. My class consisted of ten students, but it felt like thirty. These students appeared to me to be frustrated with reading books in school and manifesting their frustration through either acting out, talking back, or staring numbly into space. I was frustrated because I didn't know how to get them to read at all and didn't know what strategies might work to get them to better comprehend books. At that point, I didn't even think about how I could get them

to read books for pleasure. I only taught the remedial reading class my first year of teaching in 1994 and then in 2005 I began teaching Remedial Reading again. This class, since renamed AHSGE Reading, was designed to help students who have failed the Alabama High School Graduation Exam in Reading to pass the exam. Throughout my teaching career, I have also taught ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade regular-level English classes.

As part of a mini-research project for a college class during my doctoral studies, I decided to observe one of my colleagues who teaches ninth grade English, both honors and regular-level classes, and starts every class period with Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), which is another name for Sustained Silent Reading. When I observed her, I noticed her reading in front of her students and was shocked that everyone seemed to be reading. Most of my students appeared to have poor attitudes toward reading books and these students appeared to have positive attitudes toward reading books for pleasure. As a result of that experience, I wanted to learn more about DEAR, so I began reading about what research had previously been done. My preliminary research showed me that there are many acronyms for it; it is most commonly known as SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) and has also been called USSR (Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading). I discovered that SSR has been around since the late 1960s, but that most of the research had been done with younger students.

As a result of my research and observation, I decided to include DEAR in my regular eleventh and twelfth grade English classes in the spring of 2005. I wasn't sure if it would help older students have better attitudes toward reading, read more books, or read texts with better comprehension, since the research I read on Sustained Silent Reading and reading attitudes had been conducted mainly with elementary students. For example, McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) conducted a study on reading attitudes with first through sixth graders and found that for

that sample of the population, "...recreational and academic reading attitudes, on average, begin at a relatively positive point in Grade 1 and end in relative indifference by Grade 6" (p. 951).

This conclusion supported their initial theory that frustrating reading experiences for poor readers would lead to them having increasingly negative attitudes toward reading books and therefore read fewer books. This study made me wonder if my students' attitudes toward reading were also negative or indifferent, and I wanted to know more about what might motivate my students to read.

Wilhelm (1994) also wanted to know what motivated reluctant readers. After reviewing the literature on reading studies, he concluded, "The studies imply that reluctant readers do not know how to engage with texts, i.e. how to enter, evoke, connect and reflect on the creating of story worlds and meanings. Drama and art were shown to support students as they began to think of reading as a productive activity instead of the passive reception of meaning, and as they began to try new moves for making meaning with text" (Wilhelm, 1994, p. v). In order to assist students in engaging with text and entering the story world, he decided to introduce students to artistic and dramatic responses to literature. He hoped to move his students from being passive receptacles of knowledge to becoming active readers of text who created their own meaning.

Over the course of one academic year, he conducted teacher research for his dissertation on how highly-engaged seventh-grade readers responded to literary text and how drama and art helped less engaged readers develop a wider repertoire of response strategies. He collected data from protocols, symbolic story representations, and interviews. He also recorded his observations in his journal during classes, during lunch, after school, or during his free period. He found that teaching his students to visualize and imagine what they were reading helped motivate them to read, and he also discovered that students were reading outside of school.

However, he writes, “They did not expect school reading to be fun, engaging or personally satisfying. If they regarded themselves as readers, then the reading they valued was pursued in study halls, at home, with friends and family – usually any place but the classroom” (Wilhelm, 1994, p. 98). I suspected my students might be reading outside of school, but I also wanted to connect the outside to the inside and make in-school reading more enjoyable for them.

My Experiences with Sustained Silent Reading

A few years ago I decided to try Sustained Silent Reading with my eleventh and twelfth grade English students and observe the results. I hoped that giving my students time to read in class might encourage them to read. As Eisner (1992) stresses, “The allocation of time to what we teach has other consequences as well. The amount of time allocated to a field of study influences the kinds of mental skills children have the opportunity to acquire. Thus time represents both values and opportunity: value, because it indicates what is considered significant; opportunity, because the school can be thought of as a culture of opportunity” (p. 592). Time is a precious commodity in schools, and it is impossible to introduce every student to every piece of literature valued by society during the school day. But when students are given the time in school to read and the choice of what they want to read, they are exposed to a wider variety of books. Teachers should still expose students to the classics, but should also give them time to read texts of their choice to improve their reading skills. This could include many types of texts, including books, graphic novels, newspapers, magazines, and online text. I wanted to demonstrate to students that reading was a valuable skill to possess in society, and my first step was to incorporate SSR into my daily classroom routine.

Another reason I wanted to implement SSR was to give students a voice and a choice of what they wanted to read in class. As Rosenblatt (1976) asserts, “Victorian notions about the

influence of literature led to a rigid censorship of books by publishers and critics as well as by parents and teachers. Particular books were valued because they offered approved models of conduct which young people were expected to imitate. The view of literature presented here has led to a rather different emphasis: in a democracy, the more varied the literary fare provided for students, the greater its potential as an educationally liberating force” (p. 214). In order to better prepare students to become active citizens in a democratic society, they need to be able to make choices for themselves and that can start with allowing students to choose what they want to read in school during SSR.

At first, I was nervous about starting my own SSR program because I had no experience with it, so I asked my colleague how she did it and what was important to know before I started it. She informed me that the teacher reading in front of the class was extremely important because it served as an example to the students. She didn’t use the term teacher modeling, but as I dug deeper into the research, I found out that was what she meant. As a result of my preliminary research and talking with my colleague, I decided to start with ten minutes every block. I did notice some positive outcomes from implementing the program in my classroom. One was that my students seemed calmer and quieter. Also, I had fewer discipline problems and wrote fewer office referrals.

However, I was concerned that students weren’t really reading during SSR time, so I asked them to start sharing what they were reading with the class. Students were reluctant to volunteer during whole-class discussion to discuss what they were reading with their classmates and, when I occasionally asked them to recommend a book, I was greeted with silence. I would ask them if they enjoyed what they were reading, what they liked about what they were reading, and just general questions designed to elicit any response from them at all. I eventually stopped

asking them to share because I didn't want to force them to do something they didn't want to, but I realized that something more needed to be a part of the process beyond the time allotted in class for free reading to promote my disaffected readers' love of reading. I had hoped that by my modeling my personal love of reading and by some of their peers also modeling reading that the other students might pick up a book and read, but that wasn't the case with some students.

I wasn't entirely satisfied with SSR and felt that I wanted to do more with it because I wanted students to share their experience of reading with their peers and with me. I knew from my research that one of the important components was that it should not have a graded assignment attached to it. The reason wasn't specifically stated in the research I read, but I surmised that it would somehow ruin the experience and take away the pleasure of reading. However, I wanted students to be accountable and actually read books and not use the time for homework or sleeping. I realized that I could encourage them by giving them the time to read, by giving them the choice of what they want to read, and by modeling reading. However, just modeling reading or giving them the time and choice of reading materials was not enough to convince all of my students to read every day.

One idea I got from another teacher was to require students to write a letter to the author after they finished reading a book. I soon realized that even by giving students up to 30 minutes a day to read that some had not completed a single book in a month. Even though I modeled reading for them every day, they did not read every day. Therefore, I concluded that teacher modeling alone, at least with high school students, was not going to encourage them to read. I could only hope that their peers might influence them to read. After reading more about SSR and how teachers such as Reynolds (2004) had implemented it, I decided not to require students to write a letter to the author, but instead to offer it as an extra credit assignment. Not a single

one of my students chose to do the assignment. When I asked one of my students why he wasn't reading anymore during SSR, he told me that, since there was no assignment due, he saw no reason to read anymore. It seemed nothing I or the other students did encouraged this particular student to read. This experience led to my desire to understand my students' experiences during SSR and what influenced them to choose to read or not to read.

My Students' Experiences with Sustained Silent Reading

As I observed my students during SSR, one trend I noticed was that the majority of my students preferred reading newspapers and magazines to books. I thought they preferred newspapers because they could keep up with current events and sometimes read about themselves or their classmates in the local newspaper, and I thought they preferred magazines to books because the articles were shorter and there are pictures in magazines that aren't in books. When I first began the program, I had very few books in my classroom library that appealed to teenagers. I had some classic novels and some dusty old romances, but no new books geared to teenagers, so I started using my annual instructional money to purchase books aimed at teenagers.

When I asked them what their favorite book was, the book mentioned most often was *Tears of a Tiger* by Sharon Draper, which is a young adult novel with an African-American protagonist that they had read in middle school. I deduced from that response that they enjoyed reading stories with characters like themselves, so I began buying more books with African-American teenagers in them. The semester after I started my program, I also asked the librarians to help me recommend books. I surmised that the better I knew my students, the better recommendations I could offer.

I did attempt to influence one student's in-class reading behavior after finding out that he enjoyed reading about forensics and real-life crime. He told me that he liked watching the television show CSI about crime scene investigation, and so he started the semester reading a book from that series. When he was done with it, I suggested he read Patricia Cornwell's *Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper Case Closed*. I had read it myself, so I could make the suggestion based on my own knowledge of both the book and of my student. I was shocked that he had never heard of Jack the Ripper, but I felt that it was a good recommendation since it dealt with forensics. I thought that everyone had heard of the famous murder case involving Jack the Ripper, but that incident made me realize that my students don't have the same background knowledge that I have and that I would have to find out more about them as individuals to be able to recommend books they might like. He eventually chose not to read the book; I surmised it might have been because of the high reading level, the length of the book, or that it may have not interested him. I wish I had asked him why he didn't want to read it, but I hadn't wanted to pry or make him feel bad for not reading the book. In the end, it seemed to me that one of the keys to promoting reading was to know my students' likes and dislikes.

Because I wanted my students to challenge themselves by reading longer and more complex works, I wanted to make it a requirement that my students read a book and not the newspaper. I took them to the library, but that wasn't enough to convince them to read books instead of newspapers. The librarian had pulled a cart full of books that appealed to teenagers and to many different interests. However, few of my students checked out a book that day. I think some of them may have had library fines that prohibited them from checking out books, but I also think another reason was that they didn't think reading was "cool" or they may have had frustrating experiences with reading and didn't want to attempt it again.

The main reason I wanted my students to read books is that I wasn't sure if they could improve their reading skills by reading newspapers when most are written on a sixth-grade reading level or lower, although newspapers could serve as a bridge toward more complex reading. The reading required for the graduation exam is mainly based on American literature, so it is written at an eleventh-grade level or higher. The questions on the exam are designed to test reading comprehension skills such as cause and effect, drawing conclusions, finding the main idea and supporting details, and recognizing literary elements and figurative language. I taught these skills in my classroom, yet I also wanted students to enjoy reading for pleasure and practice reading books they were able to choose for themselves, which is why I implemented SSR.

My Experiences with Secondary Readers

During the 2005-2006 school year, I taught twelfth-grade English and also what was then called Remedial Reading, a course designed to help students pass the Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE). Partly to remove the stigma of the term *remedial*, the course has since been renamed AHSGE Reading to emphasize the institutional purpose of the class, which is to help students gain the skills and strategies they need to pass the graduation exam. Students are assigned to the AHSGE Reading course because they have failed the graduation exam in reading. I hoped that by giving them time, choice, and a positive role model, it would inspire them to read and that by reading more, they would become better readers and pass the graduation test.

I initially thought that these students would have poorer attitudes toward reading than my regular twelfth-grade English students, and I wanted to find out if SSR could encourage them to read more. I also wanted to track what students were reading. I started with a tracking sheet

where students wrote when they read, what they read, and how much they read. It simply asked “What did you read?” and “If you liked what you chose, why? If you didn’t like what you chose, why not?” That form, however, was too limiting and did not give me the data I wanted, so I eventually discarded it. Also, when I asked my students to talk about they were reading and if they liked it, they would just shrug and say they didn’t know. I tried modeling what I wanted them to do by talking about what I was currently reading, but they still didn’t want to talk, so I eventually stopped asking. I wasn’t sure if they didn’t want to talk about reading because it wasn’t “cool” or because they really had nothing to say or for some other reason.

Next, I decided I wanted students to respond in writing to what they read since I couldn’t get them to talk about what they read, so I asked them to choose one response per day from thirty reading responses from Pilgreen’s (2000) *The SSR Handbook*. Some sample responses are, “I like what I just read because...,” “One idea I learned is...,” “The reading is getting exciting because...” and students could also choose to write their own response. Students did not respond to the prompts every day, which led me to wonder if they were truly reading at all. Because I was modeling reading, I couldn’t always see if students were reading, and even if they had a book open and appeared to be reading, I had no way of knowing if they truly were reading.

I picked about ten books a week to highlight by simply putting them up front on my classroom whiteboard, which is a trick I learned from a professor in one of my undergraduate education classes. Eventually, students would be curious and pick up the books I placed in the front of the classroom, look at the back cover, or even ask about them. At the beginning of the semester, I had students answer questions about what they liked to read so I could recommend books for them and I learned that my students liked a variety of different types of books:

mystery, romance, and horror. After implementing SSR for a year, I wanted to conduct a study to see what my students thought of it and if it was making a difference in their reading attitudes.

Pilot Study

When I started the 2006-2007 school year, I found out that I would be teaching twelfth grade English as well as two sections of AHSGE Reading in the fall. These classes included sophomores, juniors, and seniors who had failed the Alabama High School Graduation Exam in Reading. This was an unusual makeup for the class since it usually consisted of mainly seniors who had a limited time to pass the exam or they would not graduate. Those sophomore and junior students taking the class fall semester would not even take the graduation exam until the spring semester, so it was difficult for me to motivate them. They didn't see the purpose of the class, so I stressed to them that it was first and foremost a reading class and that we would read books every day for pleasure.

I believed that daily book reading would improve their reading comprehension skills and that would translate to them eventually passing the AHSGE in Reading. Along with teaching them the skills and strategies to pass the test, I stressed that daily reading might improve their stamina in taking the test, since I think that the majority of students fail the exam because they get mentally tired and give up. I have personally administered the graduation exam and have observed students start bubbling in any answer just so they can finish the test and then fall asleep. The reading passages are sometimes long on the test, and the students don't have the patience or practice to read them. The metaphor I use with my students is that taking the test is like trying to run a marathon; they need to train for it just like an athlete would and practice reading daily. Some of my students only know how to crawl and need to learn how to run. By

reading books daily, I hoped my students would improve their reading skills and gain a more positive attitude toward reading.

Pilot Study Survey Instruments

Student Attitude Survey toward DEAR

For my pilot study, I administered the Student Attitude Survey toward SSR (Herbert, 1987) and changed SSR to DEAR so my students would be familiar with the term. This 20-question survey was designed using a four-point Likert scale, where one was designated as “most like me,” while four was “least like me.” The instrument is reverse coded, which means it is a mixture of positive and negative questions. Specific questions asked students to rate how they like or dislike DEAR and also how they feel about reading and their ability to read. Herbert (1987) implemented the attitude survey herself with seventh, eighth, and ninth-grade students. She reported that 61% of seventh graders, 52% of eighth graders, and 58% of ninth graders had negative attitudes toward SSR, while 39% of seventh graders, 48% of eighth graders, and 42% of ninth graders had positive attitudes toward SSR.

I first administered the Student Attitude Survey toward DEAR to my students near the beginning of the semester on August 8, 2006. A total of 47 surveys were completed. 59.8% of the responses were positive and 39.9% of the responses were negative towards DEAR. Therefore, I concluded that the majority of the students responded positively about DEAR, while the minority reported they felt negatively about DEAR. Finally, I also administered the Student Attitude Survey toward DEAR to my students near the end of the semester on December 7, 2006. I discovered that the results were still mostly positive towards reading and DEAR. Overall, 56.6% of the responses were positive, while 43.3% were negative. Both of these percentages

differed by approximately 3%, with a slight decrease in positive attitudes and a slight increase in negative attitudes.

Reader's Autobiography Questionnaire

Both at the beginning and at the end of the semester, I asked students to complete a reader's autobiography questionnaire about their experiences as readers. Buehl (2001) wrote guidelines on how to develop a reading autobiography, which I had adapted into a handout for my students. There were two parts to the handout: part one had seven questions related to what and how students read and part two had nine questions related to students' past experiences with reading at home and in school.

Since the data on this questionnaire was verbal, I had different variables than just numbers to consider. The slight majority of the students, 53%, responded that they did not read often, mentioning that they only read when they were bored or had nothing else to do. More than half of the students, 53%, mentioned some sort of distraction that interfered with their ability to read as well as they would like, such as loud noises, people talking, family, friends, work, homework, sports, music, or television.

I mainly used the same procedure for analyzing the final administration of the Reader's Autobiography Questionnaire as I had used for the initial administration. Almost half of the students, 49%, had negative or indifferent attitudes toward being a reader, while 29% of the students mentioned strong or positive attitudes. Overall, there were no significant changes to the students' responses to the reader's autobiography questionnaire from the initial to the final administration.

Quickwrites

I also assigned a series of eight quickwrites to my students over the course of eight weeks near the end of the semester so that I could find out more about the students' attitudes toward and experiences with DEAR. After I collected the students' responses to each quickwrite, I transcribed them into a compact list so that I could more easily read and compare their responses. I was careful to type the students' words exactly as they had written them, including misspellings and other grammatical miscues.

For quickwrite one, I asked students to respond to the following prompt: "How would you describe yourself as a reader?" I received 38 responses from the students in the two AHSGE Reading courses I taught. Most of the students reported that they were good readers, but that they did not like to read. Quickwrite two stated, "Rate DEAR from 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest) and justify your rating." Four of the students rated DEAR a ten, eight students rated it either an eight or a nine, while twenty students rated it from five to seven because they stated they had to be in the mood to read. No students rated DEAR three or four; however, three students rated DEAR either a one or two.

Quickwrite three: "Now that we have participated in DEAR for a few months, how would you describe DEAR for someone who has never experienced it before?" Twelve students described DEAR as "fun" or "good," while five students used the word "boring" to describe DEAR. One student wrote, "I think they would like it if they liked to read but if they don't like to read they might not like it." This confirmed what I also thought, that students who enjoyed reading would enjoy DEAR, but those who didn't like to read would not like it. Quickwrite four: "Please respond to the following: For me during DEAR time, this is what it's like..." Eight students again reported that they thought DEAR was "boring." However, a few students

reported more positive impressions, such as one female student who wrote, “For me during DEAR time, this is what it’s like a day relaxation. A day to forget about everything and just be in your own little world.”

Quickwrite five: “What do you think was my reason for using/requiring DEAR? Why do you think I use it every day?” Several students wrote that it was to make them better readers or to get them to read more, while others wrote that it was to expand their vocabulary. A few students assumed that it was time for me to read my book, while one student thought it was because I didn’t like them to talk. Quickwrite six: “Would you recommend that I use DEAR again in the next class that I teach? Why or why not?” Since this was a yes or no question, I counted how many yes and how many no responses and calculated the percentages. 88% of the students positively reported that they would recommend DEAR, while 12% negatively reported that they would not.

Quickwrite seven: “How would you describe yourself as a reader? Has your description changed from the beginning of the semester? If so, how?” This prompt was similar to quickwrite one; the only difference was that I asked students if their description of themselves as readers had changed since the beginning of the semester. Most, 65%, reported that their description had not changed, while 35% reported that their description had changed. Finally, quickwrite eight asked students to, “Rate DEAR from 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest) and justify your rating. Do you like DEAR more or less than you did at the beginning of the semester?” This again was similar to quickwrite two, except that I added the question of whether the students liked DEAR more or less than they had at the beginning of the semester. 34% stated that they liked DEAR more, 20% stated they liked it less, while 23% stated they felt about the same about DEAR. 43% rated DEAR highly from eight to ten, 34% rated it in the

middle from five to seven, and 14% rated it from one to three. I thought this was a positive result that most students seemed to like DEAR.

Observations and Realizations

Each day during DEAR, as I modeled reading for my students, I also observed them and wrote down some of my observations of their behavior in my field notes, using abbreviations to save time. Every day, I transcribed my notes into my computerized teacher-researcher journal where I also included my reflections on the day's experience for me personally and any questions I still had about my research. One word to describe the students' behavior would be "compliant." They were mainly quiet and respectful of DEAR time, but I was unsure if they were actually reading.

After my pilot study concluded, I came to several realizations about DEAR. One is that when I could not read, it took the class longer to settle down. This made me realize that teacher modeling is important, if only for the students to remain quiet out of respect while I and some of their classmates read. I had hoped that my reading would inspire them to read, but I now know that is not realistic. Another realization was that I could not force them to read if they didn't want to. I knew this before I started my study, but it became obvious to me that no matter what I did—giving students the choice to read, the time to read, and the teacher model—I could not make everyone read. I also realized that the students got good at pretending to read and I wondered if that was to please me. Finally, I thought that DEAR helped to quiet the class down and I wondered if the routine was comforting for the students.

During the spring semester of the 2006-2007 school year, I taught three sections of English 12 and implemented DEAR, but did not do a formal study. I taught English 12, English 10, and AHSGE Reading during the 2007-2008 school year and again implemented DEAR, but

did not formally study or observe the implementation. In 2008-2009, I taught English 10, AHSGE Reading, and AHSGE Language, again implementing DEAR with all classes except for AHSGE Language, but not formally studying it. However, I was still unsatisfied with my SSR program and searched for ways to implement it more successfully. As a result of my research, I discovered a new adaptation of SSR called Scaffolded Silent Reading.

Scaffolded Silent Reading

When I read about Scaffolded Silent Reading during the summer of 2009, I knew I wanted to implement it with my classes the following school year to give my students the time to read, the choice of what they wanted to read, and the exposure to a variety of genres. As described by Reutzell, Jones, Fawson, and Smith (2008), ScSR includes all of the traditional elements of SSR along with book selection strategies, exposure to a wide variety of book genres, assigning books at the students' independent reading levels, teacher-student conferencing, goal setting, and completion of projects. One difference between ScSR and SSR is that instead of modeling reading for students, the teacher scaffolds students' strategies for book selection. Wilhelm (2004) defines scaffolding as, "...providing very explicit and active assistance in handing over expert knowledge that helps students to master new strategies" (p. 37). Occasionally, I also modeled reading for my students and shared what I was reading with them by talking about the books. I also took my students to the library every other week for the librarian to give us book talks on each of the ten genres they would be reading for the semester.

For the 2009-2010 school year, I taught English 10, English 12, and AHSGE Reading. During the fall semester, I implemented ScSR with my English 10 and English 12 classes and SSR with my English 10 class. During the spring semester, I implemented ScSR with both my English 10 and English 12 classes. I decided to include the AHSGE Reading class in the study

as a control group since they did not participate in either SSR or ScSR. When I designed the study, I was aware that this class might be unique to my high school and I wanted my results to be more generalizable. I wanted to implement ScSR with my students to see if it might improve their attitudes toward reading, reading achievement levels, and genre knowledge.

Statement of the Problem

Students at the secondary level may possess negative attitudes toward reading that inhibit them from engaging in the act of reading; as a consequence, they may not read daily for pleasure and may lack the necessary reading skills to compete in today's global economy. These negative attitudes begin at home and continue as students progress through school. After students have graduated from high school and/or college and have become parents themselves, they can pass on a negative reading attitude to their children and the cycle continues. As Beers states in her foreword to Lesesne's (2003) book, *reluctant readers and children of reluctant readers*:

...come to school lacking a positive stance toward reading, having never experienced that aesthetic connection that Louise Rosenblatt, in *Literature as Exploration*, explained as critical to forge a connection with a text. Many of these students move through school adopting an aversion toward reading and the insidious cycle of aliteracy continues. To break this cycle, teachers must recognize that a dislike of reading is an acquired taste. One isn't born with a love for or an aversion to reading. Experiences at school and at home with parents, peers, teachers, and a variety of texts all help form a student's reading attitude (p. x).

It is essential that students have a positive attitude toward reading so they will continue to read long after they have completed school. Illiteracy is when someone does not know how to read,

and aliteracy is when students know how to read, yet they choose not to. Teachers can assist students in learning how to read, but it is more difficult to motivate students to want to read. This can have a profound effect on those students' ability to successfully complete high school, higher education programs, and later to obtain and maintain employment in a demanding world.

As teachers, we need to show students that reading is an important activity worthy of their time; however, that is not often the case in today's high schools. As Christenbury (2001) writes, "In high school, we pay lip service to reading as an important activity, but we rarely make time for it in the school day, leaving our students with the unmistakable impression that reading is not important enough to occupy any part of their instructional time... Letting students read *in* school should be one of our priorities; it reinforces for students—and it reminds us as educators—that reading is as valuable an instructional activity as any we can devise" (p. 156). In conclusion, incorporating an in-school reading program such as Scaffolded Silent Reading into the curriculum can demonstrate to students that not only do we as teachers think reading is important, but that society values it as well.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine secondary-level students' reading attitudes, reading achievement levels, and genre knowledge in a ScSR program compared to traditional SSR. The use of SSR and ScSR fits the curricula of secondary English language arts; standard 1 of the NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts states, "Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works" (Smagorinsky, 1996, p. viii). Giving

students time in school to read would allow them to read a wide range of print texts both for personal reasons and to prepare them for society, as they move on to higher education and also as they enter the work force. In addition to giving students time in class to read print texts, teachers should also ensure access to nonprint texts such as music, video, and the Internet. These texts can enrich the learning experience and allow students to connect what they learn to what they already know.

In addition to tapping into prior knowledge, teachers should also encourage students to read a wide variety of texts as often as possible. Guthrie and Anderson (1999) stress, “Understanding why people read is valuable because wide and frequent reading confers many benefits. Studies show that being a wide and frequent reader increases a student’s reading achievement by 10-15 percentile points on standardized tests” (pp. 17-18). Not only will students who read more perform better on standardized tests, they will also possess more knowledge than students who do not read a wide variety of texts. They will be more successful in their pursuit of educational and career goals and, ultimately, contribute more to society.

Significance of the Study

This study is important for researchers and teachers for several reasons. First, it is important for teachers to understand why students either choose or do not choose to read. Secondly, this study is important for researchers because it will add to the body of knowledge about secondary-level students’ reading attitudes and achievement levels. Finally, it is important for teachers to know more about secondary-level students’ attitudes toward reading and achievement levels in order to assist them in becoming better readers.

Not knowing how to read is a problem in today’s schools, but choosing not to read is an even bigger problem. Cramer and Castle (1994) assert, “While illiteracy is, without question, a

very serious concern, aliteracy may be an even greater one. *Aliteracy* has been defined as a ‘lack of the reading habit; especially, such a lack in capable readers who choose not to read’ (Harris & Hodges, 1981, p. 11)...of the 4 out of 5 Americans who can read, only 1 actually does” (p. 4). Students graduate from high school, and even college, knowing how to read, but choosing not to. Their reading skills don’t progress beyond a certain point, which becomes problematic when they lack the requisite skills to survive in today’s economy.

It is important for teachers and researchers to understand more about secondary students’ attitudes toward reading and reading achievement. Since one of the goals of education is to help students become successful in the workplace, improving literacy through fostering a positive reading attitude and increasing students’ reading achievement should be a priority. Mikulecky (1994) reiterates the importance of literacy as it relates to employment, “When we take part in shaping adults and adolescents who avoid reading, who are convinced they are not very good at it and who do not plan to change, we help develop people who have few choices in our global economy. Their problem is not theirs alone, because they are condemned to no jobs or very low-wage jobs that cannot pay the taxes communities need to prosper” (p. 253). When students cannot read well, they cannot compete for high-paying jobs with those who can. In conclusion, aliteracy and illiteracy affect everyone and it is everyone’s responsibility, including parents and teachers, to encourage reading.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to students who were enrolled in the teacher-researcher’s AHSGE Reading, English 10, and English 12 classes as well as a colleague’s English 11 class during the fall and spring semesters of the 2009-2010 academic year. Also, there have only been a couple

of studies of Scaffolded Silent Reading since it is relatively new (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008; Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008).

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions of terms apply in this study:

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR): also known as Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) or Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR).

Reading: Nell (1988) cites Rubakin and Bethman (1937), “Reading is an interaction among author, reader, the book itself, and the environment” (p. 116). Reading is understanding the messages encoded in text.

Reading Achievement: what readers are able to accomplish on an informal reading task for school or a formal reading assessment, which measures vocabulary and comprehension (California Achievement Test, Degrees of Reading Power, Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, and Metropolitan Achievement Test).

Reading Attitude: the disposition a student has toward reading for pleasure that cause him or her to choose to read or not to read for pleasure.

Reading Comprehension: The RAND Reading Study Group (2002) defines reading comprehension as “...the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (p. 11). They stress that comprehension involves three elements: the reader, the text, and the activity in which comprehension is a part.

Recreational Reading: also known as voluntary reading, pleasure reading, independent reading, or “ludic” reading (Nell, 1988). Reading which is done for the purpose of enjoyment.

Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR): a supplementary recreational reading program that includes all of the traditional elements of Sustained Silent Reading along with book selection strategies,

exposure to a wide variety of genres, assigning books at the students' independent reading levels, teacher-student conferencing, goal setting, and completion of projects.

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR): a supplementary recreational reading program giving students time to read in class, a choice in reading materials, and teacher modeling of reading.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in attitudes toward reading books than students participating in Sustained Silent Reading or in a control group?
2. To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in reading achievement than students participating in a control group?
3. To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in knowledge of the following genres—autobiography, biography, fantasy, fiction, historical fiction, horror, mystery, nonfiction, poetry, romance, science fiction, and sports—than students participating in Sustained Silent Reading or in a control group?

Summary

This chapter presented a brief overview of my experiences with Sustained Silent Reading and secondary readers. It reviewed the pilot study I conducted with Sustained Silent Reading and included an overview of Scaffolded Silent Reading, an adaptation of Sustained Silent Reading. It also included a statement of the problem as well as the purpose, significance, limitations, and assumptions of the study. Finally, it included definitions of the terms used in the study and research questions that guided the study. The next chapter contains a review of

literature related to in-school and out-of-school reading, the history of sustained silent reading, scaffolded silent reading, attitude toward reading, and reading achievement as it relates to Sustained Silent Reading.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to in-school and out-of-school reading, teenage boys and girls' reading in and outside of school, and Sustained Silent Reading, which is an in-school reading program. After reviewing the foundational studies in the history of SSR section, the remaining studies dealing with SSR are subdivided into the following sections: experimental research, quasi- experimental research, case studies, teacher research, and studies which review SSR. This review will also discuss the literature related to Scaffolded Silent Reading, an adaptation of SSR. Finally, this chapter will review the literature pertaining to attitude toward reading as well as reading achievement, which empirical studies have examined in connection with SSR.

In School and Out-of-School Reading

Reading during school time is only a small portion of a student's total reading time, which also includes reading done outside of school. Researchers have explored students' out-of-school literacies to understand why they may be failing to meet teachers' expectations of literacy in school. In their review of studies related to out-of-school literacies, Schultz and Hull (2002) report, "...the definitions of reading (and we can add writing and speaking) that schools use may not take into account the reading a student does out of school" (p. 14). For example, students may be reading magazines, newspapers, technical manuals, online text, or religious texts outside

of school. They point out that students' literate lives are often more complex outside of school than what teachers are able to observe in school.

Snyder (2002) confirms, "The print-based industrial model of education needs to be redesigned to take account of the reality that young people are more likely to develop complex literacy repertoires outside educational institutions" (p. 8). This type of out-of-school literacy includes many forms of electronic media. Smith and Wilhelm (2006) list some of these electronic texts: "...word processors, multipurpose software, online journals, blogs, zines, rpgs, MUDs, image downloads, Internet surfing, linking, computer games, music and lyric downloads, video downloads and production, Web and hypermedia design software, html code, and much more" (p. 166). From interviews with teenage boys, Smith and Wilhelm (2006) learned that these students had a rich, varied literacy experience outside of school, which included these other forms of literacy not typically recognized in a school setting.

Students are not only reading outside of school, but they are also writing. As part of a longitudinal ethnographic study, Roozen (2008) reports on the out-of-school literacy activities of a student labeled as a college basic writer. He describes how Charles, the subject of his study, sought extra practice with public speaking through weekly poetry readings when he was experiencing difficulty with a college speech course. He also describes how Charles read for a purpose; in his case, he read magazine joke pages, flyers, and emails to get material to present at an Open Mic Night. Although he made poor grades on his first two speeches for class, he made As on the last two, which may indicate that his real-world experiences helped improve his in-school performances. He concludes that we need to look at writers' lives inside and outside of school to understand the writer as a whole. Researchers and teachers should also look at students' in-school and out-of-school reading.

One study examined the in-school and out-of-school reading and writing activities of a female undergraduate Mexicano student. In a longitudinal ethnographic study, Roozen (2009) reports how Angelica, a self-described “bookworm,” remembered her older sisters reading books to her as a child and how “This regular exposure to literacy at home paid off in the classroom...” (p. 548). Her love for reading and writing eventually led her to become an English major in college; however, she decided to change majors after realizing the kind of writing she liked to do and the kind of writing she was expected to do in English classes were vastly different. After enrolling in a basic journalism course, she realized that writing human-interest stories was similar enough to the type of journaling she preferred and she became a journalism major. Being able to choose what she wanted to write was valuable for her in choosing a career path.

Studies show that literacy plays an important role in what career paths people choose and are able to achieve (Brandt, 2001; Roozen, 2009; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). Brandt (2001) claims, “The ability to read and, more recently, to write often helps to catapult individuals into higher economic brackets and social privilege... In short, literacy is valuable – and volatile – property” (p. 2). She defines literacy as a resource and looks at why people gain literacy and for what purposes. Employing life-story research methodology, she interviewed subjects and gathered autobiographical monologues, as well as biographical surveys from 80 Americans aged 10 to 98 about their earliest memories of reading and writing to determine how literacy has changed.

Being able to read and write also determines the societal rights, privileges, and freedoms people can enjoy. Brandt (2001) asserts that, “Knowing how to read enhances political and economic rights, whereas not knowing how to read diminishes them. In relationship to illiterates, literates enjoy more autonomy and prerogative; in a practical sense, their liberties are worth more” (p. 47). She further explicates that people need to know how to read and

understand legal contracts and also need to know how to write in order to have a voice in a democracy. In addition, access to computer technology also determines how informed people are and how they are able to express their opinions.

Brandt (2001) summarizes and reports her findings from the life stories she analyzed and discusses how most of the subjects' earliest memories of reading included pleasant ones of being read to by family members from both religious and secular texts. In addition, these subjects mentioned their use of public libraries to support their reading, as well as buying books and receiving them as gifts. She concludes:

Messages about the prestige of reading are sent to children early and often.

Reading is incorporated into shared family rituals and is supported independently of school through such avenues as religion, hobbies, and the values of parent-child involvement. School-based campaigns such as D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read), in which all members of a school community, from principal to custodian, are supposed to devote 15 minutes a day to reading, is matched by television commercials and library posters featuring sports figures and other cultural icons extolling the virtues of reading (Brandt, 2001, p. 167).

What she neglects to say is that not every home emphasizes the importance of reading just as not every school implements an in-school reading program such as SSR or ScSR. It is essential for teachers and researchers to understand what motivates students to read both in and out of school.

Smith and Wilhelm (2002, 2006) have explored what literacy means to boys, while Skilton-Sylvester (2002) explored what literacy means to girls. In their well-known study *"Reading Don't Fix No Chevys": Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*, Smith and Wilhelm (2002) explore the literate lives of adolescent males in and out of school. They assert, "A variety

of research shows that boys learn to read later than girls and never catch up... They are particularly behind when it comes to reading novels and extended forms of narrative fiction—the kind of reading that counts in most language arts classes” (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002, p. xix). Boys are at a disadvantage in English classrooms because they mature later and are not interested in the types of narrative fiction reading that are valued in school. They interviewed 49 teenage boys from four different schools, collected literacy logs, observed the boys in and outside of class, and wrote profiles on each participant.

In their summary of the research on gender and literacy, Smith and Wilhelm (2002) report the following generalizations: 1) boys read less than girls, 2) boys value reading less than girls and spend less time doing it, 3) boys are less interested in reading for pleasure and more interested in reading for reading for a useful purpose, 4) boys and girls read different things, 5) boys are more likely to read graphic novels, book series, humor, science fiction or fantasy, magazines, newspapers, electronic texts, or informational texts, 6) boys are less likely to discuss their reading, 7) boys prefer active responses such as acting out a response or making something, and 8) boys need more teacher time than girls (pp. 10-11). The differences between boys and girls when it comes to reading are evident to many teachers; however, researchers are just recently beginning to study these differences.

From interviewing the boys and creating profile interviews, Smith and Wilhelm (2002) learned, “...*Andre* reads because reading ‘puts his mind at ease.’ The profile continues by noting that ‘when *Andre* reads a book his mind is completely absorbed by the characters and the story.’ Nonetheless, when the boys talked about *Andre*, their focus was not on his getting lost in a book, the immediate pleasure he took from it, but rather on what his reading would bring him in the future” (p. 65). Even though *Andre* may have been experiencing what Nell (1988) referred to as

the state of being lost in a book, the other boys valued reading and school for what both could do for them in the future and also saw reading as an obstacle to overcome or as a way to achieve their career goals.

They also viewed reading as “schoolish” and read if they found it purposeful and helpful in their future goals. Even though the boys pursued literacy interests outside of school, they saw in-school literacy solely as a tool to help them succeed in school. Smith and Wilhelm (2002) conclude, “The boys almost universally felt that school denied them choice and control and therefore any sense of personal agency or competence. When Jeff asked two of his groups from the public schools for a metaphor for school, both groups agreed upon *prison*.” (p. 109). Even though they don’t mention programs like SSR or ScSR in their study, those programs would allow students to choose what they wanted to read.

In their study *Going with the Flow: How to Engage Boys [and Girls] in Literacy Learning*, Smith and Wilhelm (2006) confirm what research has said about in-school and out-of-school reading: “Because they didn’t understand the purposes for school assignments or what skilled school reading entailed, they felt less engaged with their school texts than with the reading they did outside of class” (p. 10). The boys they interviewed for their study read outside of school, but didn’t feel a sense of purpose for the types of reading they were asked to complete in school and for school. They interviewed boys about their reading and found that the boys liked playing video games because they presented an appropriate challenge and increased in difficulty.

In contrast, when asked to read texts in school—classics such as *Beloved*, *Ethan Frome*, and *The Great Gatsby*—these students felt overwhelmed by the difficulty of the reading. These students also enjoyed getting immediate feedback from sports, games, art, and music, so they

chose texts that provided information, such as reading on the Internet, newspaper, instruction manuals, and thrillers, which also gave feedback. Smith and Wilhelm (2006) conclude, “If we want our students to read far and read wide, perhaps we need to focus on *how* we want them to read” (p. 21). They suggest teachers use reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, an activity they refer to as “frontloading,” with novels that all students read in class. They do not explicitly mention an in-school reading program such as SSR or ScSR in their studies, although they do state, “Other ways to incorporate choice are to provide free time to read in the classroom or to incorporate literature circles and book clubs in which students choose books that will help them pursue inquiry questions of interest or follow authors or ideas they have come to know about” (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002, p. 197). However, they caution that choice may not work to motivate students to read if only certain kinds of choices are allowed.

Boys are not the only ones who practice literacy outside of school. Skilton-Sylvester (2002) observed seven Cambodian girls at home and in school and reports, “At the school these girls attended, being good at literacy had quite negative peer-group consequences” (p. 61). She explains that other students felt they couldn’t talk to the girls because they were always reading books, so the girls compensated by reading books and magazines outside of school. She stresses that for Cambodians, being literate meant oral rather than written text and also that being literate could even have resulted in their deaths; “This historical stance toward those who are literate was reinforced by the genocide of Pol Pot’s regime in which being literate was a reason for being killed” (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002, p. 62). This could possibly explain the girls’ reluctance to read and write in school, but they had literate lives outside of school, which including writing letters and fictional stories as well as illustrating them. She concludes by asserting that schools need to show students what they gain by writing (and reading) for school assignments.

A Program of In-School Reading: The History of Sustained Silent Reading

Students read both outside of school for personal reasons and in school for class assignments, but they could also be allowed to read for personal reasons during school. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is an in-school reading program that allows students time in class to read anything of their choice without having a graded assignment attached to it. One of the first descriptions of SSR came from an article by Hunt (1970/1997). He referred to the program as Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) and stated it was, "...the essence of reading power; the ability to keep going with ideas in print. Without it the reader is crippled; with the power of Sustained Silent Reading the reader is on his own, he can propel himself through print. He is an independent reader and does not depend on outside direction by the teacher" (Hunt, 1970/1997, p. 281). He referred to USSR as a "fundamental reading skill" and suggested that, for low-powered readers, less oral reading should be used. He then reports the testimony of a second-grade teacher, who had been stressing the negative aspects of students' struggling to read, rather than highlighting the positive aspect of what they could accomplish; "Attitudes affect one's approach to the teaching-learning situation. The effect on youngsters can be astounding when one stresses positive rather than the negative" (Hunt, 1970/1997, p. 281). As they read more, their skills improved and they still received skills instruction when they needed it; however, most of their time was spent reading.

One of the first proponents of SSR, McCracken (1969) wrote an editorial promoting it and stressed, "...there are no book reports, no comprehension checks, no word recognition exercises, and no teaching as part of the *Sustained Silent Reading*. There is only *Sustained Silent Reading*" (p. 446). The implication is that there is no need for an assignment to be attached to SSR when students are sustaining reading for an extended period of time. He further reiterates

that students may be literate and yet still not choose to read. He concludes his editorial by stating, “Students will know that teachers believe reading is important when we give time for practicing reading every school day so that every student has a time to read silently, sustaining himself for at least thirty minutes, and a majority of students will become hooked on the habit of reading for a lifetime, rather than becoming literate adults who rarely use a book again after graduation” (McCracken, 1969, p. 447-448). His statement became the basis for my implementation of Sustained Silent Reading in my own classroom.

Another early supporter of SSR, Oliver (1970) reports on High Intensity Practice (HIP), which includes Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR), Sustained Silent Writing (SSW), and Self-Selected Activities (SSA). He claims, “The magic of HIP seems to be in the quiet atmosphere and the favorable behavior models of peers and teachers. HIP children have been given time to read in school” (Oliver, 1970, p. 71). Some of the most important aspects of the program are the quiet time to read and the modeling of teachers and other students. Oliver (1970) also stresses that during HIP, students are in control of their own learning and that teachers should learn to give up some of that control. He concludes, “Of course, children need direct reading instruction, but not to the exclusion of practice. High Intensity Practice is HIP” (p. 71). That program, along with SSR and ScSR, provides much needed practice time for students to be able to practice the skill of reading.

McCracken (1971) stresses that SSR is only one part of a reading program and suggests that teachers who want to implement it should follow six rules: 1) Each student must read silently, 2) The teacher reads, 3) Each student selects a single book/magazine/newspaper and cannot change, 4) A timer is used, 5) There are absolutely no reports or records of any kind, and 6) Begin with whole classes or larger groups of students heterogeneously grouped (p. 521). In

answer to some teachers' concerns about how to know if students are reading is to simply observe their behavior. If they appear to be turning pages regularly over a consecutive period of time, they are most likely reading. He also states that students might want to talk about what they are reading or might request more time to read. After the first week of implementation, the teacher should be able to encourage student responses such as summarizing, relating it to current events, looking up words, answer other students' questions about the book, keep a journal, or list books or pages read. He concludes by saying that students report liking SSR and that, "in our press for achievement, the importance of practice in reading silently has been overlooked. Our students are overtaught and under-practiced" (McCracken, 1971, p. 583). SSR provides much needed practice for students in the skill of reading.

Another early supporter of SSR, Mork (1972) strongly recommends the program and points out that students need reading time in school: "Unless the educational atmosphere in the home is one that regularly includes periods of silent reading for all members of the family, it is unlikely that a child will go home and read, even when told to do so by the teacher. Making special outside reading assignments has done little to encourage reading, especially reading for the sake of enjoyment and getting ideas from books" (p. 439). He goes on to question whether it's more practice in reading that makes students better readers or if better readers read more because they have enjoyed success with it.

According to McCracken and McCracken (1978), the important components of SSR are to give students a choice of what to read, to provide the time in class to read, and for the teacher to model a love of reading. They determined that teacher modeling was crucial to the success of SSR. Using reports from teachers, they came to the conclusion that if the teacher did not model an enjoyment of reading, students did not read during SSR. They share an anecdote about one

teacher they observed reading a newspaper in class every day and how his action encouraged students to begin reading as well. They stress, “This was not a conscious attempt to impose SSR, but we realized that there was a tremendous power in an adult modeling” (McCracken & McCracken, 1978, p. 407). These students imitated the behavior of the teacher, which demonstrates the influence of teacher modeling on students’ behavior during SSR. While some teachers were implementing SSR in their own classrooms, researchers were beginning to study it.

Experimental Studies of Sustained Silent Reading

Several researchers have conducted experimental studies of SSR (Cline & Kretke, 1980; Collins, 1980; Evans & Towner, 1975; Holt & O’Tuel, 1989; Langford & Allen, 1983; Manning & Manning, 1984; Methe & Hintz, 2003; Pluck, Ghafari, Glynn, & McNaughton, 1984; Wheldall & Entwistle, 1988; Widdowson & Dixon, 1996). Evans and Towner (1975) questioned whether or not the practice of SSR led to skill development in reading. Their study examined 48 fourth graders over a ten-week period, half of which had been assigned to SSR and half to a supplementary materials practice group. Each group received an hour of reading instruction. The experimental group practiced traditional SSR as described by McCracken (1971), while the control group practiced word recognition, vocabulary, and reading exercises. They found no significant differences between the groups on the reading subtest of the Metropolitan Achievement Test, Intermediate; therefore, the researchers concluded that SSR was neither more nor less effective than other strategies.

One criticism of SSR research has been that few measure the long-term effects of SSR on attitude toward reading. However, one study by Cline and Kretke (1980) did examine the long-term effects of SSR on junior high school students who had been in the program for three years.

Researchers compared these students to a control group that had not had SSR and discovered SSR had positive effects on the students' attitude toward reading, but no effect on reading achievement. However, this study was conducted with students who already scored above national norms on standardized tests, so that might explain the lack of increase in reading achievement.

Collins (1980) studied the effects of SSR on elementary students' reading achievement. She used four instruments to assess achievement: "...the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Achievement Test, the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Teacher Individual Pupil Evaluation Forms, and basal reading book placement levels of students," while the following instruments "...to assess attitude toward reading were the Attitude Assessment and Lyman Hunt's How I Feel About Reading" (Collins, 1980, p. 110). After beginning SSR in the middle of the year, the experimental group read daily for 15 weeks, while the control group received only basal reader instruction. The researcher found, "...there were no significant differences in attitude between experimental and control groups...the attitudes of both groups toward reading became more negative during the year" (Collins, 1980, p. 111). However, the experimental group's scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills were significantly higher than the control group.

Langford and Allen (1983) also explored the effects of USSR on fifth and sixth grade students' reading attitudes and achievement. The researchers used four instruments: the Heathington Intermediate Scale for Measuring Attitudes (1975), the Estes Attitude Scale (1971), A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior by Rowell (1972), and the Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT, 1963) (Langford & Allen, 1983, p. 196). On two of the measures, the Heathington and the Estes which were self-report measures completed by students, there was no significant difference between the USSR students' attitudes and the control group students' attitudes toward

reading; however, the Rowell, a self-report scale teachers used to measure students' observable reading attitude behavior, favored the USSR group.

Langford and Allen (1983) explain, "Data obtained by the Rowell may also be open to question, in that the teachers in the language arts classes may have known which children were involved in the USSR groups and marked their tests for these children more favorably" (p. 197). However, there was a significant difference in reading achievement on the SORT, which favored the USSR group. Langford and Allen (1983) report, "These findings indicate that the increase in reading test scores of children participating in USSR was significantly greater than the increase in reading test scores of children who did not participate in USSR" (p. 198). The researchers conclude that more research into USSR and reading attitude is needed.

In an experimental study of three models of recreational reading, fourth-grade students were divided into four groups: control, Sustained Silent Reading, peer interaction, and teacher-student conferences (Manning & Manning, 1984). They administered a reading attitude inventory, which they developed specifically to measure the reading attitudes of fourth-grade students, pre and post treatment. They assumed content validity since the items were similar to other reading attitude inventories, although they didn't specify which ones they used. They pilot-tested the instrument in 1980 with two fourth-grade classes and asked teachers to rate their students' attitudes toward reading on a scale from zero to eighteen—the same scale used on their inventory, which further established the validity of the instrument. They used the reading subtest of the *California Achievement Test* as their measure of reading achievement pre and post treatment.

Teachers in all three experimental groups implemented SSR as described by McCracken (1971) and served as teacher models. Students in the SSR-only group were allowed the time to

read, choice of reading materials, and teacher models. In the peer interaction group, students were also allowed to interact with each other about their reading. Manning and Manning (1984) describe the peer interaction: “They engaged in varied activities such as small group and paired discussions about books, oral reading in pairs, and book sharing through activities such as puppetry and dramatization” (p. 377). In the student-teacher conference group, all students had individual reading conferences with their teachers at least once a week. These conferences lasted from three to ten minutes and allowed students to discuss what they were reading and make goals for future reading.

The researchers found statistically significant differences between the groups on both their reading achievement and attitudes toward reading. Manning and Manning (1984) report, “These data indicate that students who were involved in the peer-interaction model and the individual teacher-student conferences model obtained significantly higher gain scores ($p < .01$) on a measure of attitude toward reading than did students who were involved in the other two groups” (p. 379). The students in the peer-interaction group also showed significantly higher scores in reading achievement, which made the peer-interaction model the most successful of the treatments. Although the Sustained Silent Reading group did not increase their attitudes as much as the peer interaction group or the teacher-student conference group, they did show an increase in their reading attitude.

Experimental studies have also shown that an important aspect of SSR is teacher modeling of reading. The theory is that students will be influenced to read more during SSR because they are imitating the teacher’s modeling behavior. However, some of the definitions for on-task reading behavior in these studies are too narrow and don’t really measure if the students are actually reading, comprehending, or enjoying what they are reading. Pluck, Ghafari,

Glynn, and McNaughton (1984) designed two experiments to examine how teacher and parent modeling of recreational reading affected elementary students' reading behavior. They defined on-task reading behavior as a student having his or her eyes directed at a page of text for ten seconds and not talking. This definition does not include whether or not the student was actually reading or just looking at a book. They theorized that children would imitate a modeled behavior such as reading.

During experiment 1 of the Pluck et al. (1984) study, a baseline condition was set where the teacher simply instructed students to read quietly; however, during the modeling sessions, the teacher modeled reading for pleasure by telling the students how much she was enjoying reading her book. The results showed that the effects were larger for the low achievers, but the high achievers also increased their on-task behavior. In a related experiment, a gifted nine-year old boy read the most when he was allowed to select his own reading material and when he witnessed the parent modeling of silent reading. This suggests that the self-selection of material is an important factor along with modeling.

Wheldall and Entwistle's (1988) study was designed to replicate and extend Pluck et al. (1984). In a series of four studies, researchers studied the reading behavior of elementary students who observed teacher modeling during Sustained Silent Reading. The researchers wanted to determine if teacher modeling was the crucial variable during SSR. They used the same definition for "on-task reading behavior" as Pluck et al. (1984), that the students' eyes should be looking at their own book and they should not be talking during SSR. They found that students paid attention more when teacher modeling was included in SSR than when the teacher modeling was not included and concluded that quiet conditions alone were not as effective as

teacher modeling. Furthermore, they observed that students would watch the teacher reading and then go back to their own reading during SSR.

Holt and O'Tuel (1989) implemented SSR and SSW (Sustained Silent Writing) with seventh and eighth grade students reading two or more years below grade level over a ten-week period. Researchers identified students who were reading at least two years below their academic grade level by their achievement test scores and randomly assigned them to either the experimental or control group. The control group solely used the basal reading program, while the experimental group also got to self-select their reading during SSR/SSW time. SSR time lasted for 20 minutes, three times a week, while SSW time was for 20 minutes, two times a week. When compared to the control group, the experimental group significantly improved their reading achievement, attitude toward reading, and writing.

Widdowson and Dixon's (1996) study was also designed to replicate the Pluck et al. (1984) study. Their review of the research related to SSR noted that few studies looked at how engaged the students were during the Sustained Silent Reading time. They assert that just giving time for SSR was not enough to guarantee all students would read. Therefore, they wanted to know whether teacher modeling during SSR would help engage students in reading during SSR. Similar to Pluck et al. (1984), they defined on-task reading behaviors for the teacher and students as looking at the book for eight seconds and not talking. The teacher modeling increased the on-task behaviors of the low and average-achieving readers, but not the high-achieving readers. The researchers speculated that the high-achieving readers were already engaged in reading and did not need the teacher modeling. The limitation of this study was that it only measured whether or not students were looking at a book, not whether they were actually reading or comprehending.

Similar to the previous studies, Methe and Hintz (2003) defined on-task reading behavior as the students' eyes being directed toward the text of an open book for 10 seconds. They found that there was a strong relationship between the teacher demonstrating excitement about reading and the students maintaining on-task reading behavior. However, by limiting the students' reading behavior to only whether they were looking at a book, not whether or not they were actually reading or comprehending, the researchers could not know for certain whether or not students were actually reading.

Quasi-Experimental Studies of Sustained Silent Reading

In addition to experimental studies of SSR, researchers have also conducted quasi-experimental studies in classrooms where random assignment was not feasible (Davis, 1988; Fisher 2004; Herbert, 1987; Kelley & Clausen-Grace, 2006; Ozburn, 1995; Parr & Maguiness, 2005; Pilgreen & Krashen, 1993; Summers & McClelland, 1982; Von Sprecken & Krashen, 1998; Wiesendanger & Bader, 1989). In a quasi-experimental study of intermediate students in grades five, six, and seven in British Columbia, Summers and McClelland (1982) evaluated the effects of SSR on reading attitude and comprehension. They report the basic concepts of SSR as: 1) schoolwide scheduling, 2) teacher modeling, 3) self-selected reading, 4) access to material, 5) no outside interruption, 6) positive feedback, 7) limited record keeping, 8) time limits from 20-25 minutes, and 9) gradual implementation (Summers & McClelland, 1982, p. 104). All of the components to SSR have been mentioned in other studies except for positive feedback, which the authors do not define in this article. They administered the Estes Attitude Scale as their reading attitude measure and the Metropolitan Achievement Test as their comprehension measure. They found no statistically significant differences between the SSR groups and non-SSR comparison groups on both measures; however, the staff reported strong positive reactions

to SSR as well as noticing their students' attitudes toward SSR and reading being positive as well; however this data was limited due to its self-report nature. They speculate possible reasons for their results: SSR may have been implemented poorly, the model of SSR evaluated may not have matched the analysis, the treatment was not long enough, and the teacher modeling may have been weak (Summers & McClelland, 1982, p. 107).

Herbert (1987) used a student attitude survey toward SSR to study seventh through ninth grade students. She discovered that even though the majority of students had positive attitudes toward reading, they did not like SSR and wanted it eliminated from their school day. Approximately half reported that they did not even read during SSR. These results are dismal, but more information is needed to determine why these students did not like SSR. The twenty-question survey is limited in that it only asks whether or not students like or dislike SSR and not why they may like or dislike it.

Davis (1988) compared SSR to directed reading activities, where "students are often expected to participate in various ways in oral reading and 'teacher talk'" (p. 46). The teacher-researcher randomly assigned one of her eighth-grade English classes to SSR and the other to directed reading. She devoted 40 minutes Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for the entire school year to SSR in one class, while the other class received 40 minutes of directed reading activities. By the end of the year, she had lost her low ability readers due to attrition, while her medium ability SSR readers showed a statistically significant difference 13 percentiles greater than the directed reading activity readers on their adjusted average achievement on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills Reading subtest. There was no statistically significant difference between the groups for her high ability readers. She speculates that these readers

might have been approaching a “ceiling effect” where their reading abilities had little room to improve.

Wiesendanger and Bader (1989) examined the long-term effects on elementary students’ reading habits after they had completed the SSR program. One limitation of the study was that it took place almost immediately after the students had participated in SSR and did not measure any long-term effects of the program. A significant finding of the study was that the SSR students read much more than the non-SSR students; however, there was little difference between the above average readers who had SSR and those who had not. They conclude by speculating that for older, lower ability students, SSR may have had more of an effect.

Pilgreen and Krashen (1993) explored the impact of Sustained Silent Reading on the reading attitudes of 125 English as a Second Language (ESL) secondary students. Using a self-report method, 56% of the students reported that they enjoyed SSR “very much,” while 38% reported that they enjoyed SSR “some” (Pilgreen & Krashen, 1993, p. 22). Students also reported an increase in their frequency of reading, enjoyment of outside reading, and opinion of improvement in reading. The students also showed gains on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Comprehension Test. Since no control group was used in this study, the results are “...only suggestive, but the large gains suggest that free reading is an effective means of promoting literacy development with ESL students” (Pilgreen & Krashen, 1993, p. 21).

Ozburn (1995) reports on a successful high school SSR program with 60 ninth grade at-risk Hispanic students who were given the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test in August and again in May to determine if daily SSR had an effect on their reading achievement. Most students read below fifth-grade level at the beginning of the school year, but the average grade level improvement by the end of the year was 3.9. They had access to an extensive classroom library

of 35 paperbacks per student as well as a variety of magazines and comic books. They read a book of their choice for the first 10-15 minutes of each class and were also encouraged to read at home. The researcher concluded that a wide variety of books on all reading levels was important to the success of SSR.

One criticism of SSR is that many students don't actually read, but instead pretend to read or simply stare into space. Von Sprecken and Krashen (1998) observed 11 middle school classes during SSR before and after winter break to allow students time to get used to the routine and five minutes after SSR began to allow students time to get a book. Students were classified as actively reading if they were silent with a book in front of them, their eyes were apparently moving, and they appeared to turn pages at a rate appropriate to the number of words on the page (Von Sprecken and Krashen, 1998, p. 12). Von Sprecken and a school counselor acted as the two observers. Results showed that the overall percentage of students reading during SSR was 90%. Von Sprecken and Krashen (1998) concluded, "...free reading is an intrinsically pleasant activity that children will do if they have access to interesting reading material, time to read, and a place to read" (p. 13).

In an action research case study of one urban California high school, Fisher (2004) explored the revitalization of SSR. Using a SSR observation log, teachers determined whether or not 1) students had a book, 2) students' eyes followed the text at an appropriate rate for reading, and 3) students turned the pages at an appropriate rate for reading. Teachers also recorded the number of minutes of uninterrupted reading for four randomly selected students. Eight ninth-grade teachers were identified: four who often implemented SSR and four who did not. Using the Gates-MacGinitie scores from these two comparison groups, the author determined that "...the students who were provided time to read independently on a daily basis had statistically

higher reading scores...the data from a quasi-experimental retrospective study suggested that independent reading time mattered, at least for students in this urban school” (Fisher, 2004, p. 142).

Parr and Maguiness (2005) thought that discussion might be a powerful addition to SSR. They conducted a qualitative study involving three teachers and grade nine students at a secondary school in New Zealand. In the first part of the study, the researchers worked with the teachers to develop a conversation model and then, in the second part of the study, they implemented the conversation model during SSR. The teachers conducted instructional conversations approximately once a week. The researchers specify, “The conversations focused on how selections of books were made, such as looking for features that matched what a student enjoyed. Conversations also involved discussion of what the students were currently reading, or had previously read, in SSR or elsewhere” (Parr & Maguiness, 2005, p. 100). The teachers used these conversations to find out what their students were reading and why they chose the books they did.

The researchers also focused on students’ agency and identity as readers. They defined agency as, “...a student’s exercise of power or control in the SSR situation...Agency was differentiated from identity because in the former there was evidence of power over self as the driver in the interchange” (Parr & Maguiness, 2005, p. 101). After implementing the conversation model, they made some adjustments. A couple of problems they noticed was that students did not want to start a conversation and that teachers sometimes had difficulty giving up control of the conversations. In conclusion, Parr and Maguiness (2005) state, “Before the conversations began, all eight students who completed the trial were considered reluctant readers in SSR. At the end of the year, two had made quite marked improvements in this regard and two

were still reluctant to read in SSR. Most students...valued the opportunity to discuss their voluntary reading in SSR times..." (p. 105). Therefore, the researchers conclude that including discussion in SSR might be a way to motivate students to read and also to allow teachers to get to know their students' reading habits.

Kelley and Clausen-Grace (2006) discussed their adaptation of SSR they named R⁵, which represent the following, read and relax, reflect and respond, and rap. During the read and relax portion, students chose a book to read just as they do in SSR, however, unlike SSR, they also had a set purpose and the teacher monitored and conferenced with the students. During the reflect and respond portion, students recorded the book title and genre, identified the reading strategy they used, as well as an interesting tidbit about what they read. Finally, during the "rap" session, students paired up to share what they read about and, during the whole-class session, the teacher facilitated students reporting what their partner shared (Kelley & Clausen-Grace, 2006, p. 152). This program is similar to Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR) in a couple of ways. First, students in both programs have a set goal and complete writing assignments. Second, teachers teach strategies and conference with students. One difference between ScSR and R⁵ is that students in ScSR are assigned to read texts at their independent reading level; however, both programs encourage students to read in different genres.

Kelley and Clausen-Grace (2006) administered the Developmental Reading Assessment to measure their students' reading engagement and comprehension. They followed the students from third to fourth grade and administered the DRA seven months after the initial administration. The percentage of students scoring at the independent or advanced levels for wide reading and self-assessment/goal setting increased from 33% to 100% and students listing having read three or more genres increased from 38% to 61%. They report, "Comprehension

also improved as evidenced on the DRA 4-8. All areas demonstrated growth: prediction, summarization, literal questioning, interpretation, reflection, and metacognitive awareness” (Kelley & Clausen-Grace, 2006, p. 154). They conclude by stating that they saw improved motivation in every student and believe that their students truly became engaged readers as a result of the program.

Case Studies of Sustained Silent Reading and Scaffolded Silent Reading

Only a couple of case studies have been conducted with Sustained Silent Reading or Scaffolded Silent Reading (Bryan, Fawson, & Reutzel, 2003; Stehle, 1981). For her dissertation research, Stehle (1981) conducted a case study on the implementation of SSR at her junior high school. She surveyed both students and teachers about their attitudes toward SSR, which is a program she states was mainly designed to increase reading attitudes. She reports, “Of the 196 junior high school pupils who answered six open-ended essay type questions, more than ninety-two percent of the population surveyed expressed positive attitudes toward the SSR program. Teacher responses...were somewhat less positive but nevertheless confirmed a belief in the value of the project” (Stehle, 1981, p. vii). She interviewed both students and teachers because she considered them both stakeholders in the implementation of SSR. She states, “The development of a successful SSR program is a dual responsibility for it involves the attitude of both teacher and student...The teacher’s role, in terms of SSR, is one of guidance and encouragement; the teacher must support and assist the reader” (Stehle, 1981, p. 51).

Stehle (1981) and the other teachers agreed to try SSR for one year as a pilot program. She implemented it in her eighth-grade classroom once a week, usually on Fridays, by offering students ten points for “successful completion of the SSR process” (Stehle, 1981, p. 62). She explains that for students to earn the points, they needed to come to class with a book, sustain

their reading through eye contact with the page, and not talk or leave their desks or disturb others. Students recorded the titles of the books they read each time, whether it was fiction or nonfiction, and how many pages they read for the 40 minutes of weekly SSR time. Once a month, she took her students to the library so they could select their own books.

After SSR had been in place for five years, Stehle (1981) administered a survey to the seven other English teachers in her department to ascertain their perceptions of SSR. From the responses, it was apparent that all of the teachers had similarly implemented SSR once a week and the majority felt that it was a worthwhile use of instructional time. She also administered a survey to students to gauge their perceptions of SSR. Of the 196 eighth graders she surveyed, 92% of the responses to SSR were positive, with only 8% responses being classified as negative. Most students claimed there was nothing they disliked about the program; some even suggested that SSR should be held more often than only once a week. Stehle (1981) concludes by stating, “The right to read is critical in conjunction with academic success; the joy of reading—the love of reading is not so easily or as systematically taught” (p. 121). Every student has the right to read, but teachers should also provide students with the time to read and the choice of what they want to read.

Bryan, Fawson, and Reutzel (2003) argue, “...teachers who themselves read silently during SSR time are *teaching* by modeling the behaviors of a silent, engaged ‘reader.’ But research has failed to establish the value of teachers serving as ‘silent reading models’ on either the achievement or engagement of elementary-aged students” (p. 49). However, several studies have demonstrated that teacher modeling does have an effect on elementary students’ reading achievement and attitude toward reading (Campbell, 1989; McCracken and McCracken, 1978; Methe and Hintz, 2003; Pluck, Ghafari, Glynn, and McNaughton, 1984; Wheldall and Entwistle,

1988; Widdowson and Dixon, 1996). Although the authors claim no studies have been done with SSR and discussion, Parr and Maguiness (2005) did conduct a qualitative study of SSR that included discussions between students and teachers. They found that discussion was motivating for most of the students.

Bryan, Fawson, and Reutzler (2003) further claim that children become “bored” by the routine of SSR and cite studies by Gambrell (1978) and Lee-Daniels & Murray (2000); however as teachers and researchers have found, children will eventually become bored with any program, which the researchers themselves found out when they implemented ScSR and GROR with elementary students. They conducted case study research with three “non-engaged” readers, which they define as readers who are “...passive, inactive, and seldom see reading as pleasurable. They are often unwilling to take risks and rarely venture beyond their limited reading comfort zone” (Bryan et al, 2003, p. 53). In addition to being described as passive, these readers were also labeled disinterested, unenthusiastic, reluctant, inattentive, lacking confidence, easily distracted, and distracting to others. All three students were Caucasian, two were males, and one was a female.

The researchers observed the students’ behavior during silent reading time, establishing baseline conditions, intervention conditions, and transfer conditions. During the baseline condition, students read during their normal silent reading time. The intervention consisted of the participants meeting with the researcher and having a ten-minute literary discussion. The literary discussion consisted of both the student and the researcher being involved in discussion topics and taking turns speaking. During the transfer stage, the intervention was withdrawn. They report, “The purpose of the transfer was to see if the impact of the intervention would continue after the intervention was withdrawn” (Bryan et al, 2003, p. 55). Results show that the

female student was off-task less and more engaged during SSR time after the intervention and transfer stage. However, one of the male students exhibited more off-task behaviors, which the researchers theorize might have been a consequence of a substitute teacher he had during SSR. The researchers reintroduced the intervention and were more successful, despite the substitute teacher still being in the classroom.

Finally, the other male student's behavior during the baseline period was inconsistent, although he wasn't off-task as often during the intervention and he was much more consistent with being on-task during the transfer period. In conclusion, the researchers state, "The evidence here seems to tenuously support the claim that literature discussions with another individual, in this case an adult researcher, during SSR time dramatically reduced all three students' off-task behaviors thus increasing their observed engagement during SSR time each day" (Bryan et al, 2003, p. 67). They stress that teachers should not merely spend their SSR time modeling reading, but instead should engage students in conversations about their reading and also allow students to converse with peers or adult volunteers about what they are reading. However, the researchers do admit some limitations with their study, such as the small number of participants and the unique classroom context and suggest further research is needed.

Teacher Research of Sustained Silent Reading and Scaffolded Silent Reading

Several teacher-researchers have implemented SSR in their classrooms and reported their results (Akmal, 2002; Allen, 1995; Campbell, 1989; Clarke, 2006; Greenwood, 1985; Jensen & Jensen, 2002; Lee-Daniels & Murray, 2000; Leaser, 1990; Pyle, 1990; Reutzel & Fawson, 2002; Reynolds, 2004; Speaker, 1990; Trudel, 2007). As a secondary reading specialist, Greenwood (1985) taught elective reading classes which included students with diverse reading levels who had lost the desire to read for pleasure. He included SSR once a week in his reading classes and

had students sign a contract that included the requirements for their grade and a daily log where the students kept a record of their daily activities. After checking to see what the students were reading, he modeled reading for them during SSR and, along with his students, gave book talks. He encouraged his students to read whenever they could, during lunch, at home, and any spare time they had. He reports, “What a pleasure it was to see some students unashamedly reading during lunch!” (Greenwood, 1985, p. 490). This type of peer modeling may have as profound an effect on students as teacher modeling does on students in the classroom.

Campbell (1989) stresses the importance of the teacher as a role model during SSR and reports on several studies of teacher modeling during SSR. She states, “The evidence from a variety of sources, albeit limited, does suggest that for SSR to be a success the teacher will need to provide a model of silent reading. However, the teacher working as a role model will not guarantee success” (Campbell, 1989, p. 181). She concludes by mentioning that, along with teacher modeling, the time of day was also important and that SSR should not be the last lesson of the day.

A ninth-grade reading teacher, Pyle (1990), suggests that teachers try SSRW (Sustained Silent Reading and Writing). At first, she thought that having students write answers to generic questions after reading “...took away some of the joy and spontaneity of reading” (Pyle, 1990, p. 379). However, she felt that writing was the key to a successful SSR program, so she had students write for five minutes in a journal notebook. She discovered that they wrote both positive and negative comments and that their journal entries became more sophisticated as the year progressed.

Speaker (1990), a university professor, suggests that teachers use SSR + D (Sustained Silent Reading plus Discussion). He states that, “SSR + D can add an important social

dimension to literacy acquisition” (Speaker, 1990, p. 143). Teachers can use the last five minutes of SSR to allow students to discuss what they read in partners and small groups and model a discussion of what they are reading. Leaser (1990) also suggests using discussion with USSR by combining it with USA (Uninterrupted Sharing Activity) and having students share in pairs what they read. He claims that, “Sharing increases both comprehension and enjoyment” (Leaser, 1990, p. 429). He further explains that if students don’t get to share what they read, much like a fisherman who gets the chance to share a good fish story, they would feel empty and unfulfilled. Sharing fulfills that need people have to share what they are excited about with others.

As a high school English teacher, Allen (1995) has had first-hand experience with SSR. She conducted teacher research with her secondary readers and acted as a teacher-model and researcher-observer during SSR. She states, “During Sustained Silent Reading, I saw my task as twofold: modeling silent reading behaviors and monitoring the progress of each individual student. In my view, the success of a Sustained Silent Reading program is directly related to seeing teachers as active, involved readers of texts they have chosen for themselves” (Allen, 1995, p. 89). For an SSR program to be successful, students must be able to choose what they want to read and teachers must model a love of reading. While the teacher is modeling reading, her job is also to make sure that each student is reading.

Lee-Daniels and Murray (2000) decided that just having a Sustained Silent Reading program was not enough to get Lee-Daniels’ second-grade students excited about reading. She implemented SSR, but was unsatisfied with the initial results. She used Manning and Manning’s (1984) finding that peer interaction was a powerful motivator for students as inspiration to pair her students together for book discussions. What she discovered was that students needed choice

in their reading materials and a classroom community in which to share what they read. Again, an important aspect of any Sustained Silent Reading program is to give students the choice of what they want to read and to allow them to interact with their peers.

Along with books and newspapers, students can also read other types of materials. Jensen and Jensen (2002) suggest using young adult short story anthologies during SSR to hook reluctant readers. As high school language arts teachers, they implemented a school wide SSR program where everyone read on Thursdays and language arts teachers also included SSR in their classrooms on Fridays. They asked six classes—two team-taught ninth grade English classes, two honors ninth grade English classes, and two regular ninth grade English classes—to complete a short story evaluation form after every SSR period. They required students to read from the short story collection if they did not bring a book to read. The team-taught and regular students “...seem to think that reading is drudgery, and the commitment required to read a longer work is overwhelming to them” (Jensen & Jensen, 2002, p. 59). However, most of the honors students stated they would rather read a book than a short story. Although they did not conduct a scientific study, Jensen and Jensen (2002) reported, “The whining from students and teachers was greatly diminished, as both were experiencing more success and enjoyment in SSR” (p. 59).

Akmal (2002) discusses using contracts with his middle school students to keep them on track during SSR. This allowed students more control over what they read, how much they read, and what kind of assessment they wanted to produce. For example, students established the number of pages they would read each week and whether their report would be oral, written, or a project. He did assign grades to SSR, but based it on the number of pages students read. His system of negotiating contracts with students gave them ownership of their learning. Akmal (2002) stresses, “Having choices of books and reporting formats and the opportunity for

individual time with the teacher appealed to their personal interests and developed the student-adult relationship” (p. 157). This description is similar to SSR in that students are able to choose books and it is similar to ScSR in that students are able to conference with the teacher.

In their book *Your Classroom Library: New Ways to Give it More Teaching Power: Great Teacher-Tested and Research-Based Strategies for Organizing Your Library to Increase Students' Reading Achievement*, which is aimed at teachers from kindergarten to sixth grade, Reutzel and Fawson (2002) suggest teachers should use reading workshop, which includes SSR, in the intermediate grades and voluntary reading/independent reading time/SSR in the middle grades. The authors claim, “When students participate in SSR, they gain significant benefits in reading comprehension and engagement. These benefits are at least as noteworthy as those obtained through skills instruction in reading” (Reutzel & Fawson, 2002, p. 112). They cite Pilgreen (2000) to back up their claim and stress that, in her text *The SSR Handbook: How to Organize and Manage a Sustained Silent Reading Program*, students reported that they felt they were asked to do less work during SSR than during a traditional skill lesson. The research has shown that students' achievement does increase after participating in SSR (Minton, 1980; Roettger, Szymczuk, & Millard, 1979; Swanson, 1982).

However, if teachers find it difficult to motivate students to reading during SSR, the book provides a sample mini-lesson that instructs teachers to administer an interest inventory and to conference with students to find out what kinds of books they like to read. They stress, “If the student isn't becoming engaged in the reading, help him or her to make another selection based on the information you now have about interests and motivation” (Reutzel & Fawson, 2002, p. 113).

Reynolds (2004), a young adult novelist and teacher, promotes SSR as a way to motivate reluctant adolescent readers, which can help reluctant readers become lifelong readers. In her book, she reports how she assisted teachers in implementing an SSR program with adolescents at a junior/senior high school for juvenile offenders. They renamed their SSR program SAFARI, which stands for Students and Faculty All Read Independently. The basis of the program was for students and staff members to read a book of their choice for twenty-five minutes every day at the same time, which led to a “community of readers.” When students saw the staff members read along with them, that motivated them to read and contributed to the sense of community. After four weeks, she informally assessed the program and discovered that 81% of the students reported that they planned to continue reading after they left the school.

Reynolds (2004) emphasizes that the teacher modeling aspect was part of the success and also points out some practices that can be roadblocks to the success of SSR, such as having it only on Monday and Friday, which doesn't allow the students to get drawn into a book. Another roadblock to a successful SSR program is when teachers get too caught up with monitoring the checkout of books and monitoring what the students are reading through reading logs. Also, staff members with negative attitudes can discourage students from participating in SSR. She stresses that it is hard to measure whether SSR programs promote lifelong reading because few studies have examined its long-term effects.

Clarke (2006), a literacy specialist at a charter high school, describes how his school has tried to revitalize reading for their reluctant readers. He states, “Recognizing that the first step to becoming a better reader is to read frequently, in spring 2004 Blackstone put a Sustained Silent Reading program in place, requiring all students to read for 20 minutes a day, four days a week” (Clarke, 2006, p. 67). He stresses the importance of choice and teacher modeling in motivating

reluctant readers and also reports increases in students' reading scores and improvement in their attitudes toward reading.

Trudel (2007) conducted teacher research with her elementary students on Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) versus structured independent reading (IR). She reports on "The five key elements of IR (which make it different from SSR) are as follows: 1. The teacher provides guidance in the students' text selections, 2. Students keep records of what they read, 3. Students reflect on what they read, 4. Both teacher and students participate in mini-lessons and discussions from time to time, and 5. The teacher is not reading during the entire reading block (unless modeling a strategy with a student; Fountas & Pinnell, 2001)" (Trudel, 2007, p. 309). Some similarities between IR and SSR are that they both provide time to read and allow the students to self-select their own reading material.

In addition to observing her students' reading behaviors during IR and SSR, Trudel (2007) also administered a reading attitude inventory (Lewis, 1979). Based on her observations, she concluded that the students were more frequently on task during IR than they were during SSR. However, the students' reading attitude scores decreased after switching from SSR to IR. Although, Trudel (2007) stresses, "My teacher observations suggested an increase in overall reading attitudes after students switched from SSR to IR...Students rarely shared their insights on reading during SSR unless I asked them. This was different during IR" (p. 311). Although she was disappointed in the reading inventory results, she relied on her expertise as a teacher to determine the true effectiveness of IR for her students. In addition to teacher research of SSR, several articles have been published reviewing the program.

Reviews of Sustained Silent Reading Research

Since the 1980s, several reviews of Sustained Silent Reading have been published (Clary, 1991; Grubaugh, 1986; Moore, Jones, & Miller, 1980; Sadoski, 1980; Wiesendanger & Birlem, 1984). After a decade of SSR having been implemented in elementary, middle, and high schools, Moore, Jones, and Miller (1980) conducted a meta-analysis of the program. They stress that SSR has been around longer than ten years and that it has "...existed for as long as people have been reading. Whenever a person selects something to read for his/her own purpose, spends more than a few moments perusing it, and comprehends whatever s/he wants, SSR is occurring. Only in the last decade, however, has SSR gained attention as a component in a school reading program" (Moore et al, 1980, p. 445). They describe SSR similarly to how McCracken (1971) described it: time to read, self-selected material, no interruptions, no accountability, and the teacher models reading. However, they also state that teachers should react to what they read and that students should interact with each other. That peer interaction was a motivator for reading was a powerful finding of Manning and Manning (1984); however, it was not part of SSR's original design.

SSR has also been referred to as "recreational" or "free reading." However, many of the early studies of SSR reported contradictory results or were conducted over a short time period. After reading the research of the time, Moore, Jones, and Miller (1980) drew several conclusions: 1) SSR has a positive effect on student attitude toward reading, 2) SSR has a positive effect on reading ability when combined with a regular program of reading instruction, and 3) More research is needed on SSR. (p. 448). They also stressed that poor implementation of SSR could lead to poor results, which teachers could possibly avoid if they modeled reading, utilized the program correctly, and gave it enough time to be successful.

Sadoski (1980) reports that SSR was originally called Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR), which was then shortened to Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). SSR is also called DEAR, which stands for Drop Everything and Read. In a review of the research on USSR, Sadoski (1980) claimed that it was a better way to foster a positive attitude toward reading than skills-based reading instruction that emphasizes drill and practice. He stresses, "...students who read tend to become better readers, and the best way to develop reading ability is not through assessment or isolated skills drill, but by reading" (Sadoski, 1980, p. 154). This claim is supported by other research, such as Oliver (1970) who "...suggested employing a ratio of 20% instruction to 80% practice to develop purposeful, independent readers, believing that developing reading as a whole will automatically improve sub-skills application" (Sadoski, 1980, p. 153). He further concludes that SSR allows students the time and opportunity to foster a love of reading.

Research into SSR is somewhat contradictory, especially with high school students. Wiesendanger and Birllem (1984) reviewed 11 studies that examined the effect of SSR on students' reading attitudes; nine of the studies indicated a positive effect, while two studies, both of high school students, indicated a negative effect. The first secondary study by Milton (1973) attributed the failure of SSR to inadequate faculty inservice. The other secondary study, conducted by Mikulecky and Wolf (1977), examined the effect of three reading activities—USSR, self-selected reading games, and self-selected reading skills-related reading materials and activities—on seventh-grade students' reading attitudes. In this study, USSR, another variation of SSR, stands for uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading. Each group showed a decline in attitude toward reading. While this was a negative result, the fact that the USSR group demonstrated the smallest loss in mean reading attitude score compared to the other groups can

be interpreted positively, since it appears that USSR had the least negative impact on the students' reading attitudes when compared to the other methods.

Grubaugh (1986) gives an overview of the history of SSR in elementary, junior high, and high schools, along with some tips for teachers and administrators who want to implement it in their schools. He states, "Developing a positive attitude toward reading is perhaps the most important result of the research on SSR" (Grubaugh, 1986, p. 169). Grubaugh (1986) states, "According to several research studies, the long-term treatment effect of SSR on students' reading skills can improve reading skills significantly, as measured by reading test scores" (p. 169). He recommends that SSR involve everyone in the entire school reading usually at the same designated daily time, while the reality is that sometimes SSR is only implemented in English or Reading classrooms.

SSR has been a recreational reading program in elementary and some junior high/middle schools for many decades. Rarely has it been implemented with high school students; however, Clary (1991) states, "Observation tells us that adolescents, particularly secondary students, have little free time outside of school for reading; this is a major cause of decline in free reading at this age" (p. 343). Secondary students have many other activities vying for their free time, such as extracurricular activities and after school jobs, so SSR may be a valuable addition to the school day. It provides time to read in school to many students that don't have time to read outside school hours. Clary (1991) mentions several factors that might get some adolescents to read: interest, accessibility, environment, time, models, and motivation. SSR provides the time, the teacher modeling, and the students' choice of what they want to read, but by itself, it may not be enough to motivate students to read or to help improve their reading skills. Recently, researchers have created a new program designed to improve on the original design of SSR.

Scaffolded Silent Reading: An Adaptation of Sustained Silent Reading

Reutzel, Fawson, and Smith (2008) contend that SSR as it has been traditionally implemented in classrooms has several weaknesses. One weakness is that since teachers model reading during the SSR time period, they may not be monitoring students' reading. Another weakness is that students are allowed to choose what they want to read during SSR, but are not taught book selection strategies. In summarizing the National Reading Panel's criticisms, the authors assert that SSR lacks teacher monitoring and student accountability and that Scaffolded Silent Reading can alleviate these weaknesses; therefore they proposed an adaptation of SSR, which they called Scaffolded Silent Reading.

They define Scaffolded Silent Reading as: "silent, wide reading of independent-level texts selected from varied genres; periodic teacher monitoring of and interaction with individual students; and accountability through completed book response assignments" (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 39). The program includes book selection strategies, exposure to a wide variety of genres, assigning books at the students' independent reading levels, teacher-student conferencing, goal setting, and completion of projects. ScSR is different from traditional SSR in the fact that students create "...book response projects, such as drawing and labeling a 'character wanted' poster, making a story map, or filling in a blank graphic organizer" (Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 200). Other differences include no teacher monitoring and feedback and no student accountability in SSR as opposed to ScSR.

In their mixed methods yearlong study involving 72 third-grade students, Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith (2008) compared ScSR to guided repeated oral reading (GROR) and found no significant differences between the two programs and their effect on students' reading fluency and comprehension. They extend the NRP's definition of fluency to include not only accuracy,

rate, and expression, but also decoding and comprehension. Using two pretest and two posttest passages from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) test, the researchers determined the students' reading accuracy, rate, expression, and comprehension. They also conducted classroom observations of teachers and students as well as student interviews. Finally, teachers kept a weekly response journal to record their successes and difficulties with implementation of the treatment. The researchers admit that a limitation of their study was that there was no control group.

During the Scaffolded Silent Reading treatment, teachers began each day modeling fluent reading of a text, followed by discussion of what made the reading fluent. Then students were instructed to select a book to read at their appropriate independent reading level from each teacher's classroom library, which had been sorted into different levels of difficulty. Students were required to read from six different genres each nine weeks. The genres on the Reading Genre Wheel consisted of: fantasy, folktales, fables, adventure, science fiction, humor, sports, mystery, biography, historical fiction, autobiography, and poetry. Teachers conducted conferences with the students where they asked students to read aloud from their book and set goals for finishing the book. When students finished a book, they colored in that slice of the Genre Wheel and selected another book from a different genre. The authors fail to mention what accountability the students would have after finishing a book, such as a writing assignment or project (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008).

The GROR treatment shared some similarities with ScSR, but also had some differences. Both programs were implemented for 25 minutes from Monday to Thursday and the goal of both programs was to increase students' fluency and comprehension. The role of the teacher during both was to monitor and provide feedback to students as well as explain and model fluent

reading. One of the differences between GROR and ScSR is that students in the former practice oral reading while students in the latter practice silent reading. With GROR, students read the same text on their grade level chosen by the teacher, while ScSR students read texts on their independent reading levels they are able to choose with teacher guidance. GROR emphasized repeated readings of text, while ScSR emphasized wide reading of texts across different genres. While ScSR was mostly individual, GROR allowed for peer collaboration (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 43).

One strength of the GROR program versus ScSR could be the peer interaction, which also allowed students the novelty of using a *fluency phone*, described by the authors as “...constructed of white, 2-in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe and PVC-pipe elbows. The bottom part of the PVC fluency phone swiveled out for the reader to read into. The earpiece was placed on the ear of the listener during paired reading to hear the buddy’s reading through the fluency phone” (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 44). Although most of the pretest and posttest measures showed no significant difference between the groups, the researchers did note, “...a significant mean gain difference between the ScSR or GROR treatments favoring the ScSR group mean gain on expression as measured by phrasing, volume, smoothness, and pace on the *My Parents* passage” (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 45).

Both groups showed a 43% average increase in reading comprehension (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 48). However, they report, “Toward the end of the study, all teachers noted some fatigue with both reading fluency practice treatments. They wrote, ‘they are getting sick of just practicing their reading. I’m starting to lose some of them’ and ‘some are beginning to complain every morning’” (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 47). It seems for both treatments that students got tired and bored with them.

Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, and Smith (2008) further expound on the research they conducted with ScSR. They claim, “Some researchers have suggested that instructional scaffolding might improve the effectiveness of SSR, but there have been no studies of the effects of Scaffolded Silent Reading nor descriptions of how this scaffolding of silent reading might be accomplished (Hiebert, 2006)” (Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 195). This highlights the need for a well-designed study. The researchers described how the teacher color-coded each book to represent the independent reading level and allowed students to choose what they wanted to read with her guidance and support to read in a wide variety of genres, such as fantasy, folktales, fables, adventure, science fiction, humor, sports, mystery, biography, autobiography, historical fiction, and poetry (Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 197).

Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, and Smith (2008) highlight the differences between ScSR and SSR with the main difference being that there is no teacher monitoring and feedback and no student accountability in SSR. While it is true that the original design of SSR stressed that there should be no graded assignment attached to the program in order to stress the pleasure of reading, McCracken (1969) does not mention that teachers should not monitor or provide feedback. He does stress that teachers should model reading for their students while they stress that teachers should “teach and scaffold students’ appropriate book selection strategies” (p. 197) instead of modeling silent reading. However, the researchers describe a form of modeling that the teacher practiced with ScSR: “Each day ScSR practice time began with Mrs. T providing a short, 5-8 minute explanation and modeling of an aspect or element of fluent reading or how to use a comprehension strategy using a teacher-selected text” (Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 199). Although they found no significant differences between ScSR and GROR, they stress that results indicated the practices were equal and that ScSR is a “...viable,

complementary, and motivating approach that is comparable to the NRP-recommended reading practice of GROR for this sample of third-grade students” (Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 205). In conclusion, they stated that ScSR was just as good a practice as the traditionally-implemented GROR recommended by the National Reading Panel. Although few studies of ScSR have been conducted so far, many studies of SSR and reading attitudes have been.

Sustained Silent Reading and Attitude toward Reading

Several researchers have developed scales to measure students’ attitudes toward reading which some researchers have used in their evaluation of SSR (Estes, 1971; Hawk, Roberson, & Ley, 1984; Herrold, Stanchfield, & Serabian, 1989; McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995; Mikulecky, 1976; Mikulecky & Wolf, 1977; Roettger, 1980; Rowell, 1972; Schaer, Ley, Neal, & Wright, 1988). Estes (1971) developed a scale to measure students’ attitudes toward reading. He chose to use a Likert scale because of its accuracy and ease of use and asked a group of 27 teachers to submit statements related to attitude toward reading. From those statements, he selected 28 to pilot-test with 283 students from grades 3-12. Analysis revealed that younger students had more positive attitudes toward reading. He includes the twenty-item attitude scale, along with the response values assigned to each letter. Students respond with A, B, C, D, or E, with A representing “strongly agree” and E representing “strongly disagree.” For example, an A response on a positive question receives 5 points, while an A response on a negative question receives 1 point. He recommends administering the survey pre and post to gauge students’ changes in attitude.

Roettger (1980) examined the reading attitudes of elementary students who were good readers, but had poor attitudes toward reading as measured on the Estes Attitude Scales. She

states, “The children were selected because their attitude scores and actual reading performance contradicted the belief that children who read well have positive attitudes toward reading while those who do not read well have negative attitudes” (Roettger, 1980, p. 451). She discovered through interviews conducted a year after the initial administration of the attitude scale that students had different expectations for reading. The high attitude/low performance students thought of reading as a tool for survival, while the low attitude/high performance students thought of reading as “...a means of gaining specific information to help them get good grades, do their school work, and learn more about the world. For them, learning and performing well in school had a high priority” (Roettger, 1980, p. 452). The low attitude/high performance students talked about reading as a skill and enjoyed specific types of books, while the high attitude/low performance students could name more general types of books that interested them. Students in both groups expressed the desire to have more time in school to read and to discuss what they read with other students and the teacher. This supports the use of SSR or ScSR in schools.

Rowell (1972) also developed an attitude scale for reading, which he called A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior. He started the process by selecting three categories of reading: “...reading for pleasure, reading in the content areas, and reading as it takes place in reading classes” (Rowell, 1972, p. 443). Similarly to Estes (1971), he also used a Likert scale, which ranged from “always occurs” to “never occurs.” However, his attitude scale contained sixteen items rather than twenty. Also, unlike Estes (1971), his scale was designed for teachers to fill out based on the student’s observable behavior. For example, the first item states, “The student exhibits a strong desire to come to the reading circle or to have reading instruction take place” (Rowell, 1972, p. 444). Since the teacher has to observe each student and each behavior separately, this attitude scale takes a much longer time than the Estes (1971) to administer,

thereby making it impractical for teachers with limited time or large classes. He stresses that teachers need to make a decision whether to allow students to fill out an attitude scale or to have teachers observe students and fill out this attitude scale, which Rowell (1972) tested for its reliability and validity for classroom use.

Mikulecky (1976) developed a reading attitude survey, the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure (MBRAM), for his dissertation. During the construction of the instrument, he conducted a pilot test in 1975 and conducted statistical analyses for construct and concurrent validity as well as test-retest reliability. He field-tested the instrument with 1750 seventh through twelfth-grade students. The survey consists of 20 questions rated on a five-point Likert scale with one representing “very unlike me” and five representing “very like me.” Some questions ask how much the student reads and are mainly worded so that someone who loves to read would rate himself or herself highly, while someone who dislikes reading would rate himself or herself low.

Mikulecky and Wolf (1977) administered the MBRAM to 135 seventh-graders in order to examine the effect of USSR and reading games on secondary students’ reading attitudes. All groups showed a decline in positive reading attitudes; however, the USSR group demonstrated the smallest loss in mean reading attitude score, while the reading games group demonstrated the greatest loss. The researchers speculated that the briefness of the treatment, twenty minutes a week for ten weeks, may have led to the lack of statistically significant differences between groups and that reading attitudes take time to develop and change.

Hawk, Roberson, and Ley (1984) analyzed the factor structure of the MBRAM with 411 gifted seventh and eighth-grade students. Their results indicated that the instrument was a unidimensional measure of attitude, but did not measure Krathwohl’s five stages of attending,

responding, valuing, organization, and characterization. They caution that the instrument should be regarded as experimental and should not be used for decision-making about student placement or about instructional programs.

Schaer, Ley, Neal, and Wright (1988) also evaluated the MBRAM to determine whether or not it measures Krathwohl's five stages of attitude and is a true hierarchical scale. They administered the instrument to 198 undergraduate teacher education students and used the Guttman Scale Analysis procedure to examine whether or not the MBRAM is a unidimensional index of reading attitudes. Their findings indicated that the instrument is useful in determining the reading attitudes of adults. One important finding was that "69% of the preservice teachers were classified at one of the two lowest stages of attitude internalization (attending or responding)" (p. 186). This finding may help teacher educators be able to determine the reading attitudes of prospective teachers who will in turn influence their future students.

Herrold, Stanchfield, and Serabian (1989) studied the effects of a listening-to-literature program on the attitudes of middle school students toward reading. They stressed the importance of modeling as a highly motivating behavior for students and chose the teacher reading to the students as the modeling behavior to examine. Using a pretest-posttest design, the Reaction Toward Reading Attitude Scale developed by Stanchfield was administered to sixth, seventh, and eighth-grade students. They found that boys enjoyed listening to the teacher read stories more than girls. Another interesting finding was that both boys and girls had little desire to read during their free time. This fits with the findings of McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) that by grade six, students have become largely indifferent to reading. Although they did not study SSR, they did look at teacher modeling behavior through oral reading as a way to motivate students, especially boys, to read.

McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) surveyed over 18,000 children in first through sixth grades about their attitudes toward recreational and academic reading. They used the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) developed by McKenna and Kear (1990) to measure students' attitudes toward both types of reading. They explain that attitude can affect students' reading achievement and that poor attitude might lead to students choosing not to read. They reported several findings: positive attitude in grade one had declined by grade six, girls had more positive attitudes than boys and the gap widens with age, and that ethnicity had little effect on either recreational or academic reading attitude.

Overall, they noticed a negative trend in students' attitudes toward reading as they got older and progressed in school. McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) state, "The overall negative trend in reading attitude can be explained in part by the increasing impact of poor reading ability in the upper grades" (p. 952). Because the students don't read well, they have a poor attitude toward reading, which makes sense, since most students probably have a negative attitude toward activities they don't perform well. This study only studied students up to sixth grade; therefore, more research is needed on secondary readers' attitudes.

Mitchell and Ley (1996) examined high school students' reading attitudes and behaviors. They stated that little previous research had been done with a high school population, but that high achieving readers generally have a more positive attitude toward reading than low achieving readers. Their findings were that females reported more positive attitudes toward reading for enjoyment purposes than males and that high school students generally read to be successful in school and not for their own personal enjoyment. Students in grade 12 had a more positive attitude toward reading for individual development than students in grade nine, but neither their reading for enjoyment nor levels of voluntary reading was statistically significant for grade level.

Students in the most advanced classes reported more positive attitudes toward reading than students in the less advanced classes. Overall, the high school students in this study reported that they read mostly for its contribution to their success in school.

In their review of research, Wiesendanger and Birlem (1984) reported that SSR had a negative effect on high school students' reading attitudes. Of the 11 studies they reviewed, nine reported positive effects, while two studies found that SSR actually had a negative effect on students' attitudes. They conclude that several factors must be included in research on SSR to be effective: long-term study, SSR combined with reading instruction, younger students, and teacher training (Wiesendanger et al., 1984, p. 199). Although they claim SSR might be more beneficial for younger students, more research is needed to determine if it might benefit older students as well.

Yoon (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of the research on the effects of SSR on attitude toward reading. He claims that previous reviews of SSR have not established its effect on attitude toward reading; therefore, he wanted to analyze the research to determine whether or not SSR enhances students' attitudes toward reading. Initially, he looked at 350 studies, but removed most because he would be unable to calculate effect size. This left him with 43 studies, of which he ultimately analyzed seven because they were experimental studies that included control groups and calculable effect sizes. Six of the seven studies Yoon (2002) analyzed were conducted with elementary students, while one study was conducted with junior high students.

For the seven studies, Yoon (2002) calculated 11 effect sizes to account for the multiple outcome measures in some studies. Five of the 11 effect sizes included a treatment length of less than six months, while the treatment length of the other six effect sizes was more than six months. He reports that the average effect size of SSR on attitude toward reading was .12, which

translates to the attitude score of participants in the SSR group exceeding 55% of the participants in the control group. Therefore, since the attitude scores of the SSR group were higher than more than half of the control group, Yoon (2002) concludes, “This result provides evidence to support the effectiveness of the SSR reading activity at enhancing students’ reading attitude” (p. 192).

A limitation of this meta-analysis was the small number of studies he analyzed and the fact that he eliminated any study that did not have an SSR group compared to a control group or did not contain statistical information to determine effect size. However, his “...findings suggest that providing a fixed period of time for students to read materials of their own choosing either for pleasure or for information facilitate their attitude toward reading” (Yoon, 2002, p. 186). He concludes by suggesting SSR would be most beneficial for low-grade students, rather than high-grade students because they don’t have as many other leisure activities to distract them as older students. In addition to attitude toward reading, studies have also examined students’ reading achievement.

Attitude toward Reading and Reading Achievement

A students’ attitude toward reading is important because attitude has been correlated with reading achievement. Several studies have examined a possible connection between students’ attitudes toward reading and their reading achievement, while other studies have simply examined students’ reading achievement (Dwyer & Reed, 1989; Maynes, 1982; Minton, 1980; Paulson & Henry, 2002; Roettger, Szymczuk, & Millard, 1979; Swanson, 1982). In an experimental study, Roettger, Szymczuk, and Millard (1979) investigated the relationship between attitude and achievement for third through sixth-grade students. They modified the Estes Attitude Scale Toward Reading and tested the validity and reliability of their new Reading

Attitude Scale instrument. They used the Iowa Test of Basic Skills to measure reading achievement. They divided the students into three groups based on their self-reported reading attitude: high, average, and low and also divided them into five groups based on their teachers' perceptions of their reading attitude: very high, high, average, low, very low. They report, "While there was a significant difference in attitude between high and low achievers, the correlations between attitude and achievement on both the vocabulary and comprehension subtests were relatively low. The findings of this study indicate that, contrary to the assumption that a positive attitude is essential to learning to read successfully, attitudes cannot be used as a predictor of academic achievement" (Roettger et al, 1979, p. 141). They conclude that some students may value reading as an important skill to succeed in school, but dislike it because it is difficult for them, while other students who are skilled readers, may not see reading as a worthwhile way to spend their time.

Minton (1980) explored the effect of SSR on the attitudes and achievement of ninth graders and teachers. There were mixed results from the students and the teachers about their attitudes toward SSR. Most of the students thought that SSR was an "O. K. idea" and most of the teachers thought it was an "excellent idea"; however, 52% of the teachers rated the SSR program as "not successful." The researcher speculated that SSR was not successful because the teachers were not included in the decision to implement SSR and were not given adequate inservice on how to implement it.

Even though there were mixed results on both students and teachers' attitudes toward SSR and reading, there were some positive results on the students' reading achievement as measured by the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test. Minton (1980) reports, "During the spring semester, when the SSR program was in effect, the students showed a growth of six months in

speed and accuracy (8.6 to 9.2), three months in vocabulary (8.6 to 8.9), and four months in comprehension (8.2 to 8.6). Therefore, the SSR program may have had some positive influence upon the reading achievement of ninth grade students in vocabulary and comprehension” (p. 499). These are positive results showing that, even though students’ attitudes became more negative, their reading achievement improved.

She concludes by stating, “If SSR is to be incorporated successfully into the secondary school curriculum, different levels of student ability and maturity must be considered along with the right of the students to determine when and where he/she will read for pleasure” (Minton, 1980, p. 502). She based this conclusion on the idea that the current trend is to meet the individual needs of students; however, SSR is based on the belief that everyone read at the same time. She stresses that students need to learn to read independently and it doesn’t have to be all at the same time like it is during SSR.

Maynes (1982) reports on an elementary school principal who took students showing deficiencies of half a grade level or more on the Gates-McGinitie Reading Test for reading achievement to the library for 45 minutes during the noon-hour break four days out of five each week for six months. The results were neither positive nor negative. Maynes (1982) states, “There is no indication in these results that the poor readers have acquired a new appreciation for reading as a result of their U.S.S.R. experience” (p. 4). However, she cautions that the program had only been going on for two years and there might be long-term effects in the future that could not be measured at that time.

Swanson (1982) examined the relationship between attitude toward reading and reading achievement by correlating first-grade students’ scores on the Heathington (1975) reading attitude inventory with their reading scores on the Metropolitan Achievement Test. Although

she found no significant correlation between reading attitude and reading achievement for the group of students as a whole, she reported, “Significant correlations between attitude inventory and reading achievement scores of .48 ($p < .01$) for 48 females and of .32 ($p < .01$) for 43 blacks suggested higher degrees of association for these two select groups” (Swanson, 1982, p. 1303). She concluded that younger students usually have positive attitudes toward reading, while older students develop negative attitudes when reading becomes more of an academic task, rather than a pleasurable one.

Dwyer and Reed (1989) contend, “Little empirical research appears to have been undertaken to determine effects of Sustained Silent Reading on either achievement or attitudes toward reading” (p. 283). They then report on eight studies that researched the effects of SSR on reading achievement and attitudes toward reading. The studies that examined attitude and SSR had mixed results; some studies produced positive attitudes in students, while others produced negative attitudes toward SSR. However, the researchers caution that the negative attitudes might have resulted from flaws in implementing the SSR program. They conducted their own study with fourth and fifth grade students and found that boys had more negative attitudes toward reading than girls. They conclude, “The question of whether SSR enhances attitudes toward reading remains essentially unanswered” (p. 291).

One current study of a measure of reading achievement, the Degrees of Reading Power measure, used an eye-tracker to record ten undergraduate students’ eye movements as they took the DRP. Paulson and Henry (2002) explain, “The eye tracker records eye position by measuring pupil and corneal reflections with an infrared reflection source and is accurate to within half a degree of vision angle. The eye-movement data are captured and produced as a series of x and y coordinates, which analysis software superimposes on a bitmap image of the

text that was read. Fixation order and duration are available, that is, where the reader looked and for how long the reader looked there” (p. 237). Eye movements can reveal how a reader comprehends text. For example, readers fixate longer on unfamiliar words and shorter on predictable words.

Paulson and Henry (2002) conclude, “The results of this study suggest that the eye movements of students taking the DRP do not in any way correspond to those of their reading of the unclozed, baseline passages which, for all these passages may lack in aesthetic appeal, resemble much of the reading college and high school students are asked to complete” (p. 242). They speculate that students used their test-taking strategies rather than reading comprehension strategies because of the cloze nature of the test. They further strongly state, “Our conclusion is that the DRP is not an accurate measure, or even a modest approximation of, the reading comprehension process. The DRP doubtlessly measures something, but it may not be reading, and it certainly is not the reading comprehension process—in fact this test appears to cause readers to radically alter their reading processes simply to complete the assessment successfully” (Paulson and Henry, 2002, p. 242). However, these researchers used an eye-tracker to measure students’ reading which does not measure what a student comprehends as he or she reads text. They claim that the eye-tracker measures comprehension because students’ eyes will pause longer on unfamiliar words; however, this does not take into account eye fatigue or fatigue in general with taking standardized tests. It is possible the students used test-taking strategies rather than reading strategies, but if a test-taking strategy helps students comprehend text then it may also be a good reading strategy.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature related to the history of Sustained Silent Reading, reviews of SSR, as well as experimental, quasi-experimental, case study, and teacher research of SSR. It also reviewed the research related to Scaffolded Silent Reading, an adaptation of SSR. Finally, it reviewed the literature related to attitude toward reading and reading achievement as it relates to SSR. The next chapter presents my research methods.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Introduction

This study focused on students' attitudes toward reading, reading achievement, and genre knowledge in tenth and twelfth-grade English courses taught by the researcher, as well as an eleventh-grade course taught by another teacher. During the fall semester of 2009, a regular-level class of English 10 participated in Sustained Silent Reading, while another regular-level class of English 10 and a regular-level English 12 class taught by the researcher participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading. During the spring semester of 2010, a regular-level English 10 class and a regular-level English 12 class taught by the researcher participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading. An AHSGE Reading class taught by the researcher served as a control group as well as a regular-level English 11 class taught by another teacher and did not participate in either Scaffolded Silent Reading or Sustained Silent Reading. I used the following questions to guide my research:

- 1) To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in attitudes toward reading books than students participating in Sustained Silent Reading or in a control group?
- 2) To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent Reading show greater improvement in reading achievement than students participating in a control group?
- 3) To what extent do students on the secondary level participating in Scaffolded Silent

Reading show greater improvement in knowledge of the following genres—autobiography, biography, fantasy, fiction, historical fiction, horror, mystery, nonfiction, poetry, romance, science fiction, and sports—than students participating in Sustained Silent Reading or in a control group?

Before presenting an overview of the specific ways in which I conducted the research, I will introduce this chapter with a description of my participants and why I decided to use a mixed methods approach. Following the section on study design, I will describe the different treatment groups, survey instruments, data collection, data analysis, validity, reliability, generalizability, and triangulation.

Participants and Setting

I received permission to conduct this study through the Institutional Review Board of Auburn University and the board of education that has jurisdiction over the high school that is the site of the study. I also obtained permission to conduct the study from the principal of the high school where I am employed as a full-time English teacher. I explained to the potential participants that any participant under the age of 19 must have written permission from his or her legal guardian. If a potential subject agreed to participate, he or she must give the form to their legal guardian or provide me with an address to which I may send the legal guardian an informed consent form. All students enrolled in my classes and the control group class completed the reading survey, genre assessment, and Degrees of Reading Power.

The high school where I teach is located in a rural community in Alabama near a university community. The population of the school is 60% African-American, 36% White, and 4% Hispanic and Asian. The students for the study consisted of high school readers enrolled in my English 10 and English 12 classes fall 2009 and spring 2010, along with one section of

English 11 taught by another teacher, which served as a control group. I teach on block scheduling where the classes are 96 minutes long. Every first block class in the school participates in the character education program for the first 15 minutes and third block is interrupted by lunch.

In order to avoid coercion, I had a colleague consent my students and collect the forms and I received permission from the Institutional Review Board to mail additional forms home in an attempt to obtain consent. At the end of both semesters, after assigning final grades and mailing additional consent forms home, I had collected 66 consent forms. The students who agreed to participate in the study consisted of 38 females and 28 males, 42 African Americans, 23 Caucasians and one classified as Other—Laotian, and 28 twelfth graders, 27 tenth graders, and 11 eleventh graders.

Study Design

When I first considered conducting research in my own classroom, I was concerned about the effect on my students. I realized that I was in a position of power as their teacher and was concerned that students might feel obligated to respond to me because I held the “power” of the grade. However, teacher research can be a positive force in the classroom. Wilhelm (2004) states, “Teacher research shifts the relationships in a classroom. Instead of delivering information, we invest ourselves in the creative and relational work of engaging, challenging, and assisting students in new ways” (p. 184). Therefore, I wanted to preserve my role as teacher while also assuming the role of researcher and use a mixed methods approach that would intrude on my students’ lives the least amount possible.

Creswell (2003) defines mixed methods research as, “...one in which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds” (p. 18). In other words, this is a practical

approach for when the researcher wants to collect data to answer questions or solve a problem. In order to answer these questions, the researcher collects both quantitative (numeric) and qualitative (text) data. Creswell asserts, “A mixed methods design is useful to capture the best of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. For example, a researcher may want to both generalize the findings to a population and develop a detailed view of the meaning of a phenomenon or concept for individuals” (p. 22). Quantitative methods allow the research to be more generalizable to the larger population, while qualitative methods allow the research to be more specific to the persons directly involved with the study.

Similarly to teachers and their relationship with their students, qualitative researchers also relate to their subjects. Creswell (2003) states, “Qualitative researchers look for involvement of their participants in data collection and seek to build rapport and credibility with the individuals in the study. They do not disturb the site any more than is necessary” (p. 181). As their teacher, I did not want to disturb the normal flow of my classroom; however, as a researcher I wanted to be able to understand my student-participants. Moss (1994) suggests that qualitative research methods can “open up the academic conversation about literacy to the people who seem to have the most at stake—our students, particularly those from ‘powerless’ communities” (p. 2). Qualitative methods allow the researcher to relate to his or her participants and to include a more in-depth description of the context in which the research took place. As for qualitative data, I wanted to gather as many student artifacts and observational data as I could to support the survey data.

However, this type of data would be open to interpretation. Creswell (2003) affirms, “Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive. This means that the researcher makes an interpretation of the data...It also means that the researcher filters the data through a personal

lens that is situated in a specific sociopolitical and historical moment. One cannot escape the personal interpretation to qualitative data analysis” (p. 182). As both a teacher and a researcher, I had a personal connection to my students as they fulfilled the role of also being participants in my study.

As a mixed methods researcher, I chose to use what Creswell (2003) refers to as a concurrent triangulation strategy, in which both the quantitative and qualitative data collection happen during one phase of the research and can strengthen the results through the use of multiple data sources. He stresses, “This traditional mixed methods model is advantageous because it is familiar to most researchers and can result in well-validated and substantiated findings” (Creswell, 2003, p. 217). However, this method has some limitations, including requiring effort and expertise, as well as difficulty in comparing and resolving discrepancies between the two different data sets. Creswell (2003) stresses that the analysis should be combined, “In a concurrent study, the quantitative and qualitative data collection may be presented in separate sections, but the analysis and interpretation combines the two forms of data to seek convergence among the results” (p. 222). In other words, both the quantitative data from the surveys and the qualitative data from student artifacts and observations would support each other and strengthen the findings.

In their foundational chapter, Campbell and Stanley (1963) describe experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research. They state, “This chapter is committed to the experiment: as the only means for settling disputes regarding educational practice, as the only way of verifying educational improvements, and as the only way of establishing a cumulative tradition in which improvements can be introduced without the danger of a faddish discard of old wisdom in favor of inferior novelties” (Campbell & Stanley, 1963, p. 2). I chose to use a quasi-

experimental design in order to strengthen my results and explore the relatively new program of Scaffolded Silent Reading in relation to the already established program Sustained Silent Reading. I did not want ScSR to merely be a “fad” and I did not want the traditional SSR program to be discarded without conducting my own research in my own classroom.

As a teacher with access to a population of students, I chose to employ a nonequivalent control group design with my own students. Creswell (2003) explains, “In this design, a popular approach to quasi-experiments, the experimental group A and the control group B are selected without random assignment. Both groups take a pretest and posttest. Only the experimental group receives the treatment” (p. 169). During the fall semester of the 2009-2010 school year, I chose to have one group of tenth-graders participate in SSR, while one group of tenth-graders and another group of twelfth graders participated in ScSR. During the spring semester, one group of tenth-graders and another group of twelfth-graders participated in ScSR, along with two groups of eleventh and twelfth-grade students who served as control groups.

Description of Treatment Groups

Sustained Silent Reading

As one of the original proponents of Sustained Silent Reading, McCracken (1971) stressed that SSR is only one part of a reading program and suggested that teachers who want to implement it should follow six rules: 1) Each student must read silently, 2) The teacher reads, 3) Each student selects a single book/magazine/newspaper and cannot change, 4) A timer is used, 5) There are absolutely no reports or records of any kind, and 6) Begin with whole classes or larger groups of students heterogeneously grouped (p. 521). For my implementation of Sustained Silent Reading, I gave students the time and the choice of what they wanted to read in school and I read along with them; however, I did allow them to change books and did not use a

timer. When I first implemented SSR in 2005, I had used a timer, but I found that it sometimes interrupted the reading time or that it made the students watch the timer instead of reading their books. In accordance with the original design, I did not assign any reports or require students to keep any records. Although I did not require students to read in different genres, they were exposed to the biweekly booktalks from the librarian.

Scaffolded Silent Reading

Scaffolded Silent Reading is different from traditional Sustained Silent Reading because students create "...book response projects, such as drawing and labeling a 'character wanted' poster, making a story map, or filling in a blank graphic organizer" (Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008, p. 200). Other differences include no teacher monitoring and feedback and no student accountability in Sustained Silent Reading as opposed to Sustained Silent Reading. Reutzel, Fawson, and Smith (2008) defined Scaffolded Silent Reading as: "silent, wide reading of independent-level texts selected from varied genres; periodic teacher monitoring of and interaction with individual students; and accountability through completed book response assignments" (p. 39). The program includes book selection strategies, exposure to a wide variety of genres, assigning books at the students' independent reading levels, teacher-student conferencing, goal setting, and completion of projects. I implemented Scaffolded Silent Reading according to the previous description except that I added teacher modeling and booktalks and students completed writing assignments instead of art projects or graphic organizers.

Control Group

While the Scaffolded Silent Reading and Sustained Silent Reading groups were allowed to read whatever they choose to read during the time period in school, my control group was given no time for reading in school and no choice of reading materials. Finally, my control

group was exposed to the booktalks, but the control group taught by the other teacher was not exposed to them. As part of my normal classroom instruction, I collected quantitative data from the Reading and You attitude survey, Genre Assessment, and Degrees of Reading Power. I also collected qualitative data from observations and student artifacts, including their genre writings and pie charts. The next sections will discuss these instruments in detail.

Description of Survey Instruments

Reading and You Attitude Survey

The Reading and You Attitude Survey was based on the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure (MBRAM) developed by Mikulecky (1976) and revised by B. A. Murray at Auburn University in 2009. Mikulecky pilot-tested and then field-tested the instrument and conducted statistical analyses for construct and concurrent validity as well as test-retest reliability with other available reading attitude measures such as the Estes Scale (1971), the Kennedy-Halinski Reading Attitude Measure (1975), and the Dulin-Chester Scale (1976). The MBRAM was also evaluated in other studies and determined to be a unidimensional measure of reading attitude (Hawk, Roberson, & Ley, 1984; Mikulecky & Wolf, 1977; Schaer, Ley, Neal, & Wright, 1988).

In 2009, B. A. Murray at Auburn University revised the MBRAM, which originally contained all positive items, to create the Reading and You Attitude survey, which contains an even number of positive and negative items in the 28-item survey. Students rate themselves along a Likert scale from one, which represents “not like me” to four, which represents “just like me” and scores range from a low of 28 to a high of 112. He conducted a pilot test of the attitude survey with ten high school students and revised four items, which included a negative item that received a positive correlation with the total score or positive items or an item with no

correlation. The correlation between the positive total and attitude total was .88, while the correlation between the negative total and attitude was -.88. (B. A. Murray, personal communication, June 28, 2009).

During the fall and spring semesters of 2009-2010, I administered the Reading and You attitude survey to my students at the beginning and end of each semester in order to measure any changes that may have occurred over the course of a semester. After I had collected all of the data, I inputted the students' scores on each of the 28 items into a spreadsheet, reverse coded the negative, "not like me", items, and summed the scores to come up with a total score.

First, I organized the data according to descriptive statistics: gender, ethnicity, grade, semester, and treatment. Then I entered the students' pretest and posttest data and coded the students according to their gender, ethnicity, and grade. I also coded the treatment the students received as well as the semester in which they received this treatment. PASW Statistics 18.0 was used to analyze the data with the findings reported in the next chapter.

Genre Assessment

I designed the Genre Assessment based on a genre assessment by Kellner (2005). Her genre assessment contained the following genres: adventure, fantasy, historical fiction, mystery, realistic, science fiction, biography, informational, drama, oral tradition (folklore), and poetry. Reutzel and Fawson (2002) created a reading genre wheel with the following: fantasy, folktales, fables, adventure, science fiction, humor, sports, mystery, biography, historical fiction, autobiography, and poetry. I combined the genres Kellner (2005) mentioned with the ones Reutzel and Fawson (2002) mentioned, deleting categories I thought more appropriate for the intermediate grades and adding ones I thought more appropriate for the upper grades.

Also, I combined autobiography with biography and added horror to mystery to come up with the following genres for my wide writing genre wheel: autobiography/biography, horror/mystery, fantasy, poetry, romance, sports, fiction, historical fiction, nonfiction, and science fiction. I thought folktales and fables could be covered under fantasy and humor was too broad a category. I added romance because I am familiar with it myself as a reader and also I thought my students might enjoy reading it. Finally, I added nonfiction to give students more experience reading that type of text that they would encounter on the AHSGE Reading.

Wide Writing Genre Wheel Adapted from D. R. Reutzel & P. C. Fawson (2002)



Instead of 11 questions such as the Kellner (2005) genre assessment measures, my genre assessment contains 24 questions in two sections including matching genres with definitions as well as matching genres with examples. The 12 genres on the assessment are: autobiography, biography, horror, mystery, fantasy, poetry, romance, sports, fiction, historical fiction, nonfiction, and science fiction. For example, the first item on the assessment is the definition for

poetry, “written in verse, not prose; may or may not rhyme and the example for poetry was as follows: “The rain is raining all around, / It falls on field and tree, / It rains on the umbrella here, / And on the ships at sea.” The genre assessment measures whether or not students know how each genre is defined and whether or not they can recognize examples from each genre. Scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 24 (See Appendix B).

During the 2009-2010 school year, I administered the Genre Assessment to my students at the beginning and the end of each semester. Each student could have earned from 0 to 24 on the pre and on the posttest and results were compared to determine whether the students’ knowledge of genre had improved or not. The same procedure was used to analyze the data as was used with the Reading and You attitude survey.

Student Genre Writing

As part of their classroom assignments, students submitted writing assignments of at least one page, double-spaced and typed, as they finished reading each of the books in the ten genres: autobiography/biography, fantasy, horror/mystery, poetry, romance, sports, fiction, historical fiction, nonfiction, and science fiction. After reading either an autobiography or a biography, students were asked to report the story of that person’s life. For both fantasy and science fiction, students were instructed to write their own stories, based on what they read. After reading either a horror or a mystery novel, students were to write their own story, similar to what they read. I instructed them to give the reader clues so he/she could guess who the murderer/monster is who is terrorizing the characters in their story.

After reading a collection of poetry by one author or multiple authors, students were to choose their favorite poem and write their own original poem, imitating its style, including their inspiration poem. Students would also write a romantic story, including a happy ending, after

reading a romance. For sports, students could write a newspaper article about their favorite sports figure or an expository essay explaining how to play the sport they read about. After reading both fiction and historical fiction books, students would write their own fictional stories, including well-developed characters and plot, while focusing on a particular setting for historical fiction. Lastly, after reading a nonfiction book, students would write a nonfiction essay on a topic of their choice from the book they read. Students colored in pieces of the wide writing genre wheel as they turned in the writing assignments, with the goal being a completed pie chart by the end of the semester.

Degrees of Reading Power

The Degrees of Reading Power measure of reading achievement is a 70-question measure of reading achievement with scores ranging from 0-70. According to the publisher, the DRP “...provides a holistic, criterion-referenced measure of how well students understand the meaning of text...Growth in reading ability occurs when students read materials at their appropriate reading level. To help students meet the reading challenges of the classroom, state assessments, and beyond, student reading gains must be accurately measured and supported by linking comprehension ability with text difficulty” (Questar Assessment, 2010). In other words, it claims to measure students’ reading ability. Each question gives students a choice of five words to fill in the blank in a sentence as part of a paragraph, with each question increasing in difficulty as the test progresses. The test measures whether or not students know the vocabulary words as well as if they can recognize them in context.

Flippo and Schumm (2000) reviewed currently available reading tests, such as the DRP (1995 edition) and state that the test is used: “1) to evaluate the current level of students’ achievement in reading, 2) to determine the most difficult prose a student can use with

instructional assistance and as an independent reader, 3) to measure the growth in the ability to read with comprehension, and 4) to place students in developmental reading courses at the college level” (p. 436). They report two advantages of the DRP: that it is untimed and that, since prior knowledge is not necessary to understand the passages, the test is unbiased towards culturally diverse students. The DRP measures reading as a process, rather than reading as a set of individual skills, and is a modified cloze test, with each passage increasing in difficulty.

The standard DRP test contains the following characteristics: “1) The test passage must be read and understood for students to respond correctly. That is, the sentences containing the blanks will make sense with each of the options when read in isolation. However, when the surrounding text is taken into account, only one response is plausible, 2) Regardless of the difficulty of the passage, all response options are common words, and 3) Item difficulty is linked to text difficulty” (Flippo & Schumm, 2000, p. 437). Therefore, the test measures reading comprehension not just vocabulary knowledge. Flippo and Schumm (2000) state that the publishers of the DRP report the reliability of the measure: “Kuder-Richardson Formal 20 reliability coefficients were computed. Of the 72 reliability coefficients computed, 52 were greater than or equal to .95. The range of reliability coefficients was .93 to .97” (p. 438). As for validity, the publisher suggests that the design of the test—a student who comprehends the text should be able to answer items correctly—obviously makes it a measure of reading comprehension.

During the spring semester of the 2009-2010 school year, I administered the DRP to my ScSR and control group students at the beginning and at the end of the semester. The other control group taught by another teacher also took the DRP pre and posttest. The same statistical

procedures and analyses used with the Reading and You attitude survey and the Genre Assessment were also used with this measure.

Data Collection

At the beginning of the semester, I asked students if they wanted to participate in the study, making it clear that this would not affect their grade for better or worse if they chose to participate or not. A colleague conducted the consent process and kept the informed consent forms collected from all potential participants and their legal guardians until the end of the semester after I had assigned grades.

As part of my normal classroom instruction, I collected qualitative data (student artifacts and observational field notes) and quantitative data (Reading and You attitude survey, Genre Assessment, and Degrees of Reading Power). I directly observed the students during SSR and ScSR during the fall semester, as well as being a participant myself. An important aspect of SSR is for the teacher to model reading while students read; therefore, I will be a participant-observer. During ScSR, my primary responsibility was to model my enjoyment of reading for the students, while my secondary responsibility was to write down in my teacher-research journal what I observed during SSR. During ScSR, the teacher's role is to "teach and scaffold students' appropriate book selection strategies" (Reutzel, Jones, Fawson & Smith, 2008, p. 197). Therefore, my responsibility as their teacher shifted to scaffolding and modeling strategies, not reading. As a teacher-researcher, my responsibility still remained to observe and record my observations. I called both programs DEAR for Drop Everything and Read.

I kept a record of my experiences and observations in my field notes. This tool allowed me to keep a daily record of what I observed and how I felt about it at the time, which will be useful for me in constructing the final written record. As a seventh-grade teacher and teacher-

researcher, Wilhelm (1997) has kept a teaching journal about his teaching experiences and records his "...observations about particular students, assess what seemed to work or not work for the kids, tell stories, posit theories, make plans, and revise lessons that I hope will be more successful in the future" (p. 40-41). For his dissertation research, he recorded his observations and conversations with his nine case study students, writing in his journal during classes, during lunch, after school, or during his free period. I also collected student writing they had completed as part of their reading during DEAR time.

Data Analysis

Creswell (2003) suggests steps for quantitative data analysis: 1) use a table to report the number of participants who did and did not return surveys, 2) check for response bias, 3) discuss descriptive data analysis, including means, standard deviations, and range of scores, 4) identify the statistical procedure and reliability for developing survey instruments, and 5) identify the statistics and program for testing research questions (p. 160). I created a table to track the assigned student number, gender, ethnicity, grade, and scores of each student on the three surveys. Response bias is "...the effect of nonresponses on survey estimates...Bias means that if nonrespondents had responded, their responses would have substantially changed the overall results of the survey" (Creswell, 2003, p. 160). To counteract response bias, I attempted to collect both pre and post data from every student and attempted to collect consent forms from every student, both by sending those forms home with the students and also by mailing forms home.

Miles and Huberman (1994) define qualitative data analysis as "...consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 10). Data reduction is the ongoing process of organizing and discarding data. Data display is an "...organized, compressed assembly of information that

permits conclusion drawing and action” (p. 11). Conclusion drawing and verification is when the researcher decides what the data means. Throughout this study, I had a wealth of information to analyze, including my student surveys and artifacts and field notes.

Initially, I analyzed and coded my field notes. Miles and Huberman (1994) define codes as “...tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (p. 56). They advise going through transcripts and field notes with a pencil and marking off similar units, dividing them into topics and subtopics. I analyzed my data and began to generate codes in what Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to as “first-level coding,” which is a “...device for summarizing segments of data” and “pattern coding,” which is “...a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs” (p. 69). I decided that I would look for patterns related to three areas correlated to my quantitative surveys: reading attitude, reading achievement, and genre knowledge.

Creswell (2003) suggests the following steps for qualitative data analysis and interpretation: 1) “*Organize and prepare* the data for analysis. This involves transcribing interviews, optically scanning material, typing up fieldnotes, or sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the source of information” (p. 191), 2) get a general sense by reading through the data, 3) code the data by organizing it into categories, 4) generate a description of the participants and then use the coding to generate themes, 5) decide how to represent the description and themes in the narrative, and 6) interpret the data using the researcher’s experiences as well as what the literature suggests (Creswell, 2003, p. 191). Creswell (2003) defines data transformation and states that researchers may quantify the qualitative data by “...creating codes and themes qualitatively, then counting the number of

times they occur in the text data... This quantification of qualitative data then enables a researcher to compare quantitative results with the qualitative data” (p. 220).

Campbell and Stanley (1963) state, “The most widely used acceptable test is to compute for each group pretest-posttest gain scores and to compute a *t* between experimental and control groups on these gain scores. Randomized ‘blocking’ or ‘leveling’ on pretest scores and the analysis of covariance with pretest scores as the covariate are usually preferable to simple gain-score comparisons” (p. 23). However, they caution, “Where intact classes have been assigned to treatments, the above formulas would provide too small an error term because the randomization procedure obviously has been more ‘lumpy’ and fewer chance events have been employed... Essentially, the class means are used as the basic observations, and treatment effects are tested against variations in these means. A covariance analysis would use pretest means as the covariate” (p. 23).

Validity, Reliability, Generalizability, and Triangulation

In experimental research, there are several potential threats to validity: internal validity, external validity, statistical conclusion validity, and construct validity. Creswell (2003) defines internal validity threats as, “...experimental procedures, treatments, or experiences of the participants that threaten the researcher’s ability to draw correct inferences from the data in an experiment” (p. 171). For example, students in the experimental group may talk to students in the control group, which leads to a diffusion effect. They also might change their opinions or mature during the experiment. Finally, another threat to internal validity is using inadequate procedures, such as changing the survey instrument in the middle of the experiment.

Campbell and Stanley (1963) list eight threats to internal validity: history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, selection biases, experimental mortality, and

selection-maturation interaction. History refers to events that may happen between the pre and post tests along with the experimental variables, while maturation refers to the subjects getting older, more tired, etc. Testing refers to how taking a test may affect the scores of another testing and instrumentation refers to any changes in observers or calibration that may cause changes in the results. Statistical regression is where groups were selected based on their extreme scores, with selection bias also being a possibility for the selection of participants. Experimental mortality refers to the fact that participants may drop out of the study before its completion and selection-maturation interaction refers to variables that might be confused with the experimental variables (Campbell & Stanley, 1963, p. 5).

Creswell (2003) defines external validity threats as, "...when experimenters draw incorrect inferences from the sample data to other persons, other settings, and past or future situations. For example, a threat to external validity arises when the researcher generalizes beyond the groups in the experiment to other racial or social groups not under study" (p. 171). An example with my study might be if I generalized my results to ninth graders or to Hispanic students although neither group was represented in my population. Threats to statistical conclusion validity and construct validity arise, "...when experimenters draw inaccurate inferences from the data because of inadequate statistical power or the violation of statistical assumptions. Threats to *construct validity* occur when investigators use inadequate definitions and measures of variables" (Creswell, 2003, p. 171). For example, a threat to statistical conclusion validity might arise if the data set was too small to make adequate assumptions.

Campbell and Stanley (1963) list four factors that may threaten external validity: reactive or interaction effect of testing, interaction effects of selection biases and experimental variable, reactive effects of experimental arrangements, and multiple-treatment interference. They

explain, “The *reactive* or *interaction effect of testing*, in which a pretest might increase or decrease the respondent’s sensitivity or responsiveness to the experimental variable and thus make the results obtained for a pretested population unrepresentative of the effects of the experimental variable for the unpretested universe from which the experimental respondents were selected” (Campbell & Stanley, 1963, p. 5). For example, giving the participants in my study a pre survey assessment on reading attitude makes them aware that I am studying reading attitudes and may influence them to have a more positive attitude on the post survey. However, I controlled for that by giving the pre and post surveys to both ScSR and SSR treatment groups as well as two control groups.

Other threats to external validity include any effects of the experimental variable and selection biases as well as any effects of experimental arrangements, which includes any effect of the experimental variable on people in a nonexperimental setting. Finally, another threat to external validity can occur when participants are exposed to multiple treatments since the effects are likely to linger. A test of repeated measures, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), was conducted on the three survey instruments with the results being presented in the next chapter.

Summary

This chapter presents a brief overview of research methodology that was used in this study. It included a description of my participants and setting and why I decided to use a mixed methods approach. It also described the different treatment groups, survey instruments, data collection, data analysis, validity, reliability, generalizability, and triangulation. The next chapter contains the results of my research.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

This study focused on secondary students' attitudes toward reading, reading achievement, and genre knowledge in a Scaffolded Silent Reading program versus Sustained Silent Reading and control groups. The study took place during the 2009-2010 school year and involved three regular English 10, two regular English 12 courses, and one AHSGE Reading course that I, as teacher-researcher, taught, along with a section of regular English 11 taught by another teacher. Both of the regular English 12 classes and two of the regular English 10 classes participated in ScSR, while one regular English 10 class participated in SSR. During the spring semester, the regular English 11 class and the AHSGE Reading class did not participate in either ScSR or SSR and served as control groups.

A total of 66 students gave consent for their data to be used in this study. Of those 66 students, 44 students participated in ScSR during the fall and spring semesters, while 22 students participated in either SSR or a control group. Most of the students, 40, were enrolled in the spring semester, while 26 students were enrolled in the fall semester. There were 38 females and 28 males involved in the study. Most of the students were African American, 42, with 23 Caucasian students and one student classified as Other. Finally, there were a total of 28 twelfth-graders, 11 eleventh-graders, and 27 tenth-graders. In addition to completing the surveys, the ScSR students also turned in genre writing assignments; however, only 12 of those students completed all ten genres. Only the spring semester students completed the pie chart that

represented the genres they completed both by reading books and writing assignments. Before presenting the results of the individual surveys, this chapter will present the results of all three surveys combined.

Results

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on all three surveys to determine if there were significant differences between students in Scaffolded Silent Reading versus Sustained Silent Reading combined with the control groups on a survey of reading attitude, a measure of reading achievement, and an assessment of genre knowledge. The fall semester SSR group was combined with the spring semester control groups because the number of students in these groups was too small to yield any power. For all three measures, results revealed no significant differences between the treatment groups on the dependent variable, Wilks' $\Lambda = .989$, $F(1, 29) = 6.554$, $p = .016$. For the reading attitude survey and genre knowledge assessment given both semesters, results also revealed no significant differences between the treatment groups on the dependent variable, Wilks' $\Lambda = .982$, $F(1, 51) = 2.576$, $p = .115$. Since one measure, the Degrees of Reading Power measure of reading achievement, was only given during the spring semester, it was analyzed separately from the other two measures. For the measure of reading achievement, results revealed the Scaffolded Silent Reading group outperformed the control group, Wilks' $\Lambda = .953$, $F(1, 33) = 13.489$, $p = .001$, although both the mean scores of both groups decreased.

After analyzing the data using an ANOVA, an independent-samples t test was also conducted on the individual surveys to determine if there were significant differences between the Scaffolded Silent Reading group and the Sustained Silent Reading plus control group. Those who participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading ($M = 18.29$, $SD = 4.648$) had significantly higher genre knowledge scores than those who participated in Sustained Silent Reading or a control

group ($M = 12.11$, $SD = 5.759$), $t(40) = 3.84$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.20$. These results indicate statistical significance as well as a large effect size. Also, those who participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading ($M = 33.86$, $SD = 14.670$) had significantly higher reading achievement scores than those who participated in a control group ($M = 14.70$, $SD = 6.750$), $t(22) = 3.83$, $p = .001$, $d = 1.58$. These statistically significant results also indicate a large effect size. Finally, there were no statistically significant differences between the groups on the reading attitude survey. Those who participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading ($M = 69.13$, $SD = 15.582$) did have a higher mean score on the reading attitude survey than those who participated in Sustained Silent Reading or a control group ($M = 64.41$, $SD = 13.272$), $t(44) = 1.10$, $p = .277$, $d = 0.3$, but the results were not statistically significant and there was only a small effect size. Results on each of the individual measures are presented in the next sections.

Reading and You Attitude Survey

During the fall and spring semesters of the 2009-2010 school year, 66 students at the secondary level participated in this within-subjects design with 44 students involved in Scaffolded Silent Reading and 22 students in either Sustained Silent Reading or a control group. Students took the Reading and You attitude survey both at the beginning and at the end of the semester. After administering the pre survey and before implementing ScSR or SSR, I explained to the class what it was and what it was not. I informed them that they were not to talk, study, or sleep during this time, but only to read. I would also be reading with them and there would be no project attached to it.

As I modeled reading for my students in the SSR and ScSR classes, I also observed them and wrote down some of my observations of their behavior and, sometimes, what I overheard them saying, before, during, and after. I wrote down my observations in my field notes, using

abbreviations to save time. Over the course of two semesters, I jotted down 95 pages of notes. Along with what I saw, I also wrote down what I heard as students sometimes discussed what they were reading with me or their classmates.

In regards to students' attitudes toward reading, one trend I noticed was that the SSR class had a hard time settling down to read and that the girls mostly appeared to be reading, but rarely the boys. After noticing on several different occasions that most of my SSR boys did not read, I asked them why they didn't want to read. When I asked one of my male students to explain this to me, he said he did read, but he just didn't have a book and he asked me to pick one for him. He didn't give me much guidance, so I chose *Classic Ghost Stories*, which he ended up giving to a girl to read. I wrote, "Despite all the library trips/booktalks the boys seem unmoved/unfazed." I felt extremely frustrated and wondered if ScSR would have made a difference with them.

When asked why he didn't want to read, one boy claimed, "It's a girl sport." This fits in with what Smith and Wilhelm (2002, 2006) have found in their studies of male teenage readers. Although the boys in their study had a rich and varied literate life outside of school, they did not typically read in school. In their summary of the research on gender and literacy, Smith and Wilhelm (2002) reported the following generalizations: 1) boys read less than girls, 2) boys value reading less than girls and spend less time doing it, 3) boys are less interested in reading for pleasure and more interested in reading for a useful purpose, 4) boys and girls read different things, 5) boys are more likely to read graphic novels, book series, humor, science fiction or fantasy, magazines, newspapers, electronic texts, or informational texts, 6) boys are less likely to discuss their reading, 7) boys prefer active responses such as acting out a response or making something, and 8) boys need more teacher time than girls (p. 10). The differences

between boys and girls when it comes to reading are evident to many teachers; however, researchers are just recently beginning to study these differences.

In addition to my boys not wanting to read, I also suspected some other students had negative attitudes toward reading as well. On November 12, 2009, I wrote, "I think DEAR time is torture for some." This was an overall feeling I had and was not related to any specific event, but just was an accumulation of all of the previous days. I also noticed that when I didn't model reading, the students sometimes didn't read, even when I circulated around the room, checking what they were reading and if they were reading. This occurred with both boys and girls.

Before I analyzed the data on the reading attitude survey using statistical processes, I looked at the raw data to determine if students' attitude scores increased or decreased from pre to post. Overall, both the Scaffolded Silent Reading and control group students improved their attitudes toward reading, while most of the SSR students' reading attitudes decreased. Of the 40 tenth and twelfth-grade students who participated in ScSR and gave consent for their data to be included in this study, 60% improved their scores on the Reading and You Attitude survey, while 40% of the scores declined.

The tenth-graders' reading attitudes improved more than the twelfth-grade students and the fall semester students' reading attitudes overwhelmingly improved as opposed to the spring semester students. Of the 17 tenth-graders who returned their consent forms and completed both the pre and post surveys, 64.7% improved their scores, while 35.3% of the scores declined. For the 23 twelfth-graders who returned their consent forms and completed both the pre and post surveys, 56.5% improved their scores on the Reading and You Attitude survey, while 43.5% of the scores declined. Of the seven fall semester students, 71.4% improved their scores, while

28.6% of the scores declined, while 50% of the spring semester students' reading attitudes improved while 50% declined.

Most of the SSR students' reading attitudes declined, while most of the control groups' reading attitudes improved. For the eight tenth-grade students in the SSR group who returned their consent forms and completed both the pre and post surveys, 37.5% improved their scores on the Reading and You attitude survey, while 62.5% of the scores declined. Finally, of the 13 eleventh and twelfth-grade students in the control groups who returned their consent forms and completed both the pre and post surveys, 69.2% improved their scores on the Reading and You attitude survey, while 30.8% of the scores declined.

After looking at the preliminary results, I conducted a reliability analysis on the twenty-eight item reading attitude survey. Cronbach alpha for the scale was .861, indicating a degree of internal consistency among the items on the scale. The means of the individual items ranged from 1.42 to 3.09, with a mean on the total scale of 65.15 ($SD = 13.906$). Overall, the participants' responses on the scale indicated that they possessed a moderate attitude toward reading. The mean and standard deviation of the items of the reading attitude survey are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Reliability of Reading and You Attitude Survey

Item	M	SD
1	2.08	1.046
2	2.03	1.031
3	2.33	1.193

4	2.66	1.049
5	1.84	.949
6	2.12	1.142
7	2.67	1.098
8	2.89	1.170
9	2.52	1.159
10	2.71	1.030
11	1.91	1.032
12	2.55	1.077
13	2.71	1.030
14	2.25	1.040
15	2.35	1.173
16	1.64	.912
17	2.27	1.152
18	2.27	1.083
19	2.03	1.164
20	2.76	1.055
21	2.39	1.161
22	2.05	1.135
23	3.09	1.014
24	2.19	1.116
25	1.86	1.069
26	1.42	.757
27	2.50	1.135
28	2.42	1.195

Possible scores on the Reading and You attitude survey ranged from 28 to 112. Results show that the mean score of the students in the ScSR group increased from 65.88 to 67.58, while the mean score of the students in the SSR plus control group decreased from 65.62 to 65.12. The mean and standard deviation are provided in Table 2.

Table 2

Reading and You Attitude Survey

Time	Treatment	M	SD
Pretest	Scaffolded Silent Reading	65.88	13.812
Posttest		67.58	14.970
Pretest	Sustained Silent Reading Plus Control Group	65.62	10.676
Posttest		65.12	15.413

Although the means of the ScSR group increased and the means of the SSR plus control group decreased, the results of the ANOVA and the independent samples *t* test showed no significant differences between the ScSR and SSR groups on the reading attitude survey. I also analyzed the students' performance on the reading attitude survey based on their gender, ethnicity, grade level and semester enrolled in the class. Results show that the 17 males in both the ScSR and SSR groups improved their reading attitudes more than the 31 females although their scores started lower in the beginning. The mean of the male students increased from 61.29 to 63.88, while the females slightly increased from 68.32 to 68.97.

There were few differences between students based on their ethnicity, although the one student classified as Other increased his score the most. There were 28 African American, 19 Caucasian students, and one student classified as Other. The African American students increased their mean from 66.75 to 68.61, the Caucasian students only increased their mean from

64.47 to 64.63, while the student classified as Other increased his score from 66.00 to 75.00. The mean of the twenty-five tenth-graders increased from 63.12 to 65.68, while the mean of the twenty-three twelfth-graders stayed exactly the same at 68.78. Overall, the reading attitudes of the tenth graders improved while the twelfth-graders' reading attitudes stayed the same.

In addition to analyzing the data according to gender, ethnicity, and grade level, I also analyzed the data to determine whether or not the semester a student participated in ScSR or SSR may have been a factor. Although, as a teacher I suspected there were some differences, there were no statistically significant differences between the students' reading attitude scores based on the semester they participated in the program. However, the fall semester students' reading attitudes improved slightly more than the spring semester students. The mean of the fall semester students increased from 63.73 to 65.45, while the mean of the spring semester students also increased slightly from 67.62 to 68.62. While there were no statistically significant differences between the groups on the reading attitude survey, there was a trend toward the Scaffolded Silent Reading students increasing their reading attitudes, which might have been demonstrated if the time period of the treatment had been longer.

Reading Achievement Measure: Degrees of Reading Power

In order to measure whether students' reading achievement levels had improved, I administered the Degrees of Reading Power posttest on May 5, 2010 in an attempt to give it early enough so that students wouldn't be too tired by the end of the semester and just mark any answer. However, I noticed that some students took only 30 minutes to complete the seventy-item posttest, which suggested to me that they didn't really try to do their best. One tenth-grade male student even told me, "I only tried on 10 of these." The mean score of both groups decreased with the students in the ScSR group scoring higher than the control group, but

demonstrating more of a decrease, while the mean score of the students in the control group was lower than the ScSR students, but decreased less. The mean and standard deviation are provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Reading Achievement: Degrees of Reading Power

Time	Treatment	M	SD
Pretest	Scaffolded Silent Reading	38.15	16.694
Posttest		30.50	15.271
Pretest	Control Group	16.78	2.108
Posttest		15.33	6.837

Before analyzing the results of the reading achievement measure using statistical methods, I first examined the raw scores on both the pretest and posttest. Most of the students' scores on the Degrees of Reading Power measure of reading achievement decreased. A total of 35 students returned consent forms and completed the DRP during the spring semester. Of those 35, 26 tenth and twelfth-grade students participated in ScSR with 26.9% increasing their scores and 73.1% of the scores decreasing. Although most students' scores decreased, the tenth-graders performed better than the twelfth-graders. Out of the 16 twelfth graders in the ScSR group, only 12.5% improved their scores, while 87.5% of the scores declined. Out of the ten tenth graders in the ScSR group, 50% improved their scores, while 50% of the scores declined.

The scores of the students in the control groups also decreased. Results for the nine eleventh and twelfth-grade students in the control groups indicated that 33.3% improved their scores and 66.7% of the scores declined. Of those nine students, five were in the AHSGE Reading control group taught by the teacher-researcher with 40% of the scores improving and

60% of the scores declining. Four students were in the English 11 control group taught by the other teacher with 25% of the scores improving and 75% of the scores declining.

After viewing the initial results, I was concerned that students had gotten frustrated with the test and just started marking any answer at that point just to finish the test, so I discussed the issue with my committee chair and we decided to cut the score off when students had missed five items in a row. According to Flippo and Schumm (2000), “Students are urged to stop when the test no longer is comprehensible; guessing is not encouraged” (p. 438). Since those instructions were not included with the DRP that I had administered to my students and my colleague had administered to her students, I had instructed my students to do their best on the test. Even if I had given those instructions, I can imagine that my students would just stop after a few questions, claiming that they did not understand the test, just to get out of doing any work.

I reexamined both the pretests and posttests and cut the scores off after students had missed five items in a row. I noticed a pattern on a few of the scantrons which made it appear that students had begun just marking any answer from almost the beginning of the test. Either that or they truly did not know the answers. I deemed these pretests unreliable and threw their scores out. According to this process, all of the control group’s pretest scores were unreliable. After examining the posttests, I especially noticed that the twelfth-graders appeared to bubble in any answer just to get done with the test. However, I did notice several students’ scores, especially the twelfth-graders in the ScSR group, increased from pre to posttest, using this method. After throwing out the unreliable scores, I was left with 14 students in the ScSR groups, mostly twelfth graders with one tenth grader. In conclusion, I am cautious to report any reliable results on this measure of reading achievement.

I also analyzed the data according to the students' gender, ethnicity, and grade level and did not analyze the data according to semester since the DRP was only given during the spring semester. Both males and females decreased their mean; males went from 23.67 to 17.42, while females went from 37.35 to 31.39. The majority of the students were African American and their mean decreased from 32.79 to 27.75. The Caucasian students also decreased their mean from 33.30 to 23.20, but the one student classified as other increased his score from 23.00 to 33.00. Finally, 19 students were twelfth-graders, ten were tenth-graders, and six were eleventh-graders in the control group. The only group that showed any increase in their mean was the tenth-graders who went from 22.20 to 22.70. The twelfth-graders' mean decreased from 43.32 to 32.47 and the mean of the eleventh-graders also decreased from 16.33 to 14.50.

Although both groups' reading achievement scores decreased, the Scaffolded Silent Reading group outperformed the control group and an independent samples *t* test demonstrated statistical significance between the groups. Those who participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading ($M = 33.86$, $SD = 14.670$) had significantly higher reading achievement scores than those who participated in a control group ($M = 14.70$, $SD = 6.750$), $t(22) = 3.83$, $p = .001$, $d = 1.58$. These statistically significant results also indicate a large effect size. Even though the Scaffolded Silent Reading group performed better than the control group, the results were disappointing since both groups' scores decreased.

Although the results of the reading achievement measure were disappointing overall, I also relied on what I knew as a teacher and what I observed daily to determine what students really achieved. I knew as a teacher that sometimes students appear to be reading, but do not comprehend what they are reading. Often they do not ask for assistance from me as their teacher, but one time a couple of students asked me for help in understanding what they are

reading. One female twelfth-grade ScSR student asked me about *Cut*, which is about a girl in therapy who is a cutter. I had read the book, so I was able to explain that the book is told through flashbacks, which seemed to make sense to my student. Another female twelfth-grade ScSR student was reading a romance novel by Linda Lael Miller, but said it wasn't interesting to her and that she was confused. I noticed that the book was the third in a series, so I suggested that might be why it was confusing and that she might be better off choosing another book. These moments made me think that the Scaffolded Silent Reading students were attempting to comprehend what they were reading. I don't think they would have done that if they had been in a Sustained Silent Reading program with no teacher feedback or in a control group where students weren't allowed the time to read in school or the choice of what they wanted to read.

Genre Assessment

During the fall and spring semesters of the 2009-2010 school year, all students taught by the teacher-researcher, including the SSR and control group students, participated in biweekly booktalks sponsored by the librarian and were exposed to the genres, while the control group taught by another teacher was not exposed to the genres. These booktalks lasted for approximately 10-15 minutes and consisted of the librarian reading the book jacket descriptions to the students, accompanied by music. While the SSR and control group students were not required to read or write in the genres, the ScSR students were required to read and write in each of the following ten genres: 1) autobiography/biography, 2) horror/mystery, 3) fantasy, 4) poetry, 5) romance, 6) sports, 7) fiction, 8) historical fiction, 9) nonfiction, and 10) science fiction. I gave them the Wide Writing Genre Wheel and instructed them that, over the course of the semester, they would read a book in each of the genres and complete a writing assignment after reading each book.

In addition to allowing students to check out books from the library every other week, I also continued to add to my classroom library based on what students told me they were interested in reading or what I perceived they might enjoy. For example, I added NFL coach Tony Dungy's biography to my collection along with *You Hear Me? Poems and Writing by Teenage Boys* and the complete Bluford series. I also learned what students were interested in reading during the booktalks. For example, a couple of students wanted to check out *Dope Sick* by Walter Dean Myers and I already had several books by that author in my classroom library. Several students read books from the Bluford series, which is a young adult series that includes African American protagonists and real-life settings that appeals to my students. Finally, students also read such fantasy and horror books as *Twilight* and *Cirque de Freak*; both of which have become popular and made into movies.

On August 31, 2009, I began taking all of my students, including both the SSR and ScSR groups, to the library for biweekly booktalks from the librarian. Over the course of two semesters, she conducted eight booktalks every two weeks. After each booktalk, I noticed that some students were eager to check out the books she had mentioned and actually did end up checking them out and reading them for DEAR time. On September 1, 2009, I administered the genre pretest to the students. We had already discussed autobiography and biography with the tenth graders since it is part of their literature curriculum. I noticed that the SSR group was talkative, but the tenth-grade ScSR group appeared to all be reading, which I reported as seeing their eyes moving.

After reviewing the genre writing assignments I received during the fall, I revised them slightly. For example, I realized I had allowed students to write their own life story for the autobiography/biography assignment which they would be able to do without having to read a

book. I revised the assignment to read, “After reading either an autobiography OR a biography, report the story of the person’s life.” Sometimes it was a challenge determining which genre a book belonged to or what a student might be interested in reading. For example, one male twelfth-grade student wanted to read *Flyboys* for his historical fiction selection, but the book is classified as nonfiction, so we discussed how there is no historical nonfiction category.

Eventually, we decided it contained fictional details and he used it for his historical fiction selection. A female twelfth-grade student consulted with me about a nonfiction book she was reading about child abuse, but she had already completed her nonfiction assignment, so we decide it could also fit into the autobiography/biography category. Since the books could fit into multiple categories, I was flexible because my goal was to get students to read. It also helped that I have read most of the books in my classroom library or I know enough about them to be able to recommend them to students.

After students read a book in one of the ten categories of the genre wheel, they colored in the piece of the pie chart to keep track of their progress. I also used this tool during their conferences to help keep them on track. I instructed them to color in what they have read not just what they have turned in to give them a greater sense of completion, which seemed to help motivate them. Most eventually ended up turning in all or most of their assignments. Several of the spring semester twelfth-grade students turned in some of their genre assignments during the last week before the final deadline and some turned them in on the deadline date. Of the 16 spring semester twelfth-grade students who gave consent, only five completed all ten writing assignments with the ten genre categories. However, most students completed from seven to nine assignments. Only one of the students who gave consent completed none of the DEAR assignments. Of the nine fall semester twelfth-grade students with consent forms, four

completed all ten writing assignments. For the nine fall semester tenth-grade students who gave consent, only two finished all ten assignments, while most students completed at least five assignments.

Of the eight spring semester tenth-grade students who gave consent, only one student completed all of the assignments. Several students completed from seven to nine assignments. Overall, of these 42 ScSR students who gave consent for their data to be used in this study, only twelve students completed all ten assignments; however, since this was most likely a new experience for all of the students to read ten books in a semester, I consider it a minor victory that secondary students read books at all. Of these 12 students, only three of them were Caucasian males, with the slight majority, seven students, being African American females who completed all of the assignments. The remaining two students were Caucasian females. Although no African American males completed all ten assignments, the one male student classified as Other, who was also an English as a Second Language student, did complete nine of them.

Before analyzing the results using statistical processes, I examined the raw data. The Scaffolded Silent Reading students overwhelmingly outperformed the SSR and control groups. Of the 38 ScSR students, 68.4% improved their scores, 21.1% of the scores declined, and 10.5%, four students, demonstrated no change on the Genre Assessment. The tenth graders performed better than the twelfth graders. For the 17 tenth-grade students in the fall and spring semester ScSR groups, 76.5% improved their scores on the genre assessment, 17.6% of the scores declined, and 5.9%, one student, demonstrated no change. For the 21 twelfth-grade students in the ScSR groups, 61.9% improved their scores on the genre assessment, 23.8% of the scores declined, and 14.3% showed no change. Even though the SSR group was exposed to the genres,

only 37.5% improved their scores on the genre assessment, 50% of the scores declined, and 12.5% showed no change. The results were exactly the same for the students in the control groups during the spring semester. Possible scores on the Genre Assessment ranged from 0 to 24. The mean of the students in the ScSR group increased from 16.32 to 17.84, while the mean of the students in the SSR plus control group decreased from 12.75 to 12.13. The mean and standard deviation are provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Genre Assessment

Time	Treatment	M	SD
Pretest	Scaffolded Silent Reading	16.32	4.737
Posttest		17.84	4.779
Pretest	Sustained Silent Reading Plus Control Group	12.75	2.964
Posttest		12.13	6.010

Using an ANOVA statistical analysis, I also analyzed the data on the Genre Assessment in relation to the semester the student participated in the programs, as well as their gender, ethnicity, and grade. Twenty-two students were enrolled in the fall and twenty-four students were enrolled in the spring. The fall semester students improved more than the spring semester students, with their mean increasing from 14.23 to 15.64, while the spring semester students barely increased their mean from 17.04 to 17.96. The female students improved their mean score from 15.35 to 17.10, while the male students' scores decreased slightly from 16.40 to 16.33. Based on ethnicity, all mean scores increased with the student classified as Other improving the most from 14.00 to 20.00, followed by Caucasians from 17.53 to 19.53, then African Americans with a slight increase in their mean of 14.64 to 15.11. Finally, both tenth and twelfth-graders

increased their mean with the tenth-graders going from 14.24 to 15.60 and the twelfth-graders from 17.43 to 18.33.

After viewing the initial results on the ANOVA, I decided to review the students' genre writings and see how many they had completed, which would indicate to what degree they had participated in the Scaffolded Silent Reading program. A little over half of the students, 24 out of 42, completed eight or more, 80%, of the ten writings, with 33 of the 42 students completing five or more, 50%, of the genre writings. After removing data from students who completed seven or less genre writings, I conducted an independent samples *t* test to compare the 24 ScSR students to the 18 control group students.

Results indicated that there was statistical significance between the Scaffolded Silent Reading group and Sustained Silent Reading plus control group. Those who participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading ($M = 18.29$, $SD = 4.648$) had significantly higher genre knowledge scores than those who participated in Sustained Silent Reading or a control group ($M = 12.11$, $SD = 5.759$), $t(40) = 3.84$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.20$. These results indicate statistical significance as well as a large effect size.

See Figure 2 for an example of a student's genre pie chart, which is from an African American twelfth-grade female, who decided to be extremely creative with her pie chart and draw designs instead of coloring in the pie wedges. Although this student only turned in nine assignments, her chart indicates she may have read in all ten genre categories. Most of her writing was one page in length. For example, her first assignment was for *Big Fish*, which we decided to classify as fantasy. Although she definitely demonstrated understanding of the fantasy genre, her sentences were choppy. She wrote, "The battle took place right outside the home of Henry's family. It was very long. It was back and forth until Henry grabbed the

monster by the arm and ripped it right out of the socket.” This section definitely reminded me of *Beowulf*, which the students had read earlier in the semester. Perhaps the writer was remembering those details and inserted them into her story.

Her last assignment for the fiction book *Chasing Destiny* by Eric Jerome Dickey was one of the longest at one and a half pages. The fiction assignment specified that the student should write his/her own fictional story including well-developed characters and plot. Her story included herself as a first-person narrator and her friends, the Biker Girls, who were chased by her ex-boyfriend. The story had a surprise ending, “The man who got out of the drivers seat was who I never thought it would be, my ex. He had a gun with a barrel pointing straight for us. I was about to pull my .25 off of my waist when I heard a shot. He had shot Lady in the head and knew she was dead. Before I knew it, I had a gun in my hand and was releasing every bullet I had into his large body. That was the day I lost my best friend and my ex lover.” The quality of her writing had improved from her earlier work to this later work. However, her score on the Genre Assessment went down one point from 20 to 19 out of 24 correct.

Another student who completed a pie chart was a Caucasian twelfth-grade male, who listed the titles of his books in addition to shading in the pie wedges with a black ink pen. He completed all ten genre categories and his writings ranged from one to five pages handwritten. By far, his longest selection was for the mystery about the Chandra Levy case called *Sex, Power, and Murder* by David Wright, Don Gentile, and Nicholas Maier. The details for his story appear to come straight out of the book, except that he changed the names. For example, he wrote, “Many believe that Tyler Freeman knew or had something to do with Sara Johnson’s death. Tyler Freeman to this day says he had nothing to do with Johnson’s death.” This was a book I had observed him reading in class, and in fact, another teacher had complained to me that he had

been reading it in her class too. All of his writings demonstrated an understanding of each genre, which is supported by his score on the Genre Assessment posttest, in which he increased his score 3 points from 19 to 22 out of 24 correct.

The most dramatic increase on the Genre Assessment came from an African American twelfth-grade female who went from eight out of 24 correct on her pretest to 20 out of 24 correct on the posttest. Since she was enrolled in my fall semester class, she did not complete a pie chart; however, I kept track of each student's progress through a DEAR contract (See Appendix C), which students signed at the beginning of the semester, promising to read a book in each of the ten genres over the course of a semester. This student's writings demonstrated her knowledge of each of the genres. For example, her mystery story involved a kidnapped baby who was later recovered by her mother. Her biography reported the life of Michael Jackson after she read the book *Michael!* by Mark Bego, while her nonfiction selection was about teaching a baby to walk. Her romance story included a happy ending, which was part of the instructions. She wrote, "The marriage was great they had children and they upgraded all the orphans. Loving life they lived happily ever after."

However, she didn't always follow the directions for the assignments. For example, the sports assignment for the fall semester students was to read a sports book and then "choose your favorite sports figure and write a newspaper article detailing his or her career." She read a book about golf, but stated her favorite sport was volleyball and that she didn't like golf. She wrote, "I didn't read the book for the sport but for the knowledge that it gives...Even though I don't like the sport it was talking about I still liked the book." As a result of reading the assignments from the fall semester, I revised them for the spring and changed sports to "After reading in this genre, either choose your favorite sports figure and write a newspaper article detailing his or her career

OR write an expository essay explaining how to play the sport, based on what you read.”

Overall, this student completed all ten assignments, but the quality of her writing varied, perhaps depending on whether or not she really related to the book.

Summary

In conclusion, the Scaffolded Silent Reading students improved their genre knowledge more than the Sustained Silent Reading plus control group students with a degree of statistical significance, their reading achievement was higher than the control group, but their reading attitudes were not statistically significantly different from the Sustained Silent Reading plus control group. This chapter presented the results of my research and the next chapter contains my discussion of those results.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This study examined secondary students' reading attitudes and achievement as well as their knowledge of specific genres of books in a Scaffolded Silent Reading program versus Sustained Silent Reading and control groups. This chapter will discuss the conclusions, implications, and limitations of this study. Finally, recommendations for future research will be presented for researchers wanting to further study Scaffolded Silent Reading and teachers wanting to implement their own program.

Conclusions

To the extent that the data collected for this study were reliable and the assumptions correct, certain conclusions may be made. While there were no statistically significant differences between the treatment groups on the reading attitude measure, there were some notable differences between the groups. Overall, the students in the Scaffolded Silent Reading group improved their reading attitudes more than the students in either the SSR group or control groups as shown on the Reading and You Attitude survey. Even though there were only a small number of students in the SSR group, most of their reading attitudes got worse from pre to post. There was a slightly larger number in the control groups, but their reading attitudes actually improved. Most of the improvement was shown by the eleventh-grade students taught by another teacher, so there possibly could have been something else going on in that class that could account for the positive results. The students in the AHSGE Reading class also showed a

slight improvement in their attitudes toward reading, although they did not participate in either SSR or ScSR. However, they did attend the booktalks and had the same access to my classroom library as the other classes I taught.

In order to assess students on their knowledge of particular book genres, I administered the 24 item Genre Assessment pre and post exposure to the treatment program. All students that I taught both fall and spring semesters were exposed to the genres every other week during the librarian's booktalks, while the eleventh-grade control group taught by another teacher did not have access to those. Results indicated that the Scaffolded Silent Reading group, the students who completed eight or more genre writings, did outperform the other groups on their knowledge of genre with a high degree of statistical significance. Neither the SSR group nor the control groups completed the genre writings and were not required to turn in any assignments related to their in-class pleasure reading.

Even though the SSR group was exposed to the genres, barely over a third of their scores increased and half of their scores decreased on the Genre Assessment. For the three students in the control group taught by me who were exposed to the genres and completed both the pre and posttest, only one-third showed improvement, while two-thirds of the students' scores decreased on their knowledge of genre. For the five students in the control group taught by another teacher who were not exposed to the genres and who completed both the pre and the posttest, two-fifths improved their scores, two-fifths decreased, and one-fifth demonstrated no change in genre knowledge.

Although the Scaffolded Silent Reading students' reading attitudes and genre knowledge improved, three-fourths of their reading achievement scores on the Degrees of Reading Power assessment declined. However, the Scaffolded Silent Reading students outscored the control

group on the measure with a high degree of statistical significance. Also, the tenth-graders performed better than the twelfth-graders with half of them improving their scores as compared with barely twelve percent of the twelfth-graders. Two-thirds of the students' scores in the control groups decreased although students in the control group taught by the teacher-researcher performed slightly better than the students in the control group taught by another teacher. The DRP was not administered to the SSR group in the fall since there was no access to the test. While these were disappointing results, there could be many factors affecting them.

One factor that could have affected the results might have been the administration of the DRP near the end of the spring semester. Students may have marked any answer just to complete the task. Even though students were given a completion grade, they were not graded on accuracy for the purpose of the class, but only for the purpose of the study. Another possible reason for the overall decline in scores is that the vocabulary on the reading achievement measure may have been too high level for the students. Another possibility is that the test was not administered correctly.

According to Flippo and Schumm (2000), the directions for administering the test indicate that students should stop when they were no longer able to comprehend the test and I did not instruct my students to do that out of concern that they would not try at all. I attempted to re-analyze the pre and posttests by cutting off the score when students had missed more than five items in a row; however, some students missed that many starting from the first question, so that was an unreliable method. I was able to isolate a small group of students, mostly twelfth-graders, who appeared to try their best on both the pretest and the posttest. Of those students, most did increase their scores. Finally, one research study by Paulson and Henry (2002) that

analyzed the DRP concluded that it was not a measure of reading comprehension or achievement at all, but instead might measure how well students take that type of reading test.

In conclusion, the results of this study show that the Scaffolded Silent Reading students improved their attitudes toward reading more than students in either Sustained Silent Reading or control groups. They also overwhelmingly improved their knowledge of the genres tested on the Genre Assessment. Finally, few students who participated in this study improved their scores on a measure of reading achievement, although the tenth-graders performed better than the twelfth-graders.

Implications

The present study showed that reading attitudes of students who participated in Scaffolded Silent Reading improved more than students who participated in Sustained Silent Reading or a control group, although their scores were not statistically significant on the reading attitude survey. The reliability analysis of the Reading and You attitude survey demonstrates that it is a valid measure of reading attitude that other researchers and teachers may want to consider using. This study is important for teachers and researchers who wish to implement Scaffolded Silent Reading and explore its possible effects on students' reading attitudes because increasing students' attitudes toward reading may help them continue to read long after they graduate.

In addition to the Scaffolded Silent Reading students' reading attitudes increasing, their knowledge of specific genres of books also dramatically increased which demonstrates that encouraging students to read widely exposes them to a variety of genres. This exposure may help students, who otherwise would not have the desire to read or the access to books, find out what they enjoy reading. Lastly, this enjoyment of reading may transform reluctant readers into

passionate readers. The researcher-designed Genre Assessment may be a useful tool for researchers and teachers who want to assess their students' knowledge of different book genres, but it needs more field testing. Although few of the students increased their reading achievement, this may have been due to the nature of the measure itself, to the students' overall lack of motivation, or the difficulty in measuring this variable. More research is needed to determine which measures of reading achievement are the most effective with students at the secondary level.

In conclusion, the results of this study yield implications for teachers who wish to implement Scaffolded Silent Reading in their own classrooms. The need for ways to improve students' reading attitudes and achievement is an ongoing quest and is supported by this study. Finally, the researcher believes that Scaffolded Silent Reading is a promising alternative to Sustained Silent Reading that needs further research.

Limitations

However, this study has several limitations. One limitation is that it was conducted with a small number of participants. Second, data was only collected during two semesters over the course of one school year. Therefore, a longitudinal study with more participants might yield data with higher statistical power. Third, the Scaffolded Silent Reading program is relatively new and the researcher did not have as much experience implementing it as with Sustained Silent Reading. More experience with and research of Scaffolded Silent Reading would prove helpful for researchers and teachers when designing future studies.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should explore the Scaffolded Silent Reading program and its possibilities for improving students' reading attitudes and achievement as well as their

knowledge of genres of books. Exposing students to a wide variety of genres may increase their reading attitudes and achievement, but this has not been examined empirically to a great extent. Thus far, only a couple of studies have attempted to look at the Scaffolded Silent Reading program prior to this study and those were conducted with elementary students (Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2008; Reutzel, Jones, Fawson, & Smith, 2008).

One recommendation would be that the time period of measuring the effectiveness of the program should be more than a single semester. Longitudinal studies are recommended to determine the effectiveness of Scaffolded Silent Reading at different grade levels—elementary, middle, and high school. Another recommendation would be to increase the sample size since the sample size for this study was small and did not yield much statistical power. Finally, researchers and teachers should take into account when they administer the surveys so that the participants might not suffer test fatigue.

Continued use of the Reading and You attitude survey is also recommended since the instrument has demonstrated reliability and may be useful for teachers and researchers to understand students' attitude toward reading. Further study of the newly-developed Genre Assessment is also recommended since it has only been used in this study. Finally, follow-up studies should use other instruments to measure reading achievement to determine to what extent Scaffolded Silent Reading may affect students' reading achievement.

REFERENCES

- Akmal, T. T. (2002). Ecological approaches to sustained silent reading: Conferencing, contracting, and relating to middle school students. *Clearing House*, 75(3), 154-157.
- Allen, J. (1995). *It's never too late: Leading adolescents to lifelong literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Brandt, D. (2001). *Literacy in American lives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bryan, G., Fawson, P. C., & Reutzel, D. R. (2003). Sustained silent reading: Exploring the value of literature discussion with three non-engaged readers. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 43(1), 47-73.
- Buehl, D. (2001, April 19). Develop a reading autobiography. *The Reading Room, March 2001*. Retrieved August 3, 2005 from <http://www.weac.org/News/2000-1/march01/read-print.htm>
- Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1963). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research. In N. L. Gage (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 1-76). Chicago: Rand-McNally.
- Campbell, R. (1989). The teacher as a role model during sustained silent reading (SSR). *Reading*, 23(3), 179-183.
- Christenbury, L. (2001). Afterword: Future directions for reading in high school. In B. O. Ericson (Ed.), *Teaching reading in high school english classes* (pp. 155-158). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

- Clarke, B. (2006). Breaking through to reluctant readers. *Educational Leadership*, 63(5), 66-69.
- Clary, L. M. (1991). Getting adolescents to read. *Journal of Reading*, 34(5), 340-345.
- Cline, R. K. J., & Kretke, G. L. (1980). An evaluation of long-term SSR in the junior high school. *Journal of Reading*, 23(6), 503-506.
- Collins, C. (1980). Sustained silent reading periods: Effect on teachers' behaviors and students' achievement. *The Elementary School Journal*, 81(2), 109-114.
- Cramer, E. H., & Castle, M. (1994). Developing lifelong readers. In E. H. Cramer & M. Castle (Eds.), *Fostering the love of reading: The affective domain in reading education* (pp. 3-9). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Davis, Z. T. (1988). A comparison of the effectiveness of sustained silent reading and directed reading activity on students' reading achievement. *High School Journal*, 72(1), 155-156.
- Dwyer, E. J., & Reed, V. (1989). Effects of sustained silent reading on attitudes toward reading. *Reading Horizons*, 29, 283-293.
- Eisner, E. (1992). The misunderstood role of the arts in human development. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73(8), 591-595.
- Estes, T. H. (1971). A scale to measure attitudes toward reading. *Journal of Reading*, 15(2), 135-138.
- Evans, H. M., & Towner, J. C. (1975). Sustained silent reading: Does it increase skills? *Reading Teacher*, 29, 155-156.
- Fisher, D. (2004). Setting the "opportunity to read" standard: Resuscitating the SSR program in an urban high school. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 48(2), 138-150.
- Flippo, R. F., & Schumm, J. S. (2000). Reading tests. In R. F. Flippo and D. C. Caverly (Eds.),

- Handbook of college reading and study strategy research* (pp. 403-472). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Greenwood, S. C. (1985). Use contracts to motivate and manage your secondary reading class. *Journal of Reading, 28*(6), 487-491.
- Grubaugh, S. (1986). Initiating sustained silent reading in your school. *Clearing House, 60*, 169-173.
- Guthrie, J. T., & Anderson, E. (1999). Engagement in reading: Processes of motivated, strategic, knowledgeable, social readers. In J. T. Guthrie & D. E. Alvermann (Eds.) *Engaged reading: Processes, practices, and policy implications* (pp. 17-45). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hawk, J. W., Roberson, T. G., & Ley, T. C. (1984). The factor structure of the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 44*, 1059-1065.
- Herbert, S. S. (1987). Open to suggestion. *Journal of Reading, 30*, 648-651.
- Herrold, Jr., W. G., Stanchfield, J., and Serabian, A. J. (1989). Comparison of the effect of a middle school, literature-based listening program on male and female attitudes toward reading. *Educational Research Quarterly, 13*(4), 43-46.
- Hiebert, E. H. (2006). Becoming fluent: Repeated reading with scaffolded texts. In S. J. Samuels & A. E. Farstrup (Eds.), *What research has to say about fluency instruction* (pp. 204-226). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Holt, S. B., & O'Tuel, F. S. (1989). The effect of sustained silent reading and writing on achievement and attitudes of seventh and eighth grade students reading two years below grade level. *Reading Improvement, 26*, 290-297.

- Hunt, L. C. (1970/1997). The effect of self-selection, interest, and motivation upon independent, instructional, and frustrational levels. *The Reading Teacher*, 50(4), 278-282.
- Jensen, T. L., & Jensen, V. S. (2002). Sustained silent reading and young adult short stories for high school classes. *The ALAN Review*, 30(1), 58-60.
- Kelley, M., & Clausen-Grace, N. (2006). R5: The sustained silent reading makeover that transformed readers. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(2), 148-156.
- Kellner, N. R. (2005, February). Genre assessment. *Library Sparks, February 2005*. Retrieved June 24, 2009 from http://www.highsmith.com/pdf/LibrarySparks/2005/lsp_feb05_lessons.pdf
- Langford, J. C., & Allen, E. G. (1983). The effects of USSR on students' attitudes and achievement. *Reading Horizons*, 23, 194-200.
- Lee-Daniels, S. L. & Murray, B. A. (2000). DEAR me: What does it take to get children reading? *The Reading Teacher*, 54(2), 154-155.
- Leeser, J. H. (1990). USSR + USA. *The Reading Teacher*, 43(6), 429.
- Lesesne, T. S. (2003). *Making the match: The right book for the right reader at the right time, grades 4-12*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Manning, G. L. and Manning, M. (1984). What models of recreational reading make a difference? *Reading World*, 23, 375-380.
- Maynes, F. J. (1982). U.S.S.R. for poor readers. *Orbit*, 13, 3-4.
- McCracken, R. (1969). Do we want real readers? *Journal of Reading*, 12(6), 446-448.
- McCracken, R. A. (1971). Initiating sustained silent reading. *Journal of Reading*, 14(8), 521-524, 582-583.
- McCracken, R. A., & McCracken, M. J. (1978). Modeling is the key to sustained silent

- reading. *Reading Teacher*, 31, 406-408.
- McKenna, M. C., & Kear, D. J. (1990). Measuring attitude toward reading: A new tool for teachers. *Reading Teacher*, 43, 626-639.
- McKenna, M. C., Kear, D. J., & Ellsworth, R. A. (1995). Children's attitudes toward reading: A national survey. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 30, 934-956.
- Methe, S. A., & Hintze, J. M. (2003). Evaluating teacher modeling as a strategy to increase student reading behavior. *School Psychology Review*, 32(4), 617-623.
- Mikulecky, L. (1976). *The developing, field testing, and initial norming of a secondary/adult level reading attitude measure that is behaviorally oriented and based on Krathwohl's taxonomy of the affective domain*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Mikulecky, L. (1994). The need for affective literates. In E. H. Cramer & M. Castle (Eds.), *Fostering the love of reading: The affective domain in reading education* (pp. 249-254). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Mikulecky, L., & Wolf, A. (1977). Effect of uninterrupted sustained silent reading and of reading games on changes in secondary students' reading attitudes. In P. David Pearson, (Ed.), *Reading theory, research and practice*. (pp. 126-130). Clemson, SC: The National Reading Conference, Inc.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Minton, M. J. (1980). The effect of sustained silent reading upon comprehension and attitudes among ninth graders. *Journal of Reading*, 23(6), 498-502.
- Mitchell, T. L., & Ley, T. C. (1996). The reading attitudes and behaviors of high school

- students. *Reading Psychology*, 17, 65-92.
- Moore, J. C., Jones, C. J., & Miller, D. C. (1980). What we know after a decade of sustained silent reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 33, 445-450.
- Mork, T. A. (1972). Sustained silent reading in the classroom. *The Reading Teacher*, 25(5), 438-441.
- Moss, B. J. (1994). Introduction. In B. J. Moss (Ed.), *Literacy across communities*. (pp. 1-7). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Nell, V. (1988). *Lost in a book: The psychology of reading for pleasure*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Oliver, M. E. (1970). High intensity practice: The right to enjoy reading. *Education*, 19(1), 69-71.
- Ozburn, M. S. (1995). A successful high school sustained silent reading program. *English in Texas*, 26(3), 4-5.
- Parr, J. M., & Maguiness, C. (2005). Removing the *silent* from SSR: Voluntary reading as social practice. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 49(2), 98-107.
- Paulson, E. J., & Henry, J. (2002). Does the Degrees of Reading Power assessment reflect the reading process? An eye-movement examination. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 46(3), 234-244.
- Pilgreen, J. (2000). *The SSR handbook*. Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook Publishers.
- Pilgreen, J., & Krashen, S. (1993). Sustained silent reading with English as a second language high school students: Impact on reading comprehension, reading frequency, and reading enjoyment. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 22(1), 21-23.

- Pluck, M., Ghafari, E., Glynn, T., & McNaughton, S. (1984). Teacher and parent modelling of recreational reading. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 19, 114-123.
- Pyle, V. S. (1990). SSRW—Beyond silent reading. *Journal of Reading*, 33(5), 379-380.
- Questar Assessment. (2010). Degrees of Reading Power DRP Program Educational Assessment Product – Questar Assessment, Inc. Retrieved April 20, 2010 from <http://www.questarai.com/Products/DRPProgram/Pages/default.aspx>
- RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Reutzel, D. R., & Fawson, P. C. (2002). *Your classroom library: New ways to give it more teaching power: Great teacher-tested and research-based strategies for organizing your library to increase students' reading achievement*. New York: Scholastic.
- Reutzel, D. R., Fawson, P. C., & Smith, J. A. (2008). Reconsidering silent sustained reading: An exploratory study of scaffolded silent reading. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 102(1), 37-50.
- Reutzel, D. R., Jones, C. D., Fawson, P. C., & Smith, J. A. (2008). Scaffolded silent reading: A complement to guided repeated oral reading that works! *The Reading Teacher*, 62(3), 194-207.
- Reynolds, M. (2004). *I won't read and you can't make me: Reaching reluctant teen readers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Roettger, D. (1980). Elementary students' attitudes toward reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 33, 451-453.
- Roettger, D., Szymczuk, M., & Millard, J. (1979). Validation of a reading attitude scale

- for elementary students and an investigation of the relationship between attitude and achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 72(3), 138-142.
- Roozen, K. (2008). Journalism, poetry, stand-up comedy, and academic literacy: Mapping the interplay of curricular and extracurricular literate activities. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 27(1), 5-34.
- Roozen, K. (2009). From journals to journalism: Tracing trajectories of literate development. *College Composition and Communication*, 60(3), 541-572.
- Rosenblatt, L. (1976). *Literature as exploration*. New York, NY: Noble and Noble.
- Rowell, C. G. (1972). An attitude scale for reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 25(5), 442-447.
- Sadoski, M. C. (1980). Ten years of uninterrupted sustained silent reading. *Reading Improvement*, 17, 153-156.
- Schaer, B. B., Ley, T. C., Neal, K. S., and Wright, J. P. (1988). Evaluation and validation of the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 48, 181-186.
- Schultz, K., & Hull, G. (2002). Locating literacy theory in out-of-school contexts. In G. Hull & K. Schultz (Eds.), *School's out! Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice*. (pp. 11-31). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Skilton-Sylvester, E. (2002). Literate at home but not at school. In G. Hull & K. Schultz (Eds.), *School's out! Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice*. (pp. 61-90). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Smagorinsky, P. (1996). *Standards in practice grades 9-12*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Smith, M. W., & Wilhelm, J. D. (2006). *Going with the flow: How to engage boys [and girls] in*

- their literacy learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Smith, M. W., & Wilhelm, J. D. (2002). *“Reading don’t fix no Chevys”*: Literacy in the lives of young men. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Snyder, I. (2002). Silicon literacies. In I. Snyder (Ed.). *Silicon literacies: Communication, innovation, and education in the electronic age*, 3-12. London: Routledge.
- Speaker, R. B. (1990). Another twist on sustained silent reading: SSR + D. *Journal of Reading*, 34(2), 143-144.
- Stehle, C. F. (1981). *Invitational learning: A case study on the implementation of the sustained silent reading (SSR) program within the junior high school classroom*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Rochester.
- Summers, E. G., & McClelland, J. V. (1982). A field-based evaluation of sustained silent reading (SSR) in intermediate grades. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 28, 100-112.
- Swanson, B. (1982). The relationship between attitude toward reading and reading achievement. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 42, 1303-1304.
- Trudel, H. (2007). Making data-driven decisions: Silent reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(4), 308-315.
- Von Sprecken, D., & Krashen, S. (1998). Do students read during sustained silent reading? *The California Reader*, 32(1), 11-13.
- Wheldall, K., & Entwistle, J. (1988). Back in the USSR: The effect of teacher modelling of silent reading on pupils’ reading behaviour in the primary school classroom. *Educational Psychology*, 8, 51-66.
- Widdowson, D. A. M., & Dixon, R. S. (1996). The effects of teacher modeling of silent reading on students’ engagement during sustained silent reading. *Educational*

- Psychology*, 16(2), 171-180.
- Wiesendanger, K. D., & Bader, L. (1989). SSR: Its effects on students' reading habits after they complete the program. *Reading Horizons*, 29, 162-166.
- Wiesendanger, K. D., & Birlem, E. D. (1984). The effectiveness of SSR: An overview of the research. *Reading Horizons*, 24, 197-201.
- Wilhelm, J. (1994). *Developing readers: Teaching engaged and reflective reading in the middle school*. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.
- Wilhelm, J. D. (2004). *Reading IS seeing: Learning to visualize scenes, characters, ideas, and text worlds to improve comprehension and reflective reading*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.
- Wilhelm, J. D. (1997). *You gotta BE the book: Teaching engaged and reflective reading with adolescents*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Yoon, J. (2002). Three decades of sustained silent reading: A meta-analytic review of the effects of SSR on attitude toward reading. *Reading Improvement*, 39, 186-195.

Appendix A - Reading and You Attitude Survey

Name : _____ Circle one: Male Female Age: _____

Directions: Circle the number for each statement to show how much it describes you.

1. You have so many books you want to read that you put a lot of books back without finishing them.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

2. When you're waiting in class before school or when you finish your work, you pick up something to read.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

3. If you're packing for a trip, you don't want to drag along any books.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

4. You can name an author or series for which you've read most or all the books.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

5. You don't mind if you are so busy you don't have time to read.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

6. While you are going on vacation, you look for something good to read to take along.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

7. When you go to look something up, you often catch yourself reading about something else, too.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

8. You've rarely if ever read a whole book.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

9. If people ask you what's worth reading, you can't think of anything to tell them.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME
1 2 3 4

10. When you run across something you don't know, it's too much trouble to look it up.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

11. Even when you are very busy, you always find at least a few minutes to read.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

12. When you are with someone younger, it's a good idea to read a story aloud.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

13. You remember times when you go so wrapped up in a story it seemed like you were living in the book world.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

14. The picture on the cover is what makes you want to buy or check out a book.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

15. You would be disappointed if you opened a present and it turned out to be a book.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

16. When shopping or online, you like to visit a bookseller and browse for books.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

17. If you're babysitting, watching TV together makes more sense than reading aloud.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

18. After you finish reading a story, you quickly forget about what happened.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

19. When you don't have to read anything for school, you do something besides reading.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

20. You don't have any good friends who like to read or talk about books.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

21. You have a collection of books at your house that belongs to you.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

22. You've just heard about a good book you don't have in your classroom, but you've got better things to do with your money.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

23. To choose a book, you read something to find out what the book is about.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

24. You don't really need to have your own personal copies of books.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

25. There is always a good book near your bed.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

26. If people ask you what you want for your birthday, you can usually think of a book.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

27. If you have to read a book, you pick a short one so you can finish it.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

28. Sometimes you find yourself so excited about a book that you try to get your friends to read it.

NOT LIKE ME JUST LIKE ME

1 2 3 4

Appendix B - Genre Assessment

Name : _____ Circle one: Male Female Age: _____

Adapted from the following source:
http://www.highsmith.com/pdf/LibrarySparks/2005/lsp_feb05_lessons.pdf

Part I Directions: Match each of the following genres to its definition.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Autobiography | G. Romance |
| B. Biography | H. Sports |
| C. Poetry | I. Historical Fiction |
| D. Fantasy | J. Horror |
| E. Science Fiction | K. Fiction |
| F. Mystery | L. Nonfiction |

1. Written in verse, not prose; may or may not rhyme
2. Stories about people falling in and out of love
3. Stories about people involved in competitive and non-competitive activities
4. True stories about real people and/or events
5. Stories that involve magic, wizards, and mythical creatures
6. True stories about real people—dead or alive—written by other people
7. Made up stories about what might possibly happen in the future based on scientific principles
8. True stories about real people written by the person himself or herself
9. Story revolves around a problem, crime, or mystery to be solved using clues
10. Stories set in a specific time period (can be based on real-life people and/or events)
11. Made up stories about made up people and events
12. Scary stories about monsters, murderers, ghosts, etc.

Part II Directions – Match each example to its genre.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Autobiography | G. Romance |
| B. Biography | H. Sports |
| C. Poetry | I. Historical Fiction |
| D. Fantasy | J. Horror |
| E. Science Fiction | K. Fiction |
| F. Mystery | L. Nonfiction |

13. “Atticus was right. One time he said you never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them. Just standing on the Radley porch was enough.”
14. “Their faces were only inches apart, and he blinked once, then his eyes seemed to pierce right through her. Slowly his hand rose, and with exquisite gentleness he touched her cheek.”
15. “They say that weightlessness can cause disorientation, especially in children, whose sense of direction isn’t yet secure. But Ender was disoriented before he left Earth’s gravity. Before the shuttle launch even began.”
16. “The rain is raining all around,
It falls on field and tree,
It rains on the umbrella here,
And on the ships at sea.”
17. “On a morning in mid-April, 1687, the brigantine *Dolphin* left the open sea, sailed briskly across the Sound to the wide mouth of the Connecticut River and into Saybrook Harbor.”
18. “A few months after my twenty-first birthday, a stranger called to give me the news.”
19. “On glancing over my notes of the seventy odd cases in which I have during the last eight years studied the methods of my friend Sherlock Holmes...”
20. “John Adams was a lawyer and a father, a graduate of Harvard College, the husband of Abigail Smith Adams, the father of four children.”
21. “‘Elves and Dragons!’ I says to him. ‘Cabbages and potatoes are better for me and you. Don’t go getting mixed up in the business of your betters, or you’ll land in trouble too big for you,’ I says to him.”
22. “Wicks said: There’s blood and broken glass and charred paper in there...but there’s no one in that room at all.’ Paul Sheldon looked at Wicks, and then he began to scream. He was still screaming when he fainted.”

23. “Harry is every coach’s dream kid: He shows up for every practice early, stays late and is enthusiastic. Harry is also every coach’s nightmare: He has neither the instinct nor the physical talent for the game.”

24. “In 1939, people fishing off the coast of South Africa caught a fish none of them had ever seen before. Two meters (6 feet) long and bright blue, with odd lumps on either side of its tail fin, the fish was a coelacanth [SEE-luh-kanth]. They were thought to have become extinct in the days of the dinosaurs.”

Appendix C - DEAR Contract

I, _____ promise to read a book in each of the following 10 genres over the course of the semester:

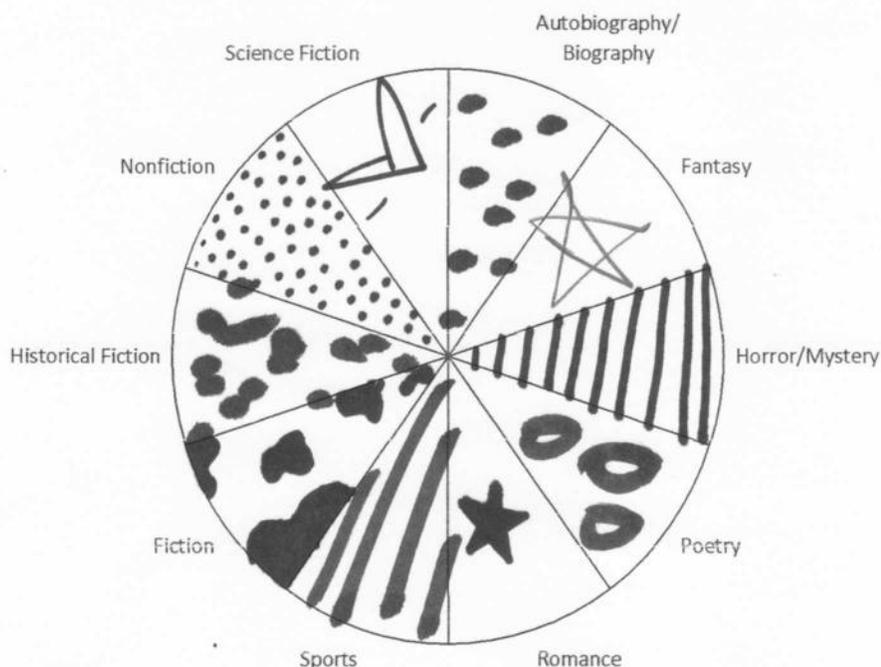
- Autobiography or Biography
- Horror or Mystery
- Fantasy
- Poetry
- Romance
- Sports
- Fiction
- Historical Fiction
- Nonfiction
- Science Fiction.

I will finish each book by the proposed deadline and turn in the writing assignments for 50 points each.

<u>Genre</u>	<u>Proposed Finish Date</u>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

DEAR Assignments Spring 2010 - Wide Writing Genre Wheel

Directions: As you finish reading a book in each of the genres and turning in the completed written assignments, color in the genre wheel. You should have a complete pie chart by the end of the semester.
(50 points per assignment = 500 points total)



Autobiography or Biography – After reading either an autobiography OR a biography, report the story of the person's life.

Fantasy and Science Fiction – After reading a book in each of these genres, write your own fantasy and science fiction stories, based on what you read. **(2 assignments)**

Horror or Mystery– After reading a horror or mystery, write your own story, similar to what you read. Give the reader clues so he/she can guess who the murderer/ monster is who is terrorizing the characters in your story.

Poetry – After reading a collection of poetry (either by one author or multiple authors), choose your favorite poem and write an original poem imitating its style. Include your inspiration poem.

Romance – After reading a romance, write your own romantic story, including a happy ending, based on what you read.

Sports – After reading in this genre, either choose your favorite sports figure and write a newspaper article detailing his or her career OR write an expository essay explaining how to play the sport, based on what you read.

Fiction and Historical Fiction – After reading a book in each of these genres, write your own fictional stories, including well-developed characters and plot. For historical fiction, focus on a particular setting. **(2 assignments)**

Nonfiction - After reading a book in this genre, write your own nonfiction essay on a topic of your choice from the book you read.