
THE READING PARADIGM

A Journal of the Alabama Literacy Association

Volume 14, Issue 1

December 2020



The Alabama Literacy Association is the local affiliate of International Literacy Association. Established in 1968, the Alabama Literacy Association, formerly known as Alabama Reading Association, serves the state of Alabama to promote literacy for all ages.

The Reading Paradigm (RP) is the peer-reviewed journal of the Alabama Literacy Association that provides research-based teaching ideas to literacy educators. The journal publishes articles covering topics such as applying literacy research to classroom practice and using strategies to help all learners succeed. Topics may include, but are not limited to, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and programs for diverse populations of literacy learners.

Full-length articles and brief Teaching Tips are accepted for consideration through peer review. In addition, RP publishes informal, personal essays from classroom teachers for the non-peer-reviewed Voices from the Classroom.

RP is published online twice each year in June and December. Submission deadlines are April 1 for June publication and October 1 for December publication.



*The Journal of the
Alabama Literacy Association*

Volume 14, No. 1, December 2020

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Letter from the Editor

I doubt if anyone will forget the year 2020. The pandemic has not only affected the personal health of people globally, but it has touched every aspect of daily living. I believe I can speak for all of us when I say, “We are ready for normal, whatever that is!” Person to person schooling, appointments, conferences, dining, entertaining, etc. had to be omitted, rescheduled, and foregone completely. Because the Alabama Literacy Association had no “in person” fall conference, the printed version of the Paradigm could not be distributed. The ALA executive committee agreed that there would be a number fourteen edition; it would just take on a different format. It is our hope that you will find the inaugural online issue to meet your needs in providing excellent professional development reading. The editorial staff is grateful to concerned educators for the quality contributions for this issue. We wish for a safe and happy ending to this Covid-19 year and an exciting, safe 2021.

Betty Dean Newman



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Beyond the Scores: Digging Deeper into Miscues to Adjust Instruction that Works

Abstract

In 2019, 35% of fourth-graders performed at the proficient level in reading (NCES, 2019). In Alabama, scores decreased from 2017 to 2019. In response, Alabama has developed new literacy legislation requiring schools to turn attention to early reading skills. At the same time, teachers indicate that the skill of analyzing data is one that takes time and practice to apply. Research indicates that teachers need more professional development to analyze data effectively and design interventions and instruction based on the data. Looking beyond the numbers can be a daunting task that eludes even the most experienced educators. However, by following a process to identify sub-skills, categorize miscues, and adjust instruction, teachers can address students' individual misconceptions and close learning gaps efficiently. This teaching tip explains one method for processing data at a deeper level to design individualized instruction for emergent readers.

Beyond the Scores: Digging Deeper into Miscues to Adjust Instruction that Works

Okay, your task today is to look at the data from your class and identify all the student scores. Determine three groups for your students: those performing above proficient; those performing just at or just below proficient; and those performing significantly below proficient. I will be assisting you as you work to take a deeper look at your student scores. We are going to pull the test booklets for your lowest performing students. This will allow us to determine exactly why they are performing at that level so we can individualize instruction.

- Mrs. D., Reading Specialist

“Mrs. D.” (first author, blinded for peer-review), a reading coach for her elementary school, leads a data analysis and planning meeting. Rather than simply looking at scores provided, she is encouraging her teachers to dive deeper into the data to better understand why students are performing at the level they are. Walker and colleagues (2018) ascertained, “teacher anxiety pertaining to DDDM [data-driven decision-making] can potentially interfere with the implementation of data use within the K-12 education system” (p. 478). Mrs. D. is encouraging teachers to look more closely at their data, conduct in-depth analysis, and prepare interventions that target specific reading skills.

Data analysis is part of education terminology and has been for some time. As a result of No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001), data analysis has shifted from reporting numbers to integrating data into nearly every educational decision. Many teacher education programs include one or more courses on data analysis, school districts allocate hours to data meetings, and school funding is predicated on reporting data. For example, the Alabama Literacy Act

provides the lowest-performing 5% of schools an assigned reading coach from the state department in addition to the school-based literacy coach. Moats (2009) affirmed, “unfortunately, current educational policies and funding practices continue to focus on program selection, school organization, and student test scores—not teachers, the contexts in which they teach, or the leadership and professional development required to ensure ‘teacher quality’ (p. 387). Policymakers expect teachers to synchronize instruction with data. Yet, teachers need models of good decision-making practices in order to make precise instructional decisions when using data effectively (Fisher & Frey, 2007).

Analyzing data in a way that informs teaching is something entirely different from simply discussing data after teaching has taken place. The skill of analyzing data is one that takes time and practice. Looking beyond the numbers can be a daunting task that eludes even the most dedicated educators. The purpose of this teaching tip is to provide teachers with a step-by-step process to follow when analyzing data and student miscues for improved, individualized instruction. Teachers and school administrators can use this structure to guide their own data analysis and inspire their colleagues to look beyond the scores. If you have been overwhelmed by data and different teaching beliefs, do not worry; we have been there.

A Historical Perspective of Literacy Beliefs

Many theories and initiatives have shaped how literacy instruction has evolved over time. Here, we take a look at some of the most influential. Beginning in the early 1900’s, theories were based on how students learn from behavioristic models with Classical Conditioning Theory, Connectionism, and the Theory of Cognitive Development. In the 1970’s-1980’s, our knowledge of reading instruction surged with many current, on-going beliefs that highlighted

authentic texts, social interactions, and family involvement: Whole Language Theory, Social Constructivism, Emergent Literacy Theory, Metacognitive Theory, Family Literacy Theory, Stage Models of Reading Theory, Parallel-Processing Model, Phonological-Core Variable-Difference Model, Double-Deficit Hypothesis, and Neuroscientific Theory. With so many theories supporting reading, differing beliefs and approaches are expected.

The infamous “reading wars” between the whole language approach and the phonics-based instructional approach has been used to politicize and legislate requirements for teachers for some time now. Both sides can ultimately agree that learning to read is of utmost importance for any child’s education. A balanced approach is most often accepted, which requires teachers to identify their students’ needs in order to provide the most effective, individualized instruction at each stage of the learning to read process. Numerous researchers have touted the benefits of miscue analysis; Goodman (1969), Marie Clay (1979), and Fountas and Pinnell (1996) have all provided guidance and researched the benefits of analyzing student miscues for a variety of purposes. In the approach we propose, teachers build on this strong research-base to develop targeted interventions that address gaps in students’ progression of foundational reading skills.

Current State of Reading in the United States

In 2019, 35% of US fourth-graders, and 31% of Alabama fourth-graders specifically, performed at or above the proficient level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessment (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019). Recently, many states have adopted literacy laws, and some states have even adopted legislation that requires third-grade retention for students not meeting grade level reading benchmarks; Tennessee

adopted in 2012, Mississippi in 2013, Georgia in 2014, and Alabama in 2019. To meet these demands, schools are turning their attention to improving early reading skills to meet new requirements of proficiency by third-grade.

The National Reading Panel (2000) named the “big five” components of reading, designating a strong emphasis on phonemic awareness and phonics for the early reading years. Between phonemic awareness and phonics lies the understanding of the alphabetic principle. The What Works Clearinghouse Guide, *Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd grade* (2016) provides support in recommendation three, “teach students how to read a word systematically from left to right by combining each successive letter or combination of letters into one sound. This is called blending” (p. 23). Therefore, alphabetic principle understanding and blending are key concepts that should be instructional foci in first grade.

According to Cummings and colleagues (2011), one widely accepted way to assess the alphabetic principle is using a Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) measure. In an NWF measure, students read consonant-vowel-consonant sequences such as /tav/, which are not actual words. From this type of measure, educators assess if children have mastered the skill without figuring out the word by sight, context, or prior knowledge of the word. Cummings and colleagues (2011) state, “there are over 14 published studies that document the reliability and predictive validity of NWF (Nonsense Word Fluency, Dynamic Measurement Group, 2008), but less research has been devoted to links between NWF and instructional practices” (p. 284). This gap in the research shows that while students were being assessed with NWF, this data has not been linked

directly to teaching practices. To help students, “Mrs. D.” wanted to create these links between NWF and instructional activities within the classroom.

Challenges to Analyzing Data

Mrs. D. is a white, female reading specialist working in a medium-sized, suburban, Title I school district in the Southeastern United States. She holds an Education Specialist degree in teacher leadership, a Master’s degree in reading, and is currently completing an Education Doctorate in literacy education at a large, research-intensive university. Mrs. D. brings her advanced experience and education to data analysis, which informs her desire to dig deeper into data. Because of her extensive experience, she has developed advanced skills in data analysis and a deeper understanding of how data informs instruction.

Mrs. D.’s experience is particularly valuable when considering emergent reading. First-grade reading is an especially data-laden field. The ranges of students’ individual skills can seem like an unending chasm that teachers must successfully bridge before launching the students into the world of deep reading comprehension in second grade. Skills that first-graders must master are letter naming fluency, letter-sound fluency, reading fluency, reading accuracy, comprehension, writing, and others. Moreover, based on data, a teacher may recognize that students are not mastering one or more of those reading skills. However, identifying a child’s root problem can overwhelm even the most experienced first-grade teacher.

Alabama’s Literacy Act requires educators to focus on students’ mastery of foundational skills to the extent of formulating an individualized reading plan to link underperforming screening assessment scores to appropriate interventions. This is a new level of state guidance and in-depth monitoring for schools through yearly Literacy Act data collection. The task of

analyzing miscues to match appropriate interventions and classroom instruction practices is on the forefront of every Alabama educator's mind as these reading plans are developed across the state. In order to better prepare educators for these individualized plans, we model how to customize those plans for the most foundational reading skills.

According to Scarborough's Reading Rope (2001) and Gough and Tunmer's (1986) Simple View of Reading, letter-sound fluency, word recognition, and decoding skills are foundational to other reading skills. This revelation influenced educators' understanding of how children learn to read and what stumbling blocks can prevent a child from mastering the reading process. This research suggested focusing on word recognition and decoding skills first, which is where Mrs. D. started with data analysis. Teachers can find the most foundational skill and start there when working to build children's emergent reading skills.

Mrs. D.'s Approach to Categorizing Student Miscues

Since alphabetic principle skills are crucial to the early stages of reading, Mrs. D. dug into the data from the Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) (Good & Kaminski, 2002) NWF measure. Other recommended screening assessments, such as Aimsweb (2008), include similar measures for nonsense word decoding. These measures all seek to investigate a student's understanding and fluency of the alphabetic principle. When looking at student NWF scores, Mrs. D. quickly realized that the overall scores themselves gave very little information, indicating only whether a student had met a benchmark or not. Beyond that, the numerical scores really did not tell much about the students' strengths or areas of need for instructional decision-making. Mrs. D. needed to dig deeper and see the students' actual miscues to understand *why* they were not correctly reading the syllables on the assessment.

To help, Mrs. D. had to know what the students did not understand and where they were in the sequence of reading skills that were to be demonstrated on this assessment. This approach inspired Mrs. D. to make the leap from looking at the concise, one-page numerical report to pulling out the students' individual testing booklets and looking at each student's actual miscues. Let us be honest; this approach took time. Time is often in short supply in schools, which is why the focus is commonly on the summary of numerical scores from these types of screening assessments. This approach was not as fast as looking at the concise report that comprised one table of numerical scores. However, it was necessary to understand the students' misconceptions. Figure 1 is an example of what a student test booklet might look like. Each miscue is analyzed to identify the student's needs.

Figure 1.

Sample Student NWF Assessment – Grapheme/Phoneme Confusions

<i>DIBELS® Nonsense Word Fluency</i>					
p o v	r z	<u>h a l</u>	j o k	b e l	<u>11</u> /15
i h	<u>t u m</u>	k j	r e g	<u>u t</u>	<u>9</u> /13
n e j	h o s	<u>u m</u>	w a f v	<u>j o z</u>	<u>10</u> /14
k e v	h o d	d e k	e b	l a j	<u>1</u> /14
n e n	v a d	w i d	w i l	y u k	<u> </u> /15
n e k	f e g	d o z	u n	t e f	<u> </u> /14
y a l	e p	v u s	k i c	b a l	<u> </u> /14
p o l	e m	j e j	p u f	n u f	<u> </u> /14
t u m	u f	n o v	z a j	v e s	<u> </u> /14
n e j	u g	k e s	k u b	l o s	<u> </u> /14
Total correct letter sounds (CLS):					<u>31</u>
Total words recoded completely and correctly (WRC):					<u>5</u>
Error Pattern:					

The red-inked markings on the collection of test booklets indicated that some children were not reading the correct consonant phonemes for particular graphemes; confusing /k/ for the grapheme g and /b/ for the grapheme d. Vowel sounds were being confused as well; /e/ being read as /i/. Some students struggled with automaticity and were simply not reading enough sequences to meet the benchmark. Finally, some of the marked miscues indicated that students were reading long vowel sounds when they should have been reading the CVC sequences with short vowel sounds.

Mrs. D. started by asking, “what skills do I want the students to show mastery of with this assessment?” That was an easy question to answer. They needed to show mastery of the alphabetic principle by correctly reading the consonant and vowel phonemes, be automatic with the phonemes so they could blend the CVC sequences, and know that the nonsense syllables are closed syllables so the vowel is read as a short vowel.

Ordering Nonsense Word Sub-skills

With the goals of the assessment in mind, and the data to support where each student was academically, Mrs. D. could plan specific instruction to help each child meet that goal. If students understood three concepts: (1) mastery of consonant and vowel phonemes for each represented grapheme, (2) automaticity of phonemes for each represented grapheme, and (3) mastery of decoding closed syllables, they could easily be successful on the nonsense word blending measure and have a firm foundation of the alphabetic principle needed to learn more advanced phonics skills. These three concepts became the method for categorizing students’ needs. Mrs. D. looked at each student who fell below the benchmark and analyzed their miscues;

then, assigned each student to one of these three categories based on the skill they needed to master.

Some students had multiple types of miscues. In that case, Mrs. D. prioritized the most foundational sub-skill first, understanding that once the students mastered that skill, they could move to the next skill. The school's curriculum introduced consonant and vowel sounds in kindergarten, so that category served as miscue category number one. Next, students should become fluent and automatic with those sounds, so automaticity became miscue category number two. Finally, decoding the CVC sequences as a closed syllable became category number three since it was the most advanced sub-skill. Mrs. D. wanted to ensure that students were not confusing the closed syllables with the recently taught open or vowel-consonant-e syllables since miscue marks indicated many of vowels were incorrectly read as long vowels. Having the students' mispronunciations written in their testing booklets was essential to this process. Now that Mrs. D. knew what gaps each student had, she could make plans to close those gaps.

Tiered Interventions and Strong Core Instruction

“Tiered interventions” is common education lingo, but what does it really mean? When we visit a doctor and receive a prescription to get well, that medication will fix the exact problem, or illness, that ails us. Tiered interventions should function in the same way. Mrs. D. needed to ensure that what was taught in the students' intervention groups would directly fix the misunderstanding(s). However, when the data was analyzed and students were placed into their assigned miscue categories, Mrs. D. quickly realized that there were a high number of students not meeting these goals.

At this point in the data analysis process, the question became, “Is this a core instruction problem?” To effectively make use of tiered intervention times allotted within the master schedule, Mrs. D. made the decision to address these student needs during core instruction. When more than 20% of the student population demonstrates a similar need, a school can focus efforts on tier one, core instructional time to make the biggest impact on student learning.

Students received a daily, five to ten-minute mini-intervention from their homeroom teacher during tier one instructional time. These supports were embedded into tier one small group meetings. Students received the following instruction based on their assigned miscue category (see Table 1).

Table 1

Table of Miscue Categories and Instructional Adjustments

Miscue Category	Instructional Focus	Instructional Activities
1. Consonant Vowel Phoneme Miscues	Multisensory articulation instruction	Teachers hung consonant and vowel articulation charts in their classrooms to use in conjunction with grapheme cards. These charts categorize the ways our mouths articulate each sound, grouping sounds that are similar in ways together. For example, on the consonant chart, the /b/ and /p/ are close to one another on the chart because mouth placement is the same for these phonemes. The only difference is the /b/ phoneme is voiced while the /p/ phoneme is unvoiced. As teachers moved through these charts, students used mirrors and talked about their mouth positioning and airflow when making each sound. Teachers had students describe and categorize phonemes by similar characteristics. Speech pathologists are a great resource for classroom teachers for articulation charts and support. The prescribed students spent five to ten minutes, daily, working on these activities.

2. Automaticity Deficit	Grapheme-phoneme flashcard and manipulative practice	Teachers introduced new sets of flashcards that had the grapheme and a picture for a keyword to help students remember the phoneme. For example, on the Dd card, a picture of a dog was visible since dog starts with the phoneme /d/. Teachers spent five to ten minutes daily working with the prescribed students using the flashcards. Students responded chorally and received individual turns. Once students' automaticity improved, teachers transitioned to an advanced set of flashcards that only had the grapheme. This change removed the scaffold of the keyword picture. Students continued working in the group until they demonstrated automaticity with the advanced card set.
3. Closed Syllable Confusions	Spiral syllable-type review for closed, open, and VCe syllables	Teachers worked five to ten minutes daily with these students to ensure that they did not have any misunderstandings or confusions about how to read the vowel sound in each of the three syllable types. Teachers started by reviewing closed syllables and teaching the rule for the short vowel sound in a closed syllable. Next, teachers reviewed the rules for the long vowel sound in an open syllable and the long vowel sound in VCe syllables. Students used hand signals to identify syllable types: a closed fist for closed syllables, an open palm for open syllables, and the sign language e gesture for VCe syllables. Students sorted syllable cards, built syllables with letter tiles, and read mixed syllable lists. The teacher's focus was on whether students were consistently reading the vowel sounds correctly in all three syllable types and if students could explain why the vowel was either short or long.

Monitoring Progress

Once Mrs. D. assigned students to a miscue category and teachers began teaching the prepared lessons, she provided support as the reading coach by modeling, co-teaching, and offering lesson feedback. Teachers monitored the students' growth twice a month by using nonsense word progress monitoring probes. This allowed teachers to compare student progress to their original screening test and check for appropriate growth. By progress monitoring, more data was collected to help inform with which phonemes and graphemes students needed additional practice.

If a student had multiple types of miscues and joined the most foundational skill group, Mrs. D. and teachers monitored their progress and kept groups fluid. If a student mastered consonant and vowel phonemes, but then also needed to work on automaticity, they moved to that group next. A student only left the assigned group once he or she had successfully and regularly met the upcoming benchmark goal. Once a student could attain that next, upcoming goal, the alphabetic principle gap was closed. This system of analyzing miscues to plan instruction helped create a direct link between the student misconceptions of key concepts and the instruction they received in their classroom.

General Steps for Analyzing Other Types of Miscues

The process detailed here was specific to DIBELS NWF data; however, this process could work for any reading skill and with any screening or benchmark assessment tool. Figure 2 includes the steps Mrs. D. took to use a miscue analysis for assigning interventions and adjusting instruction to close reading gaps.

Figure 2.

General Steps for Analyzing Miscues



Conclusion

This process could be used for any reading sub-skills students need to master. Phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension all have sub-skills that students must master to perform on grade-level. By looking at an assessment's numerical scores, teachers are unable to do more than state if a student is performing on the level expected and order students from least achieving to most achieving. By focusing on the more detailed information provided by the assessment, short-answer responses, or assessor notations, teachers can make better informed decisions about the type of instruction needed for students.

It is critical for teachers to dig deeper when analyzing data and to use that information to plan instruction. If we do not address our students' learning gaps as efficiently as possible, how will they close in time so that new, secondary gaps do not form? Taking the extra steps and working to analyze your students' miscues to provide tiered interventions and adjust instruction might be the missing link in supporting your students' achievement; if so, try it!

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Toward Early & Accurate Identification of Risk for Dyslexia: Exploring the Clinical Utility of the Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST)

Abstract

With dyslexia emerging as a policy priority in education, many states, including Alabama, now mandate universal screening systems. Alabama requires that kindergarten dyslexia screening include measures of a) letter naming skills, b) letter sound skills, c) phoneme segmentation skills, and d) nonsense word fluency skills (Alabama State Board of Education, 2016). In Grades 1 & 2, Alabama requires that screening include a) accuracy of word reading, b) spelling skills, c) phonemic decoding efficiency skills, and d) sight word reading efficiency. Yet how to weigh and prioritize each of these skills raises a new and crucial set of questions. This manuscript describes a mixed methods study that investigated the DIBELS PSF and the PAST, with the goal of determining a universal reading screener that adequately assesses phonemic awareness and has clinical utility. Implications and suggestions for educators involved in conducting universal reading screenings and the subsequent reading instruction will be explored.

Keywords

Universal reading screening, Dyslexia, DIBELS, phonemic awareness

Declarations

Funding: The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflicts of interest/Competing interests: The author declares no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Once an unrecognized issue, dyslexia has recently emerged as a policy priority in education. Forty-six states have dyslexia-specific laws, 24 of which, including Alabama, have passed legislation within the past five years (Youman & Mather, 2018). Although states vary in their approach to dyslexia education reform, common themes in newer legislation include the adoption of multi-tiered systems of support, the use of explicit instruction, changes to teacher preparation and training, and an increased emphasis on intervention and screening procedures (Gearin, et al., 2018). Most states now mandate universal screening systems (National Center on Improving Literacy, 2019) to identify students who are at-risk for future academic difficulties. Yet screening for reading difficulties is as challenging as it is important because reading itself is a complicated process. Successful screening calls for the right tools, the right staff, and the right training all coming together around students at the right time.

Screeners in education work much like tools measuring blood pressure during a doctor's visit to check for heart disease. They provide brief assessments of a particular skill or ability that is highly predictive of a later outcome. As such, screeners are designed to quickly differentiate students into one of two groups: 1) those who require intervention and 2) those who do not (Gaab, 2017). Screening for dyslexia risk, however, is very different from assessing for dyslexia diagnosis. Screening simply determines the level of risk, and it is not appropriate to use screening results to formally diagnose whether an individual actually has dyslexia (National Center on Improving Literacy, 2019). Moreover, although early screenings increase the likelihood of identifying struggling readers "before they fall" (Torgesen, 2004), these assessments must be carefully designed and administered when assessing young children and

special populations to serve both the student and the teacher. Far too often, students are left to “wait to fail” and aren’t diagnosed with reading difficulties until after third grade. Estimates of the prevalence of dyslexia range from 5 to 17.5% (Shaywitz, 1998), with some suggesting rates in the population as high as 20% (Youman and Mather, 2013). Reducing the prevalence of dyslexia symptoms requires targeted intervention, ideally as early as possible (Fletcher, et al., 2007).

Starting with “SCREENED” Screeners

To guide educators in conducting earlier and more accurate assessments, Gaab (2017) recommends eight key characteristics to consider when planning a screening. The first letters of these characteristics spell the mnemonic device: SCREENED.

Short: Effective screenings are brief and target skills that are highly predictive of later reading outcomes (Jenkins, Hudson, & Johnson, 2007). A screening battery should be no longer than 30 minutes. The goal is to quickly identify children at risk, not to complete a full evaluation or make diagnoses.

Comprehensive: Although brief, a screening should include key domains, including phonological awareness, letter knowledge (letter-sound knowledge for kindergarten and older), rapid automatized naming, vocabulary, listening comprehension, and family history. It should also be conducted on *all* students.

Resourceful: Screeners need to be cost efficient (Schatschneider, Petscher, & Williams, 2008), which means using existing tools and staff, if possible. Most schools/districts already own assessments that can be used to assess the key domains in young children since these are already

used in second or third grade to assess children who repeatedly struggle to learn to read.

Currently employed school psychologists, school psychometrists, reading specialists and special education teachers who are already trained to administer these assessments can easily learn to adapt them to assess more students earlier.

Early: Screening should be done early. As early as preschool, but no later than kindergarten. Deficits in phonological awareness, rapid automatized naming, verbal working memory, and letter knowledge have been shown to be robust precursors of dyslexia in children as young as age three (Puolakanaho et al., 2007). A longitudinal study conducted in Finland tracked children from birth until age 8 and demonstrated that early differential brain measures could distinguish at-risk children who later developed reading problems from those who did not (Leppanen et al., 2010).

ESL/Dialect Inclusion: Children who are English learners or speakers of dialect must be included. Minority children and children from low socioeconomic backgrounds have been shown to have an increased risk for developing reading problems, which can be explained by differences in the quality and quantity of preschool literacy experiences and overall language exposure (Washington, 2001). Prior to third grade, culturally and linguistically diverse children with English reading difficulties are under-diagnosed and after third grade, these students are often over-diagnosed (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011)

Neurobiology/Genetics: The most efficient and affordable screening is to ask parents whether there is a family history of reading disabilities. Dyslexia occurs in up to 50% of

individuals who have a first-degree relative with dyslexia (Pennington, 1991). The risk and severity of dyslexia is higher when both parents are affected (Wolff & Melngalailis, 1994).

Evidence-based response to screening: A well-done early screening will not make a difference if classroom instruction and intervention does not target the identified needs with evidence-based practices. The goal is not to refer the at-risk children to special education but to address their specific needs within the regular classroom environment.

Developmentally appropriate: The assessment components of the screening need to be developmentally appropriate for the targeted age range.

SELECTING THE RIGHT SCREENING TOOLS

In addition to these characteristics, screening tools must be reliable and valid for the purposes of identifying students who are at risk for dyslexia, and, importantly, they must possess adequate classification accuracy (Hosp & Ardoin, 2008). Dyslexia is more than a simple reading problem; it is defined as a learning challenge that is neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the delivery of effective classroom instruction. Other related concerns may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003). Under- and over identification of students who are at risk for learning difficulties can both have considerable instructional and resource implications (Petscher, Kim, & Foorman, 2011). Students who are under identified may

not receive needed additional targeted instruction, and students who are over identified may receive additional instruction they do not need.

Consequently, screening for reading difficulties requires multiple measures depending on where readers are in their development. Many states reflect this comprehensive approach in their screening requirements, and most states require that dyslexia screening encompass a number of critical skills shown that underlie dyslexia risk:

- Phonological awareness – the ability to recognize and manipulate the sound structure of language.
- Rapid automatized naming – the ability to quickly retrieve information from phonological memory.
- Alphabetic principle – the ability to associate letters with sounds to read words.
- Word reading – the ability to fluently and accurately read words using sound-symbol correspondences and sight word recognition.

For example, Alabama requires that kindergarten dyslexia screening include measures of a) letter naming skills, b) letter sound skills, c) phoneme segmentation skills, and d) nonsense word fluency skills (Alabama State Board of Education, 2016). In Grades 1& 2, Alabama requires that screening include a) accuracy of word reading, b) spelling skills, c) phonemic decoding efficiency skills, and d) sight word reading efficiency. Yet how to weigh and prioritize each skill raises a new and crucial set of questions.

Phonological Awareness and Prioritizing Phoneme Manipulation

Phonological awareness is essential for reading success and is one of the most common deficits associated with dyslexia. This awareness can be defined as a conscious sensitivity to the sound structure of language (Lane, 2004). More specifically, phonemic awareness is a subset of the broader category of phonological awareness and is the *conscious* awareness of and ability to “play with” the sound structures in oral language (Paulson & Moats, 2010). This ability to manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words (Kilpatrick, 2015) represents the most sophisticated and advanced form of phonological awareness (Kilpatrick & McInnis, 2015). Phonemic awareness is also central to successful screening for dyslexia, but its complexities and strategic role in developing reading skills may be poorly understood.

Steps of Phonemic Awareness Ladder

As has long been established, phonemic awareness is not easily established, and children need explicit instruction to gain the necessary skills (Adams, 1994). In fact, educators must understand that there are various steps of phonemic awareness, and that each of these steps represents a skill that can be developed through targeted instruction and practice. These steps build from the simplest phonemic awareness skills at the bottom of the ladder to the most complex at the top. The first step, phoneme isolation, involves knowing that a word is made up of a sequence of sounds and that the individual sounds in words can be differentiated from one



another, such as being able to pull the first sound off of spoken words, as in /h/, hat, or /s/, soap. The second step up is blending sounds, which involves listening to and pulling together isolated phonemes to create words, such as sounding out a word by using letter-sound knowledge to say each sound in a word (/c/ /ă/ /t/), and then quickly

blend the sounds together to read the whole word (cat). This process requires students to hold individual sound elements in their working memory. The third step up is phoneme segmentation, which is the ability to divide a spoken word into its component sounds (phonemes). Students are given a word like “sad”, and then they segment it, or “stretch” the phonemes, /s/ /ă/ /d/.

Educators tend to focus heavily on these lower steps of phonemic awareness, particularly the third step, phoneme segmentation. As a result, segmentation tasks are the most widely used and, typically, the only measure of phonological awareness within popular tests and screeners like the DIBELS, AIMSweb, PALS, and easyCBM (Kilpatrick, 2015).

Often overlooked are the top three *manipulation* steps, consisting of the advanced skills of phoneme addition (step 4), deletion (step 5), and substitution (final and top step 6). Significantly, manipulation appears to incorporate the skills tapped by *all* the other phonological awareness tasks described above. Phonological manipulation tasks require students to hold phonemes in their working memory long enough to isolate specific phonemes, add, delete, or change specific phonemes, and then blend the phonemes back together to form a new word. For these reasons, manipulation tasks appear to do a better job of assessing phonological awareness than simple segmentation tasks (Kilpatrick, 2012). Students who make it to the top substitution step are able to quickly and easily map printed words to permanent memory (Cardoso-Martins, et al., 2002; Dixon, et al., 2002). Students who do not reach the top step typically struggle in reading (Greenberg, Ehri, & Perin, 1997). Not surprisingly, Kilpatrick (2015) found that “phonemic manipulation has substantial long-term impact on reading.”

Phonemic Awareness Screeners – what we are missing

One difficulty educators face in screening, however, is selecting among the many ways to assess phonological awareness. The commercially available phonological awareness screeners employ a variety of tasks, including rhyming, segmenting, blending, isolating, and categorizing (Anthony, et al., 2003; Yopp, 1988). What is lacking in these approaches, however, is a prioritization of the more complex manipulation steps (Kroese, et al., 2000; Wagner, et al., 1999). Research has demonstrated that manipulation tasks are superior measures of phonological awareness because they are the best predictors of word-level reading proficiency and are most closely related to reading connected text (Kilpatrick, 2015). Moreover, manipulation tasks cast a wider net in capturing more of the metalinguistic underpinnings associated with the construct of phonological awareness (Kilpatrick, 2012). Without prioritizing manipulation tasks, the goal of early and universal screening will remain out of reach for many children

One Promising Tool: PAST and Why It's Different

The Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST) shows promise as a clinically useful screening tool that prioritizes these signature manipulation steps. The PAST measures and emphasizes manipulation tasks. As a result, it correlates more strongly with word-level reading and phonics skills than most phonological awareness assessments in current use and can function as a valuable supplement to existing normed test batteries (Kilpatrick & McInnis, 2015).

From a practical standpoint, the PAST can be used with all grade levels, including PK. Additionally, it provides several alternate versions, so it can be used for progress monitoring, and it is free. To accurately assess phonological awareness, the PAST includes items involving manipulations, such as deleting ending sounds and deleting and substituting penultimate sounds in single syllable words ending in a blend (e.g., going from lift to list by changing a /f/ to /s/).

This tactic is based upon Ehri's theory of sight-word recognition, which implies that if students are phonemically aware of every sound in every position within spoken words, they possess an advantage when learning to read (Ehri, 2005; Kilpatrick, 2015). The PAST also provides feedback for every incorrect item. This procedure ensures that students' phonological awareness skills are being assessed and avoiding confusion with task demands. Another distinctive feature of the PAST is its timing element and associated dual scoring system. When an item is given, the examiner mentally counts "one thousand one, one thousand two." If the student responds to that item before the examiner reaches the word "two" in the silently counted phrase, the student receives an automatic score for that item. If the student responds after the examiner silently completes that phrase, the student receives a score as correct, but not automatic. All correct and automatic responses count toward the student's total correct score. However, only those items that were responded to within two seconds count toward the student's automatic score. This distinguishes students with phoneme proficiency from those who could respond correctly on a phoneme awareness task by using some compensating mental/phonic strategy.

Despite a plethora of studies on the relationship between phonological awareness and reading, there has been very little research conducted to determine which of the many possible approaches to phonological awareness assessment is most clinically useful. Clinical utility is the main value of an assessment since it includes the instrument's reliability, validity, and practicality; such utility value also considers availability and cost, ease of learning and administration, ease of interpreting results, relevance to practice, time effectiveness, and also to what extent the assessment results support data-based decision-making. Few studies have investigated these practical questions to assist educators in moving beyond lower-level tests of

segmentation skills to superior tools that prioritize phoneme manipulation while offering additional benefits to students and administrators.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this mixed methods study is to evaluate the clinical utility of the PAST as a dyslexia screener for early detection of at-risk children in relation to a traditional instrument, the DIBELS PSF. The following research questions guided this study:

- 1) Are the commonly used DIBELS PSF and the new PAST positively correlated for assessing risk for dyslexia in a test of kindergarten and first grade students?
- 2) What are the perceptions of examiners who administer the PAST regarding its social validity and clinical utility?

Methods

Participants

Because the assessments fell within the description of normal classroom activities, the research and survey were deemed exempt from further review by the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Internal Review Board (IRB). Participants were 107 Kindergarten students and 92 First Grade students from a suburban, private elementary school in Birmingham, AL. No specific data were collected on gender or race as the study's purpose was strictly to investigate the PAST measure. All students in Kindergarten and First Grade were recruited, and there were no pre-selection criteria other than the absence of any visual, hearing, or cognitive disability. Other participants in this study were the 30 adult examiners of the PAST, who were trained and had experience in reading assessments.

Materials

1) DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2002), a nationally-recognized early literacy screening system, assesses students' skills in three areas: first, phonological awareness (assessed via an Initial Sounds Fluency test that measures a child's recognition and production of early word sounds and a Phonemic Segmentation Fluency test that measures a child's ability to produce individual word phonemes); second, alphabetic principle (assessed via a Nonsense Word Fluency test that measures knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and letter blending); and, third, reading fluency (assessed via an Oral Reading Fluency test). Scores on each DIBELS test are used as predictive indicators of future student reading performance. Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF) is a standardized, individually administered subtest that assesses students' ability to identify the individual phonemes of a word presented verbally. For example, if a test administrator provided the word "cat," a complete response would be "/c//a/ /t/." A student's final score represents the total number of correct phonemes produced in one minute. Items at the beginning of PSF forms include two phonemes, but progress up to six phonemes by the end of first grade forms.

2) PAST (Kilpatrick, 2015) is a non-commercial (free), targeted screening measure of a child's phonological knowledge and skills. It is a criterion-referenced test used to determine a student's level of phonological awareness (i.e., syllable, onset-rime, or phoneme) and degree of proficiency (i.e., knowledge or automatic). The PAST is unique in that it has a timing element and contains orthographic inconsistency of the items. The PAST can be used with all grade levels, including pre-school, and includes alternate versions for progress monitoring, which enhance its potential utility.

3) Surveys were designed in-house and given to test administrators to assess the social validity and clinical utility of the PAST. The test administrators completed the anonymous web-based surveys after administering the PAST. Validity evidence for survey items was obtained by having academicians with expertise in assessment and related fields provide feedback. Additions, revisions, and deletions to survey items were based on their feedback. This study focused on 10 survey items, 8 Likert-like questions and two open-ended responses.

Procedures

Assessments. All student participants received both measures, the DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) and the PAST, and the tests were individually administered. The DIBELS was administered first, and the PAST was administered immediately afterward. Students were pulled from independent work time and tested in a central location. Each session lasted approximately 20 minutes. Each student was given a number for recording purposes, and no names were collected by researchers. Scores on each measure were tabulated by the examiners.

Surveys. The adult examiners (n=30) completed a web-based survey of the social validity of the PAST. An email was sent to the examiners; and it contained an introduction and explanation to the survey, which served as informed consent. All data were collected anonymously. The self-report survey data were analyzed using inferential statistics to better understand respondents perceived acceptance, effectiveness, satisfaction, and clinical utility with the PAST screener. No demographic information was collected on the examiners.

Results

This study examined whether the DIBELS PSF and the PAST are positively correlated for assessing dyslexia risk in Kindergarten and First Grade students to see if the tools measure the same construct. Additionally, it collected data on the perceptions of examiners who administered the PAST about its social validity and clinical utility as a tool for advancing universal screening for dyslexia risk.

Comparing the two instruments. Regarding the first research question, the data indicate a low correlation, .22, between the Kindergarten DIBELS PSF and PAST scores. The correlation between the First grade DIBELS PSF and the PAST Scores was .10, demonstrating an even lower correlation. These low correlations suggest that these two screeners are not measuring the same construct. Even though it is commonly believed that they are both measuring phonological awareness, they are not synonymous. These measures are, in fact, assessing important, but different constructs, or steps of phonological awareness.

More specifically, the DIBELS PSF assesses students' ability to identify the individual phonemes of a word presented verbally. For example, if a test administrator provided the word "cat," a complete response would be "/c//a/ /t/." Meanwhile, the PAST measures phonological manipulation tasks which involve deleting sounds from words, substituting sounds, or reversing sounds (Kroese, et al., 2000). Phonological manipulation tasks predict word-level reading proficiency and are most closely related to reading connected text (Kilpatrick, 2015). Without this information on phonological manipulation, it would be hard to determine which students are truly at-risk, and difficult to plan appropriate instruction and intervention. In sum, while the two tools measure different constructs, both constructs are necessary.

Analyzing administrator perceptions of the PAST. Regarding the second research question about the perceptions of 30 examiners regarding the utility of the PAST, a large number, 96%, either strongly agreed or agreed that the instrument provides information they need for their practice of teaching reading. Analysis of additional survey questions indicates that a majority found it easy to learn, administer, and interpret. Here are the specifics.

Ease of learning, administering, and interpreting. Thirty-six percent of the respondents reported that the PAST was very easy to learn, and 63 percent reported that it was easy to learn. Thirty percent reported that it was very easy to administer, and 70% reported that it was easy to administer. When asked to rate the ease of interpreting the PAST results, 20% reported that it was very easy, 56% reported that it was easy, and 23% reported that it was moderately difficult.

Time effectiveness and relevance to practice and decision-making. Of the examiners surveyed, 56% reported that they strongly agreed that the PAST was time effective, 33% somewhat agreed, and 10% neither agreed or disagreed. Twenty-six percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the PAST provides the type of information they needed to inform their practice, 70% agreed, and 3% somewhat disagreed. 100% of the respondents agreed that the PAST results support data-based decision making.

Likelihood to use. When asked to rate the likelihood of using the PAST in their future practice, 37% reported that they were extremely likely, 55% were somewhat likely, 3% were neither likely or unlikely, and 3% were somewhat unlikely.

Supplementary feedback revealed a couple of themes in the open-ended responses to the survey, including: questioning the length, the leveling system, and the usefulness of data. Several respondents reported that they felt the PAST was too lengthy for a screener and that their examinees could not maintain attention for the duration of the test. Although the test should only take 8-10 minutes to administer, brevity is critical for screeners. The DIBELS PSF only takes one minute to administer. A PAST short -form has been created. However, the short form was not investigated in this study.

The leveling system of the PAST was questioned frequently on the survey. Respondents reported concerns about students' inconsistent performance across some levels, mainly Level I and J. The PAST manual addresses this issue saying, "an individual student may struggle with an easier level yet pass a higher level. This is because different levels involve different types of manipulations. For example, H and K involve splitting initial blends. If a student struggles with sounds in blends, he may not pass H, but may pass J, which does not involve blends. Students who struggle with awareness of ending sounds may do poorly with Level I and L but do well with H, J, and K. (pg.99) "

Many respondents reported that they felt the PAST data fill an important gap. One respondent shared, "I think the PAST is a very useful way to see how the students handle different areas of phonological awareness. As a Kindergarten teacher, I am used to only having information about letter sounds, beginning sounds, and blending. The PAST is a quick test, but it gives me additional information that I need."

Discussion

Phonemic manipulation ability has a substantial long-term impact on reading (Kilpatrick, 2016). Most commercially available dyslexia screeners and tests include a segmentation measure, which accurately evaluates the student's level on the first three steps of phonemic awareness. However, these tools often fail to do a good job of assessing performance on the upper levels of segmentation, which focus on the critical skills of phonemic manipulation. This practice of capturing only half of these six phonemic skills could lead to delayed or mis-identification of children at-risk for dyslexia. This paper introduced the PAST as a promising measure for screening all six levels of phonemic awareness, especially those upper phoneme manipulation steps so critical to learning to read. Our correlation study revealed that the segmentation items in the DIBELS PSF and the PAST do not measure the same construct. Further, our survey of screening administrators found that a large majority think the PAST fills an information gap and is a tool that they would likely use in practice. In sum, we found that both measures are needed to compliment each other and make sound instructional decisions.

Implications for Practice

When considering the elements of effective reading screeners, it is important to consider both statistical and practical needs. Statistically, the tasks in the screening should demonstrate sufficient screening accuracy across a set of different indices so that children are identified correctly with precision according to their risk level in their future reading difficulties (Petscher & Young, S.K., 2011). Practically, assessments in screens should be brief, easy to administer, score, and interpret (Johnson, Jenkins, Petscher, & Catts, 2009). Although essential to learning to read at any age, phonological awareness tends to not be assessed nor taught beyond kindergarten.

With its emphasis on phonemic manipulation, the PAST can be used to identify at-risk students and assess progress in individuals in kindergarten through adulthood. Kilpatrick (2012) demonstrated that phonological awareness skills continue to develop beyond first grade, but that a task like segmenting loses some of its strength of correlation with reading growth and development after first grade. For this reason, educators who teach grades higher than kindergarten should consider explicitly teaching advanced manipulation practice throughout the school day. Practice activities, such as those found in “Equipped for Reading Success” (Kilpatrick, 2016), can be used sporadically. These activities include asking students to say a word and then repeat the word, but substituting the medial phoneme (e.g., “Say slat, now say slat but instead of /a/ say /i/ “- the students says, “slit.”) Teachers can easily generate words for these exercises. They can use them as games to play while students wait to go to classes, line up for lunch, ready for PE, etc. If students are not able to jump to a level of difficulty, Kilpatrick recommends teaching the level by employing multisensory techniques (from most intrusive to least intrusive as appropriate). These techniques include using; letters/spelling to illustrate phonological awareness, visual-spatial clues, visual-sequential skills such as tapping or clapping and finally, oral cues. In addition, teachers can use word study strategies, such as introducing a new word orally first, instead of in print, calling attention to specific sounds in the word. Other recommended strategies include using word walls with rime units, backward decoding of unknown words found in print, and calling attention to the irregular part of a word when sounding out a word with atypical sound-letter correspondences.

Implications for Research

These findings suggest that while phonological segmentation is commonly incorporated into popular test batteries and screeners, it may not be best practice to use it alone, ignoring phonemic manipulation fluency, to determine whether a student may have difficulties learning to read. Though other studies may not have made the direct comparisons with the DIBELS PSF, the present findings regarding the two constructs, segmentation and manipulation, confirm what has been reported in the correlation tables of previous reports (e.g., Kroese et al., 2000; Perfetti et al., 1987; Wagner et al., 1993). Future research needs to address questions regarding using the PAST Short Form to investigate whether briefer assessments can be used to predict later reading ability as accurately as full-length assessments. This information would offer practical utility for teachers who use valuable instructional time for assessing students. The current researchers plan to further investigate the use of the PAST. For example, a longitudinal study of the students tested will be ongoing to monitor their reading progress throughout their elementary school years.

Limitations

As with all studies, there are limitations to the current investigation. First, a relatively small sample size of screening administrators for the survey (n=30) limits the generalizability of the results. Second, the participants, students and administrators, were not asked demographic questions that could have made them identifiable, such as their age or ethnicity. Thus, comparisons between groups of participants were not possible. Third, the diversity and size of the student sample was limited. Finally, the survey itself was developed by the author

specifically for the purposes of obtaining feedback from the examiners. The questions developed have good face validity for this purpose, but other measures of validity were not calculated.

Future Directions

These findings indicate new directions are required for early and accurate identification of children at-risk for dyslexia nationally and in Alabama. These directions must include measures to assess phonemic manipulation proficiency. For example, according to the AL Dyslexia Resource Guide, phoneme segmentation skills assessment recommendations do not include measures that look at the top levels of phonemic awareness. The measures recommended by the Guide, while good ones, stop short at segmentation. Hence, they omit a free, easy-to-use process like the PAST for collecting information that is essential for determining at-risk students, informing instruction, and documenting progress. We recommend that educators go beyond segmentation and assess the upper levels of phonemic awareness to document manipulation proficiency, as well. Additionally, Alabama does not require the inclusion of phonological awareness screeners beyond Kindergarten. Therefore, we recommend, based upon existing literature and the initial findings here, that phonological awareness screeners be included at all levels where students are learning to read. To that end, educators may want to consider using a tool like the PAST to measure the upper manipulation steps of the phonemic skills-- addition, deletion, and substitution. With this emphasis, the PAST creates a fuller picture of the assessment results, and any additional time devoted to upfront screening will save valuable staff time and resources spent on reading instruction. The PAST is free, easy to administer, and as demonstrated in this study, has high social validity. Most importantly, it allows for early and

accurate identification of at-risk children so that students learning to read experience success, rather than struggle, right from the start.

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Peer Review and Structured Feedback to Promote Community in an Online Classroom

Abstract

In the online learning environment, development of classroom community is essential. One such strategy educators could use to develop classroom community in the online environment is an incorporation of peer review and structured feedback in their content areas. This paper provides an outline for planning for the use of peer review, as well as considerations for reflecting on the facilitation of peer review in the online classroom.

Peer Review and Structured Feedback to Promote Community in an Online Classroom

COVID-19, otherwise known as the “coronavirus,” has brought forth unprecedented times locally, nationally, and internationally in many aspects of teaching students. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, educators have been called to make significant changes to instructional delivery and practice, as well as to be prepared to enact more changes. Online modes of instruction have the potential to be effective means of teaching and learning, but not without challenges. At least two concerns arise when considering the notion of educating students remotely: quality and rigor of instruction and feelings of isolation noted by students. Planning for and facilitating literacy-based instructional activities which engage students in high-quality learning, as well as promote feelings of connectedness, can be achieved via online means. One strategy is to use peer review and structured feedback to promote classroom community.

Review of Literature

Online learning in both synchronous and asynchronous settings can potentially provide effective, collaborative instruction for students in contexts ranging from elementary to higher education (Dixson, 2010). Interactions which contribute to potential effectiveness of online learning environments are student-content, student-instructor, and student-student (Banna, Lin, Stewart, & Fialkowski, 2015). The interactions could be reclassified as “student to content” and “student to human interactions.” Both types of interactions are essential for successful learning environments. Before the facilitation of content-area learning activities, classroom community should be established – or be a work in progress.

Creating effective environments is important in the learning process. According to Ryan and Deci's "Self-Determination Theory of Motivation" (2000), people need to perceive three elements to be motivated: a sense of connectedness to others, a sense of autonomy, and a sense of competence. Connectedness, or the feelings of relatedness to others, is important in the development of classroom community. Classroom community is defined as "a sense that teachers and students share common goals, are mutually respectful and supportive of one another's efforts, and believe that everyone makes an important contribution to classroom learning" (Ormrod & Jones, 2018, p. 345). In an online learning environment, this sense of community is very important, as feelings of isolation are commonly reported among students in web-based courses (King, 2002; Swan, 2017; Willging & Johnson, 2009).

In a traditional, face-to-face classroom, small groups are used to create community and facilitate learning experiences (Wong & Wong, 2004; Ormrod & Jones, 2018). The benefits of using small groups for learning activities include social benefits, interdependence among classmates, and academic gains (Evertson & Emmer, 2017). Similar experiences can be provided in an online learning environment. For example, Driscoll, Jicha, Hunt, Tichavsky, and Thompson (2012) found that students who were able to interact with their instructor and other students enrolled in an online course were equally as satisfied as students enrolled in the face-to-face equivalent, taught by the same instructor. Driscoll et al. (2012) asserted that findings indicated purposefully planned interactions in online course could mirror that of face-to-face courses and provide an effective learning environment. Dixson (2010) found that there were no particular activities students found more engaging than others, but found that students' social presence was increased when engaging in active learning assignments and

discussions. Drawing upon Dixon's (2010) work, Britt (2015) suggested strategies for promoting student engagement and investment in online courses, including authentic activities which involve collaboration, literacy skills, and reflection. Small groups are perfect venues in which to facilitate these types of activities in online courses.

One such authentic activity which can be facilitated within collaborative small groups is that of conducting peer review. Woodward (2015) identified and defined four types of peer review, including peer editing (focus on grammar and mechanics), peer response (focus on guided questions and templates developed by educators to guide reviews), peer evaluation (focus on making judgements regarding the writing), and peer conferencing (focus on oral conversations to discuss writing), all of which provide important considerations of the drafting and writing process (pp. 40-42). Graff (2009) recommended that in teaching high school students to peer review and provide feedback, educators should model for and engage their students in think alouds. By doing this, Graff (2009) suggested students can visualize how they might question the text under review and allow that process to guide the review. Peer review has been included within the writing process through drafting and revisions, but can be included in authentic contexts within content areas to promote and demonstrate literacy. In a study involving fourth- and fifth-grade students, Philippakos and MacArthur (2016) found students who peer reviewed essays and offered feedback improved their own quality of writing and included more desired elements in a persuasive essay writing activity from first to last draft. In a university-level, English as a Foreign Language course, Yang (2010) found students' quality of writing and use of self-correction strategies improved when provided opportunities to reflect on peer review throughout and after the writing process. Similarly, Tuten and Temesvari (2013)

found that students enrolled in a Popular Science Journalism course who peer reviewed articles for a campus science publication indicated they perceived an increase in their own content literacy development and communication skills, then subsequently learned to enjoy the writing process. The peer review process has clear benefits for both the author and the reviewer.

Based on literature, classroom community is an important aspect of the learning environment, including the online learning environment. Peer review has the potential to be a beneficial strategy in development of content area literacy and in fostering a sense of classroom community.

The Strategy in Action: Peer Review and Structured Feedback

Built on research outlined above, structured peer review and feedback can create a sense of interdependence among classmates and group members, in addition to increasing content area literacy through writing. To use this strategy, purposeful planning and open reflection are critical.

Planning and Logistics

When facilitating collaborative peer review in online courses, much as an educator would do in a face to face classroom, there are many aspects of the activity to consider in the planning process. At a foundational level, educators should consider the technology being used to facilitate the dialogue between the class and small group members. Ensuring that all students have a working knowledge of how to use technological tools is necessary for success.

Additionally, knowledge of procedures for addressing technological concerns if and when they arise is an important planning consideration.

Once technological concerns have been addressed, small groups should be formed. Assuming that community is under development from the onset of the course, further activities to support connecting members of small groups should be facilitated. When creating small groups, there are several factors which could influence groupings. For example, the purpose of the peer review and assignment, student personalities and individual differences, as well as developmental needs should be considered when forming groups.

Prior to facilitating peer review and feedback, trust should be established among group members as much as possible. Provide an initial explanation of the purpose for the groups and how groups will be used for peer review and feedback. In order to establish feelings of connectedness within group members, students should complete introductory activities which help the members get to know each other as “humans.” Activities could include synchronous discussions with guided questioning in the form of “human scavenger hunts” or a concrete display in which group members share 2-3 specific items relevant to their interests. The two examples listed could be completed in an asynchronous format through a VoiceThread, for example, posted to the discussion board for oral or written comments. By providing introductory activities for students to complete within their small groups, students begin to get to know each other, as well as develop trust and interdependence.

After planning for small groups, the next step is to purposefully plan for the peer review and feedback itself. Drawing upon Wiggins and McTighe’s (2005) concept of backward design,

develop a plan with the end in mind. Ask sequenced questions such as “What are my goals and intended outcomes for the peer review?” “How will I know if my students are understanding the content and the peer review/feedback process?” “What are students going to construct and review to demonstrate content literacy?” “How is this task an authentic representation of something students might do in the world beyond the classroom?” and “How am I going to teach my students to conduct peer reviews and offer constructive feedback?” Thinking through and answering questions such as these will help guide the small group peer review.

Next, consider how students will focus their review and offer feedback to classmates. Depending on the purpose of the assignment, it might be appropriate to provide a checklist or a rubric to guide reviewers’ thoughts as they consider their group members’ work. For younger reviewers, only a few points should be offered for consideration. In older students, a more developed rubric or thorough checklist is appropriate. Will a “feedback form” be provided or will it be the reviewers’ choice to determine where and how they offer feedback? Will the feedback be provided orally, in writing, or both? If oral feedback is to be provided, how will that be facilitated and scheduled via online synchronous or asynchronous means? Answering these questions will provide guidance for the logistics of facilitating the peer review and feedback process.

Finally, the peer review timeline should be considered. Scheduling deadlines helps both the educator and the students manage their time and productivity. First, determine when the students will share a draft of their project with small group members. After that, provide at least a day or two for peer review. This allows group members time to consider and reflect upon the project under review in a deeper manner, considering guidelines set forth in the rubric or

checklist, or other factors. Determine how many peer reviews students will complete within the group. If you have a small group of four students, it might be reasonable to ask members to review and offer feedback on each groupmates' projects. If you have a small group of six students, it might be appropriate to ask group members to review two projects each, ensuring every member of the group receives two reviews. Additionally, providing reminders of deadlines can be quite helpful. Send announcements or post messages to remind your students of what they are reviewing and when that review is to be completed. Using the feedback is an important part of the peer review process. Providing direction on what students should do with the feedback provided is important, too, as is indicating a timeline for post-review reflection and action steps.

An important part of the peer review process is the assessment piece. In addition to group members learning to function as a valued member of an interdependent community, they potentially learn content on a deeper level through evaluation of group members' work. Furthermore, teachers are able to assess students' work from two perspectives: production of their individual project and assessment and evaluation of others' projects. The small group peer review process can serve as an assessment tool for educators to determine the extent of learning and opportunity for growth in content literacy areas.

Reflection

Throughout the peer review process in an online setting, opportunity for growth exists for both students and educators. Reflection on this will reveal both strengths and areas for improvement. There are several ways this reflection could occur. For educators, throughout the

planning and facilitation process, compile anecdotal notes regarding what went well and what could be improved. Observe interactions with group members with respect to their commentary. Are comments thorough and well-developed for the developmental stage of the students? Were comments to classmates framed in a positive manner, even if it was an opportunity for growth? Was there a sense of community development and trust demonstrated through comments? Consider if goals or outcomes were met through the peer review process, if students demonstrated knowledge of the content through the review, if gaps in knowledge are evident as a result of the review, and if students were adequately prepared to conduct the peer review. Another beneficial consideration is to determine if rubrics or checklists were effective in focusing peer review, or if changes should be made to tools provided by the educator. While making anecdotal reflections throughout the process is important, also ask students for feedback regarding the process. Ask students they felt the peer review process was beneficial in both developing community and in academic contexts, what went well, what they'd change if they could, and their preferred method of giving and receiving feedback. Ask students to elaborate on how they felt community was established as a result of the peer review. After personal reflection and receiving feedback from students, it is likely changes will be made to the peer review process and how it is used to create community.

Conclusion

The peer review and feedback process can be used to promote classroom community in online course settings. Student interactions with both content and the instruction are important in the online learning environment, but student interactions with other students should be planned for and facilitated in a purposeful and deliberate manner. These interactions create community

and, as supported by Vygotsky (1978), promote construction of knowledge through a social context. The strategies and considerations provided for planning and reflection for peer review to create classroom community are important in effective facilitation, but pay dividends in the creation of online classroom community and construction of knowledge.

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Teachers' Perceptions and Use of Technology in an Elementary Language Arts Classroom

Abstract

With technology becoming more prevalent in elementary school classrooms, students now must use it more than ever before. Yet while they know how to use some aspects of technology, their primary source for instruction will be from their classroom teacher. Technology has the potential to help students find success. Technology can be the tool in a teacher's toolbox that will help students and teachers work more collaboratively or to better problem solve. Technology has changed how teachers are able to teach. Specifically, in a language arts classroom, students are able to be thoughtful writers, and technology is one tool that is helping them. However, there are issues that can hinder this. As teachers now are teaching how to use technology, this study looked at how they feel they are doing using technology in their classroom and what their experiences were.

Teachers' Perceptions and Use of Technology in an Elementary Language Arts Classroom

Technology has the potential to help students find success. Technology can be the tool in a teacher's toolbox that will help students and teachers to work more collaboratively or to better problem solve. Students are easily able to interact with one another virtually, as well as in person. Teachers are also able to interact with students either virtually or in person (Pritchett et al., 2013).

It is an indication of the centrality of technology to a 21st century education that The Common Core State Standards have taken out technology as a specific subject and now integrated it throughout all subjects. The current Common Core State Standards were developed by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (2010) to create one set of standards that students in all fifty states would follow. They state that all students need to use technology in an authentic manner. States such as Alabama combined both the Common Core and Alabama state standards to create the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards (Alabama State Department of Education, 2010).

Technology has changed how teachers teach (Gorski, 2005; Prensky, 2001). Technology encompasses many tools that a user can utilize such as computers, tablets, Smart Boards, and websites. Crook and Bennett (2007) state, "Tools are resources that can permit optimization within the cognitive economy of some task" (p.314). One example could be a student using a word processor to write a term paper. Any technology used to write and teach writing is a tool; however, it is not a silver bullet. Students must be *taught* how to use these tools to help them in

their education. Students need to learn that the technology is a tool that they can use to aid them in their writing, much like a pencil, and teachers should give explicit lessons to their students to explain *what* tool they are going to be using, *how* to use it, and *why* they are going to use it. Just as we teach students to read, we must work toward developing digital literacy.

Students come to class with varying levels of familiarity with technology. Some students need to be taught where the power button is located while others need to see what the Internet looks like and how to navigate it. Students need to be taught to type as well as how to use programs that allow them to create slideshows or to compute mathematical problems. This involves not only teaching the academic vocabulary but also vocabulary that deals specifically with technology.

Technology changes how we write and how we look at writing. As an educator, it is important to understand the implications of these changes in both practice and scholarship. “Electronic technologies are changing the forms by which people communicate with each other and understand the world” (MacArthur, Graham, & Fitzgerald, 2006, p. 248). MacArthur (1996) illustrates all of the new technologies coming into our lives will change the way we communicate. “Never before have the technologies of writing contributed so quickly to the creation of new genres” (Yancey, 2004, p. 298). Students are writing in blogs, wikis, instant messages, tweets, and other forms. Students are texting all of the time. Yancey (2004) goes on to state, “The consequence . . . is the creation of a writing public that, in development and in linkage to technology, parallels the development of a reading public in the 19th century” (p. 298). Literacy is changing in monumental ways with the use of technology; teachers now have

technology tools such as Kindle's and computer software. All of these tools are changing literacy and writing.

Technology is also changing writing instruction. "Today, the 21st century, people write as never before--in print and online" (Yancey, 2009, p. 1). In her book *Always On: Language in an Online and Mobile World*, Naomi Baron (2010) explains that we are actually writing more today than in the past. Students today are texting, emailing, and posting all of the time.

Below are various stories from teachers in the classroom and how they use and teach with technology in their classroom. The sample of teachers is wide ranging, thus allowing others to connect to their thoughts and ideas. All of the participants shared how they use technology and how technology has changed over time. The participants expressed how as teachers they need to keep learning and growing. Each one expressed the view that they are like their students and are learning new things all of the time. For some of the teachers, the learning curve in technology is quite a bit larger than for others who have grown up using it. All of them are learning to use technology to help their students. Just like students who struggle to grasp new ideas, the participants each had to go on their own educational journey.

Teresa is a teacher who has taught all of her career in the same school district, but she has a world view on education. She feels that "technology integration plays a huge part in helping me stay engaged as a lifelong learner." She points out that she is now able to communicate with both students' parents and other teachers much more effectively due to technology. For her, creating a Wikispace has been instrumental in her teaching. Finally, she states that "technology has been a linchpin for some of my success. I would rather have everything in electronic form where I can access things more readily and easily."

Madison discussed how she just feels more confident as a teacher now than when she first started. She mentioned that "familiarity" of the subject matter has really helped her confidence. She points out

that technology is in her classroom every day. She uses it or her students use it on a daily basis. “Now that I have many different technologies in my classroom every day, I cannot imagine going back and writing on a chalkboard.” She also states that she is able to use technology resources much better now than when she first started. Her final quote was, “I feel like I know what I’m doing now compared to my first couple of years of teaching; I am also always learning.”

Becky, the most veteran teacher interviewed, has really seen her classroom evolve. She first talks about how her teaching has changed to “trying to get students to think rather than just feeding them information.” She also points out that when she first started teaching, students would just sit in rows and do their own thing. Now her students sit in groups and work collaboratively on assignment. Technology also has greatly changed how she teaches. Becky points out that technology has really helped her communicate with both students and parents. She also points out that when she started teaching, there was no such thing as computers in the classroom.

Jaclynne also has noticed many changes in her classroom over the last ten years. She points out besides new curricula; technology has changed the most in her classroom. She points out that she did not have any computers in her classroom when she first started teaching. Now each one of her students has their own laptop and she has more technology tools than she “knows how to use.” She gave an example that she is “using my iPad to help students in a way that I would have never thought possible.” She can now freely roam around the room with her iPad and comment on student writing from anywhere in the classroom. She is using technology to record her teaching lessons and uploading them to her class website. She gave an example of one of her students who has a chronic illness that prevents them from attending school regularly. She is able to record her writing lesson using her iPad and upload it to her website where the student can view it as often as necessary and keep that connection with his teacher and class. Jaclynne does point out that evolving has “been hard and tough and conflicting at times.” She finished her answer stating “I had to learn to be the best teacher that I can be in the situation that I am in.”

Melissa has taught the fewest years, but she has already evolved in her teaching. She started off saying, “When I first started teaching I wasn’t prepared to teach; I was prepared to have kids come in my room.” She then goes on to describe how student engagement is what has changed the most in her classroom. She described her first year of teaching as “reading a book and kids would know what to do.” Her classroom was chaos, and she “had no idea what I was getting myself into.”

Each of the participants realizes that change is sometimes difficult, but the rewards have proven to be worth it. The participants illustrated through their interviews that they have seen positive outcomes from their use of technology in the classroom.

How do teachers choose specific strategies?

There are a few similarities in the stories of the five teachers. Previous experience was a deciding factor when choosing specific strategies. If they have had good results in the past, they were more likely to use the strategy again. Also, if they saw another teacher utilizing the strategy, they were more likely to use the strategy in their own classroom. A couple of the teachers would read about a specific strategy and then implement it into their classrooms. The majority of the group, though, felt that if they could see the strategy being used, they would be more likely to try it in their classroom. They felt that reading about it was a bit harder to integrate the strategy as compared to seeing it modeled. Using technology to find strategies was also a popular opinion among the group. Many of the same strategies were written in books, but with the use of technology they could see with video or pictures what it would look like. The teachers mentioned websites such as YouTube and Pinterest that they would frequent to gain ideas for strategies. All of the participants in the above study use websites to help in all subject areas of their teaching. During the focus group, each of the participants noted that they had not used a particular source that was mentioned and were going to look at it more closely to see if they can also gain strategies from it. Teresa was able to give all of the teacher’s excellent sources that she has had success using in writing, and Madison was able to show the group her Google site that she has created to help the students. This is

similar to using professional learning networks which was discussed in chapter one. These are just two examples of how teachers are using technology to help them teach writing.

The group also mentioned professional development opportunities as a way to help them choose specific strategies. They mentioned that they need help and that professional development can be the vehicle to help them in their own learning and use of technology. Teresa gave examples of what she had specifically learned during various professional development classes. . The participants all agreed that they have attended classes like this and found them to not be helpful to their praxis. They mentioned that if they conducted role playing scenarios where they could practice the strategy ahead of time, they were more likely to go back to their classroom and try it with their students. The participants all mentioned that they really needed to use the tool and “play” with it first. If they were able to actually practice using the tool or site they were usually likely to at least try it in their classroom with their students.

They also expressed how many times the professional development opportunities were not very helpful, but there were a few that really helped them to understand how a strategy could be helpful in their classroom. They cited examples of classes that they have attended where they were shown a PowerPoint presentation on how to use a particular technology tool or website. If it was a strategy written on a piece of paper, they all agreed that even if it sounded good they would be less likely to go back and try to use the strategy. They shared examples of taking home the packets from trainings and just putting them on their desk or throwing them away.

All of the participants agreed that if they knew the strategy would work they would use it. They defined a working strategy as a strategy where they saw students actively engaged in the assignment or actively utilizing the tool. Also, if one of their teammates was able to use it, they felt that it might be a good idea for them to try it as well. One interesting phenomenon that occurred was that none of the participants mentioned their college courses as a major impact on informing their choice of strategies. Out of the five participants, all but one had graduated in the late 1990’s with a bachelor’s degree. The one

participant who graduated in the 1970's had received a master's degree in the last five years. The participants who graduated with a bachelor's degree in more recent times were shown to know and use technology more than those that graduated earlier. Also, if the participant received a master's degree in more recent years, she was more likely to be using technology in their classroom.

Each of the teachers also shared how they utilize technology outside of school. All of them have smart phones which give them access to the Internet. Texting was seen as the most useful tool that they used. Madison said that she texts on her phone more than actually talking on her phone. During the course of our discussions I asked if any used their phones for school related matters. All of the teachers mentioned using it to check their school email account. I then wondered if they communicated with students using the Internet and their phones and none of them did. Teresa mentioned that using her wiki class page is difficult to use on such a small screen. None of the others accessed their class website or web 2.0 tools. Becky mentioned that she does almost all of her classroom related technology work such as emailing and researching new websites at home on her desktop computer. She stated that she liked the bigger screen and the full size keyboard.

When discussing how they choose what specific strategy they use, each teacher mentioned first learning about the strategy either from a colleague, or from a professional development class that they attended. Melissa having only taught in the school district for a year felt that her previous district did very little to support integrating technology into the curriculum. She discussed how most of the time she went to a technology training it was more about using a program on a computer, which was usually a remediation type program. She gave an example of going to a training that was focused on using the program FastMath and how she should use it in her class to drill her students on their math facts. Teresa felt that the school district did a nice job of trying to help teachers integrate technology. She described spending two weeks four years ago and really looking at how technology can be utilized during the literacy block. She gave examples of specific activities that she liked and had applied in her own

praxis. Becky also attended the same training and agreed that she liked it but that she felt they went too fast for her to keep up and that the classes were too large to have good conversations. Since it was not a mandatory meeting during the summer Madison chose not to attend. Jaclynne also was not yet in the district and felt that they should offer the same type of training every summer.

In what ways do available technologies support and influence strategies for teaching writing?

All of the participants for this study noted that they feel lucky that they have so many resources available to them in the classroom. They realize that there are many teachers who do not have the same resources. All of the teachers use a teacher computer that is connected to high speed Internet on a daily basis. This enables them to either find new strategies to incorporate into teaching writing or to write using the computer itself. Having access to the Internet to get ideas or strategies was found to be an excellent resource for the teachers. Whether they were getting strategies through email or through a website, they all felt that the computer directly influenced their teaching of writing. The participants were also able to view videos of specific strategies that they would use to influence their teaching of writing.

All of the participants said that having access to multiple types of technology tools was extremely helpful. All agreed that they were more likely to try a new strategy using a specific technology tool if they had access to it. They also mentioned that they had to have practice in using the tool to use it effectively. Thus all agreed that professional development was a key area. If they were trained and saw the strategy in use, they were more likely to attempt it in their own classroom.

One of the most important technology tools that benefits students, according to the participants, is the projector. All of the teachers have a projector mounted to their ceiling which is connected to their teacher computer in the classroom. All of the teachers shared various strategies they use during writing to help their students. The most popular strategy that the teachers discussed was projecting student work or examples that the students could see. They were also able to display mentor text in a way that all of the students could see and follow along. The participants felt that if they could display what good writing

looks like, their students would be more likely to either emulate the author that was shown or to see how an author crafts a particular type of story, be it nonfiction or fiction.

Having access to technology is not sufficient; the technology also needs to be working. All of the teachers expressed frustration about times they tried to use a specific technology tool and it was not working. For example, when the Wi-Fi network for the school goes down, and they are trying to have each of their students use the Wi-Fi in writing. All of the students in the subject school have a Google account and compose their writing using Google Apps. If the Wi-Fi isn't working, then students are not able to compose or use the Internet to help them with their writing. Teresa also pointed out that she has had problems with the school district Internet filter not allowing her student's access to sites that she would like them to see such as YouTube. All of the participants agreed that when issues happen frequently with a particular strategy, they are less likely to try that strategy again. Additionally, they all felt that if computers are not working or projectors keep overheating, these challenges would keep them from integrating technology strategies into the writing process.

All of the participants in the study felt that technology can and should support writing in their classroom. During interviews and the focus group discussion, the five participants all thought that technology helps them to help their students become better writers. All of them feel that technology is a huge part of writing, whether used as a tool for composing or for researching. Teresa stated that her students are doing more authentic writing using Google Drive. Her students are planning, drafting, editing, and revising only using their laptops. However, they all agreed that technology cannot replace a good teacher.

All of the participants in the study had challenges that they faced when it came to integrating technology into the writing process. All of the participants felt that with the new state standards being required, they were spending more time trying to figure out how to implement the new writing standards versus trying new strategies in the writing process. They all commented that they felt they had more

freedom as a teacher before, but the new standards seem to be more restrictive to them. The participants had been told by administration that the standards were changing and they had to implement a new writing program. They were frustrated that they did not have any professional development with the new program and no say on what students were going to learn. They have to learn a new curriculum and at the same time learn how to use technology in a way that is meaningful and purposeful.

With the new standards came very little professional development. The teachers who had been in the district for at least two years had many professional development opportunities in the area of writing and technology. However, they all felt that this time with the new state standards they were given copies of the new standards for their grade level with very little instruction and guidance.

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Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Uncertain Times: Helping Teachers Cope with Secondary Trauma

The news outlets consistently repeat that we are living in unprecedented times. Teachers are tasked with more responsibilities than ever to ensure that their students' academic needs are being met in a virtual learning environment. The pressures placed on educators at every turn are daunting for all educators, from the youngest, most spry to the veterans who mentor them. The truth of the matter is, we have never been asked to teach in times and under circumstances like these—hence, “unprecedented.”

Teachers have taken to social media to declare their many hours spent on an increased workload with descriptions that include feeling overwhelmed, drowning, and completely at a loss. Personal experience and conversations with those in our immediate circles tout that the workload has increased by no less than twice the amount of an average teacher's pre-pandemic workload. Also of additional importance is that new education terms have replaced many previous ones. “Essential question”, “Project-based learning”, and “Inquiry-based instruction” have been placed on the backburner for terms like “Virtual learning”, “Synchronous instruction”, and “Being apart together.” Many teachers feel ill-prepared as they lack the necessary experience and training now needed for virtual instruction. While teachers work tirelessly to convert instruction to engaging virtual lessons, stress and anxiety build, and students, as well as teachers, struggle to cope with the fast-moving changes to education as we know it.

Recent experiences in education had teachers learning more about how to help children cope with trauma many of them face due to neglect, abuse, and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. According to Bushnell, et al. (2018), between 2005 and 2014, just under

200,000 students aged 3-17 were being treated for anxiety disorders across the United States.

The implications of this high number of children being treated for anxiety are far-reaching. Even when treated, anxiety disorders often lead to more serious disorders such as depression and substance abuse (Beesdo, Pine, Lieb, & Wittchen, 2010). Even though educators learn early in their teacher preparation programs that students' physiological and social needs must be met before the teacher can reach the child's academic needs (Maslow, 1943), doing so is much more difficult in a virtual format.

There is no doubt that teachers are influential in the lives of their students in that they provide students with social skills, and academic skills, but teachers also provide emotional support for students, especially those affected by trauma (Alisic, Bus, Dulack, Pennings, & Splinter, 2012). Teachers often use strategies, referred to as 'trauma-informed pedagogy,' to help their students cope with such trauma. What happens, though, when teachers struggle to find balance between offering academic support and emotional support? Teachers are not trained in dealing with trauma; however, students often need emotional supports before they are able to learn effectively. Because the teachers work closely and develop close relationships with students, emotional involvement often takes a toll on teachers, indicating that compassion fatigue is a concern of many teachers in classrooms today (Alisic, et al., 2012). "When children hurt, we the compassionate, competent adults in their lives hurt too—whether or not we are aware of the toll it takes on us," (Fowler, 2015, p. 31).

It is important for teachers to be able to identify compassion fatigue, or secondary trauma, within themselves. While Baicker (2020) states that it can present much like emotional burnout, which educators often experience at points during their career, secondary trauma is

often overlooked in education. It is more than just a feeling of complete exhaustion. Symptoms can include:

- Increased anxiety and concern about safety
- Intrusive negative thoughts and images related to students' traumatic stories
- Fatigue and physical complaints
- Feelings of numbness or detachment from students and peers
- Diminished concentration and difficulty with decision making
- Desire to physically or emotionally withdraw from others
- Feelings of professional inadequacy

Additionally, Baicker explains that teachers must understand where these enhanced feelings are coming from in order to learn how to better handle trauma-related experiences within the classroom setting.

There are many strategies that teachers can use to help students cope with the effects of trauma, but what should teachers do to reduce the effects of secondary trauma in their own lives, especially during a pandemic? According to Davis (2020), it is essential to have an experienced mentor who can guide and share wisdom as you follow your path of education into your career as an educator. A reciprocal relationship in which both the mentor and the mentee benefit and learn can be crucial to the acquisition of wisdom in coping with the ups and downs of teaching, including secondary trauma (Ellis, Alonzo, & Nguyen, 2020).

Secondly, Davis (2020) suggests that storytelling is a coping strategy that can be beneficial to teachers and students alike. Mentors can help young teachers recognize the

importance of using stories to connect with people and help them make meaning and purpose out of life experiences. Telling stories can encourage cultural awareness, improve empathy, and provide opportunities to consider different perspectives (Davis, 2020). When teachers share their stories with others and listen to the stories of others, even those stories of difficult experiences can become powerful teachers (Davis, 2020). Though stories can also often cause trauma, such as when students share the narratives of their experiences (Miller & Flint-Stipp, 2019), they can also be used to help teachers build the experiences that become their personal, powerful stories.

Miller and Flint-Stipp (2019) find that offering opportunities to explore various areas of wellness and meditation decreased the effects of secondary trauma in preservice teachers.

Wellness techniques include:

- Finding support in friends or significant others
- Speaking with a counselor
- Taking vitamins
- Getting 15 minutes of sun each day
- Getting a full night's sleep
- Taking deep breaths

Miller and Flint-Stipp further describe that preservice teachers who were paired with cooperating teachers who established a work-life balance were more inclined to imagining that type of self-care for themselves. Echoing the sentiments of Davis (2020), an effective mentor should also be one who influences the mentee to take necessary precautions to take care of his/her own

physiological needs in order to become a more effective teacher who is less impacted by secondary trauma.

Finally, Juarez, Becton, and Griffin (2020) identify four areas of support teachers need when dealing with secondary trauma: social-emotional, professional, spiritual, and physical well-being. Those serving in mentor roles, as well as school leaders and administrators, have an important role to play in helping to support teachers to find the appropriate balance between personal life and work. The need for this type of support is greatly enhanced due to the current pandemic. Leaders can look for times during the day to help teachers practice self-care strategies such as those mentioned above. Leaders can also look for opportunities for training and additional support related to dealing with traumatic experiences. While teachers are not counselors, they are often the first ones a student will disclose a traumatic experience to, and teachers must have the knowledge and skills to effectively support the student.

Finding the right balance between work and life is increasingly difficult in the age of a pandemic; however, it seems that, based on the information provided, it is even more crucial than ever for teachers to take the time to care for their own social and emotional needs. Teachers develop and maintain such emotional bonds with their students, they often feel they are not allowed to take care of their own emotional well-being. Many teachers may even feel that it is selfish to take care of themselves. However, given the appropriate measures of self-care and resiliency, the experiences that cause secondary trauma in teachers can become the experiences that give them a greater sense of purpose.

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Teaching Tips

Creative Writing with Origami

Kyoko Johns
Michael Alvidrez

Beyond the ABCs: Using Alphabet Books to Support Literacy Learners

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A Turning Point: Unfiltered Conversations

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Creative Writing with Origami

Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing can be intimidating for many students, and even adults, who are insecure about their spelling and grammatical abilities. Teachers worried about teaching reading and writing may forget that they can incorporate these in all subjects. Writing is often taught in isolation. Having students write across the curriculum will only strengthen their understanding of how to write. According to Martin (2015), “Writing in mathematics provides a level of reflection and analysis that allows students to focus their thing on their own process and problem solving” (p. 302). Traditionally, writing in math instruction has been difficult to implement. Science and Social Studies have lent themselves more to writing. (Brozo & Crain, 2018).

How can we encourage our students in elementary schools to write more? People in general like to talk about their experiences and tell stories when they are excited about something. Using origami can provide fun and engaging experiences that inspire young students to write. What is origami? Origami is the traditional Japanese art. You can create a limitless number of objects by simply folding a piece of paper. Origami has been used as an educational tool in mathematics by many teachers. Students make two- and three-dimensional shapes out of various sized square papers during math lessons and learn number, geometric, and fractional concepts. Incorporating origami in lessons can provide an active learning environment in which students are encouraged to use their creativity, problem-solving skills, and reasoning abilities. Problem solving, representation, communication, and reasoning are part of five process standards and essential aspects for mathematical competence according to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM, 2000) and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, 2010). CCSS (2011) also emphasizes evidence-based writing along with the

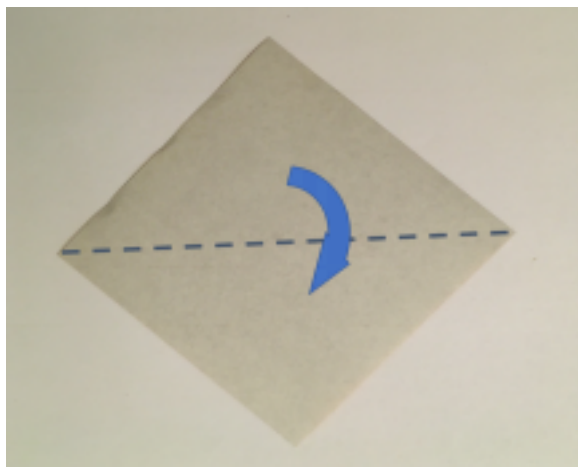
ability to inform and persuade. Incorporating origami can provide learning opportunities that address many standards across the curriculum.

Getting Started with Origami

1. Share a story or poem that includes origami with the students to spark their curiosity. The following books include relatable stories and bright illustrations that would catch children's attention:

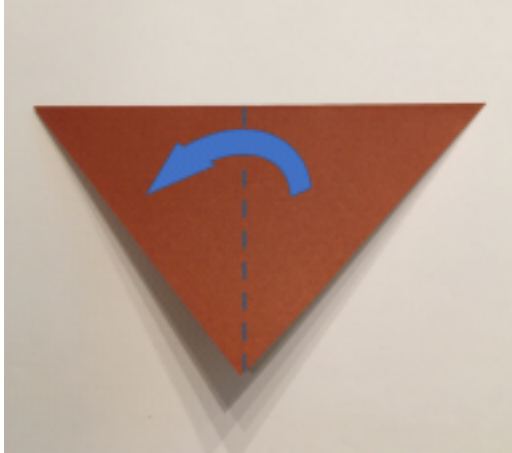
- *Fold Me a Poem* by Kristine O'Connell George
- *Lissy's Friends* by Grace Lin
- *Yoko's Paper Cranes* by Rosemary Wells
- *Spread Your Wings and Fly: An Origami Fold-and-Tell Story* by Mary Saunders

2. Demonstrate creating a dog with origami using the document camera or creating a slide presentation with pictures ahead of time so that students can clearly see each step. a. Place a piece of square paper (colored side facing down if it is colored).

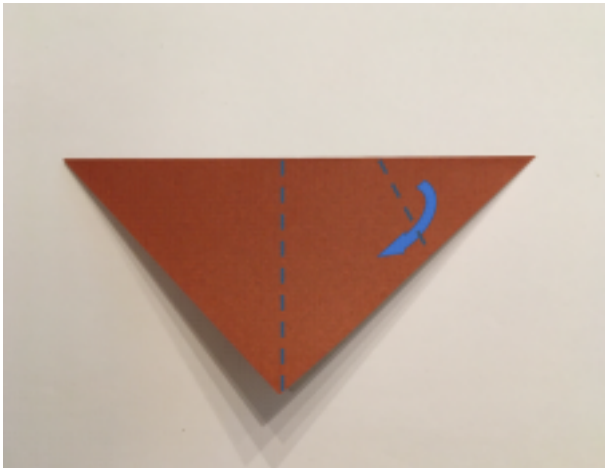


b. Fold it in half by folding from top to bottom.

c. Fold in half again by folding one corner to another corner.

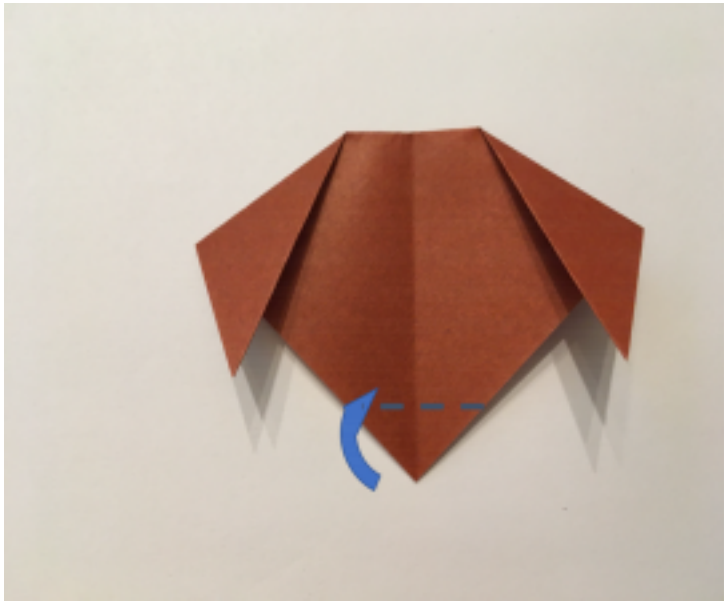


d. Unfold then fold the right corner down.



e. Fold the left corner down.



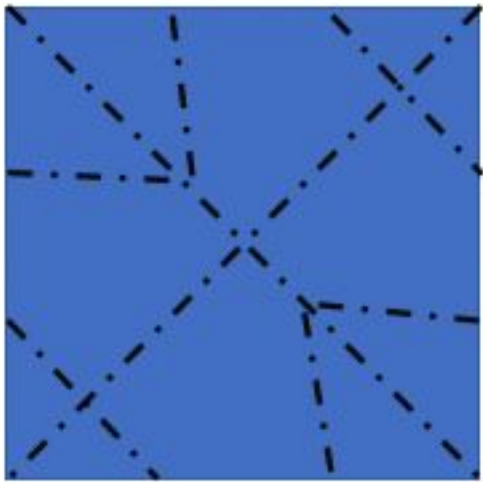


f. Fold the bottom corner up.



g. Draw the dog's face.

3. Guide students create their own dogs with origami.



4. Unfold the completed origami dog and ask students what they notice.

Writing Assignments

From here you can have the students engage in different writing assignments. Students can write creatively. You can have the students take their origami character and create a story having the dog as a central character. The students could refer to one of the example books to help them if needed. The second type of writing would be a how-to style writing assignment. Students would have to explain the steps necessary to create an origami character. They could use vocabulary words which they have learned in math to assist, such as fraction or horizontal.

Both of these assignments would be great formative assessments to use in evaluating how students are doing in the writing process.

Where is the Math?

The 2-dimensional shapes and geometry vocabulary such as line segment, diagonal, corner, acute angle, right angle, vertex, and line of symmetry can be addressed while creating origami. What shape do you see when we fold the paper in half diagonally? How many acute or right angles do you see? Are there any parallel lines? Fraction is another concept that is addressed while folding and unfolding origami papers. Halves and fourth can be addressed in steps b and c. Older students can be challenged to find the fraction of a specific shape compared to the original square or another shape. Unfolding the completed origami product provides a rich learning opportunity to discuss what students discover and understand depending on the age of students.

More Origami and Writing Projects

The following books and websites provide resources for students if they are interested in creating more origami objects and writing about them.

Books:

- Easy Origami Animals by John Montroll
- Easy Origami: Over 30 Simple Projects by John Montroll
- Origami: A Step-by-Step Introduction to the Art of Paper Folding by Belinda Webster

Websites:

- Origami for Kids at origami-fun.com
- Origami for Kids to Make at Origami-Instructions.com

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- Very Simple Origami for Kids and Easy Instructions at Origamiway.com

With teachers and students struggling in the areas of writing and math, this is one useful and fun way to engage students in the writing process while practicing valuable math skills. Also bridging writing and math allows for more authentic learning. Students are given opportunities to write about either what they are doing or to create a new story to go along with creations that they have created. Teachers can bring in specific areas of instruction such as grammar or spelling. Utilizing mentor texts allow both teachers and students to see how other authors have been able to do the same. This offers opportunities for formative assessments across the curriculum. As students see the connections between writing and math, they will begin to realize the seamless interaction between the subject areas.

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Alphabet books are one of the oldest genres of children's literature in America dating back to the 1691 publication of the *New England Primer*, whose purpose was to teach both letters and moral values (Sutherland, 1997). The number of alphabet books written since the 15th century is impressive (Smolkin & Yaden, 1992), and their diversity ranges from the simplistic structure found in the classic *Dr. Seuss's ABC* to very complex, thematically focused books spanning a great variety of topics and types (Chaney, 1993).

Despite their immense variation, alphabet books are usually concise and follow a consistent, predictable pattern that is easily recognized, thus, contributing to the success of beginning readers. The most common organization format for alphabet books is sequential. Reading these books helps children begin to acquire the life-long skill of alphabetizing.

Aardvarks, Disembark! and *AlphaOops! The Day Z Went First* further increases children's familiarity with alphabetical order and reinforces awareness of individual letters by presenting the alphabet in reverse.

Opportunities for developing a child's metalinguistic abilities are particularly prevalent during the reading of alphabet books (Smolkin & Yaden, 1992) because they provide an ideal context for using language to discuss concepts like letters, sounds, and words. Further, such discussions increase children's understanding that letters are distinct graphic symbols different from numbers or words, letters possess identical features (such as vertical and horizontal lines) arranged differently to generate unique and distinguishable forms, and letters, unlike objects, are dependent upon a specific orientation (such as facing left or facing right). Books like *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, that use both capital (in the text) and lowercase (in the illustrations) letters

offer additional opportunity for letter identification and naming while alliterative examples (*Animalia, Adelaide to Zeke, and Aster Aardvark's Alphabet Adventures*) reinforce letter-sound correspondence.

The value of alphabet books for developing vocabulary has been long recognized (Anderson, 2013), since they inherently require readers to focus on the names of the objects pictured. *Owl and Other Scrambles, The Graphic Alphabet, Picture a Letter, and Alphabatics* associate single words with each letter through unique visual representations while other books, like *The Ultimate Alphabet*, depict many and varied words that begin with each letter. Books using specific language conventions, such as *Achoo! Bang! Crash! A Noisy Alphabet* (onomatopoeia) and *Easy as Pie: A Guessing Game of Sayings* (idioms), contribute to children's knowledge of words and their definitions by demonstrating ways that language is manipulated to influence meaning. The purpose of different kinds of words is revealed in *The Z Was Zapped: A Play in Twenty-Six Acts* (verbs), *C Is for Curious: An ABC of Feelings* (adjectives), and *Have You Ever Seen a Smack of Jellyfish?: An Alphabet Book* (collective nouns), which each present a different part of speech.

Sharing alphabet books written in various forms--narrative (*G is for Goat, Old Black Fly, and The Alphabet Keeper*), expository (*A Caribou Alphabet, Illuminations, and I Spy: An Alphabet in Art*), and poetic (*R Is for Rhyme: A Poetry Alphabet and Alphabet Animals*)--increases children's knowledge of different text types. Reading alphabet books from different disciplines – social studies (*D Is for Democracy: A Citizen's Alphabet and A Pioneer ABC*), science, (*W Is for Wind: A Weather Alphabet and The Yucky Reptile Alphabet Book*), and mathematics (*G Is for Googol: A Math Alphabet*) -- increase content knowledge along with

literacy learning (Kane, 2008). Ranging from food (*Alphabet Soup*) to football (*T Is for Touchdown: A Football Alphabet*), the wide array of alphabet book themes cover the world (*P is for Poppadoms!: An Indian Alphabet Book* and *Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions*) allowing ample opportunity for increasing motivation to read and conduct further research by connecting children to personally relevant, meaningful topics.

As children participate in animated conversations surrounding these intriguing texts, their knowledge of print grows. Speaking, reading, and writing share common knowledge sources and provide contexts for one another (Clay, 1998; Dyson, 2000) making alphabet book discussions a natural connection between reading and writing. Routman (1991) describes alphabet books as invitations for writers to write by providing the means to organize their writing. Taking dictation and translating kid-writing (Tunks & Giles, 2009) provide the means for very young children to author their own alphabet books or contribute to class publications. Immersing children in an assortment of alphabet books becomes the impetus for them to be used as anchor texts during writing workshop (Ray, 2006), where they serve as guiding examples of a particular kind of writing. Evers et al. (2009) recommend anchor alphabet texts as an effective means of providing first, fifth, and eighth graders with scaffolded instruction, supportive writing opportunities, and multiple forums for sharing child-authored books.

Children who are learning to read and write need access to meaningful and personally interesting books. Alphabet books from various genres of literature reflecting a wide range of developmental abilities, interests, cultures, and reading levels increase the likelihood that appealing options are available to everyone. Through interactions with alphabet books children will expand their language and cognitive skills by learning the purpose and meaning of letters

and words as they discover that written language comes in different forms and is used for various purposes. Capitalizing on children's familiarity with alphabet books is one way to support early writing attempts and promote their progress to becoming independent authors.

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A Turning Point: Unfiltered Conversations

Across the United States and around the globe—widespread demonstrations, acts of violence, anger, police brutality, and clashes between police and protestors—following the death of George Floyd—occupy the space of social media and in one way or another have affected each citizen in our great nation. With such constant media coverage and firsthand observations, adults, parents, and children most likely have questions and hopes for a more humane, equitable society. For educators, it is a pivotal point in classroom discourse to have honest, uncomfortable dialogue with our students. It is critical that we listen to what they are saying to us, and be advocates for elevating their life stories and experiences as a basis for exploring inroads for substantive change. Graves (1998) spoke to the cumulative effect of classroom discourse and the discovery of others' life stories on us:

From the time we get up in the morning until we retire in the evening, we are surrounded by teaching/learning events. Thousands of stories become part of us during our lifetime. The questions are, can we recall these stories with any profit? Can I reach back and recall stories that might help me not only to understand myself but also to assist others in teaching and learning (p. 5)?

Similarly, Short and Burke (1996) offered this poignant reflection about the relevance of honest, yet uncomfortable conversations between educators and their students:

Inquiry and change for us often begin with a vague feeling of tension that we may not be able to articulate. Something isn't right, and we get a sense of what is bothering us, and that leads us to take some kind of action" (p. 97).

What now follows are suggested instructional strategies that teachers may explore to foster a ‘bank of trust’ as a pathway for unfiltered conversations and positive change.

Become cognizant of the notion that, Black lives do matter. Specifically, talk to your students about what they see in their community and how they feel about it. Learn of how they feel about race and violence. Similarly, reflect upon their questions, fears, and concrete proposals for reimagining a safe space for conversation and addressing systemic racism. This moment in our nation’s legacy is the right time to say that tomorrow’s hopes for equality starts today. Yes, we can and must seek to understand the needs of our children as well as their perspectives of how they view racial inequity and racial violence. In recognition of the significance of the expression, ‘Black lives matter,’ we drew upon the below passage—written by American author, Williford (as cited in Putaansuu, 2020)—as a poignant reminder of how relevant the three words encapsulate this moment in our nation’s history:

If my wife comes to me in obvious pain and asks, ‘Do you love me?’ an answer of ‘I love everyone’ would be truthful, but also hurtful and cruel in the moment. If a co-worker comes to me upset and says, ‘My father just died,’ a response of ‘Everyone’s parents die,’ would be truthful, but hurtful and cruel in the moment. So when a friend speaks up in a time of obvious pain and hurt and says, ‘Black lives matter,’ a response of ‘All lives matter,’ is truthful. But it hurts and cruel in the moment.

[\(https://www.cityofportorchard.us/mayors-george-floyd-message/\)](https://www.cityofportorchard.us/mayors-george-floyd-message/)

As teachers, we can choose to take a stand and say, ‘Racial violence is bad,’ and that in some instances police do things that are not correct and that collectively we can find a new normal that

respects and values all human life, with an understanding that better outcomes can be had and better responses can be used.

Explain the presence of large civic protests and unrest. In a manner that is developmentally appropriate, talk to your students, expressing that civic protests are a constitutional right for a citizen to express their opinion—pro or con—about local, state, or national issues. It is in this manner that we ‘as activists’ can publicly, directly raise the issues and peacefully provoke change in our country. As educators, we are compelled to explain and teach our students that social injustice is wrong and painful and that the presence of hundreds, thousands, and millions of men, women and children marching in the streets of cities across our country is not just a choice but also a right. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1968) said, “A riot is the language of the unheard” (<http://www.gphistorical.org/mlk/index.htm>). In turn, explain to your students that where we are as a country at this very moment is the right time to encapsulate our fatigue and our dreams; to indicate our passion and anger; and to push for real reform of how racial diversity in American society is acknowledged, empowered and valued. Christensen and Karp (2003) asserted in the following comment how significant it is for the voices and lives of students to be an integral part of the curriculum:

At a time when cynicism and hopelessness increasingly dominate our youth, helping students understand the world and their relationship to it by encouraging social action may be one of the few antidotes. Schools are a prime place where this can take place (pp. 74 – 75).

Foster solution-focused conversations and actionable measures via a collaborative paradigm. As K – 12 educators, we can choose to initiate or collaborate on intentional

conversations with our parents, students, and administrators to question ourselves about current school policies and procedures. For example, what is the ethnicity of students referred to the front office or given either suspensions or expulsions? What is the demographic profile of students given low academic grades or recognized for outstanding conduct and academics at school functions? Which students are appointed as peer mentors for a student newly assigned to the class? Which class of students participate during instructional conversations? Speaking to the discomfort of dealing directly with the issue of race in the classroom, Howard (2016) noted:

When White educators acknowledge both our insecurity and our privilege when dealing with issues of race, and when we begin to question the influence of the dominance paradigm in our work with students, we actually gain credibility with our colleagues and students from other racial ethnic groups (p. 76).

School operations must be transparent in order that all partners have access to reexamine the character of existing policies and procedures that unknowingly debilitate the potential of families representing marginalized populations. It is under the promise of complete transparency that empirical data can be retrieved as the framework for generating truthful understandings of the school mission and for constructing community-based solutions that erase all remnants of racism and safeguard our school children—our nation's legacy.

As educators and instructional leaders, we must be at the forefront of all initiatives to dissolve ingrained racism and tear down institutional barriers that demoralize, obstruct, or deny any student of color the protections of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. As citizens of our great nation, we must be poised for responsible change to serve as the conduit that reawakens trust between stakeholders of our respective schools. Yes, as informed, committed citizens we

need to understand the concept of racism. To reiterate, we must remain vigilant to the prevalence of uninformed mindsets and misperceptions that tend to minimize or devalue a person because of some arbitrary criterion. Equally relevant, we as educators must help advance an uncompromising resolve to treat all persons, regardless of the color of their skin, with dignity and respect, and with full realization that all Black lives do matter. George Floyd's unexpected death has generated a national conversation on racism, and we hope that conversation will give way to substantive change in a manner that all United States citizens experience the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

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Children's Picture Book Reviews

What's New in 2020-2021

Reviewer: Reba M. Wadsworth

Madeline Finn and the Therapy Dog

Written and Illustrated by Lisa Papp

Peachtree Publishers

2020

You will fall in love with this special story about Madeline as she works to train her dog Star to become a therapy dog. Each day she practices over and over all the things therapy dogs are required to do. Star follows her lead and soon is ready for the test. Each day during the testing period that last over several days. Star never fails to meet all the goals and his behavior makes all the patients respond to him with the exception of one...Mr. Humphrey. Mr. Humphrey doesn't even smile which makes Madeline work even harder to get to know him. On the very last visit, Madeline gets a smile from Mr. Humphrey and the success of the story shows Star winning the metal showing him to be a Therapy Dog when it is attached to the collar. The illustrations work perfectly to enhance the story with each colored illustration.

All Because You Matter

Written by Tami Charles

Illustrated by Bryan Collier

Orchard Books

2020

The words just flow off your tongue as you read this story which is written by a young mom as a love letter to her unborn child. *“They say that matter is all things that make up the universe: energy, stars, space...If that is the case, then you dear child, matter.”* The story continues from birth to watching the child takes his first steps, say his first words, and become a young boy of school age. As the book ends the words become more powerful with reassurances that the universe was created with room for all children regardless of color because *“since the beginning of time...You mattered. They mattered. We matter...and always will.”* Bryan’s art perfectly supports the story from beginning to end in full page illustrations.

Addy's Cut of Sugar

Written and Illustrated by Jon J Muth

Scholastic Press

2020

Jon Muth has outdone himself with this one about grief and loss . When young Addy loses her beloved kitten she goes in search for someone that can help her pain. She wants her kitten back. Her very wise friend tells her he can help her get over her loss if she will go to each neighbor's house and ask for a cup of sugar. The one restriction is that she can not get the cup of sugar from anyone who has not suffered a loss themselves. As she goes house to house, young Addy learns a valuable lesson which brings her some comfort and healing. She learns that the most important thing after a great loss is to cherish the memories of the good times she had with her kitten. This one is a must to keep on your shelf for the time when one of your children suffer a loss.

Eleanor Makes Her Mark

Written by Barbara Kerley

Illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham

Scholastic Press

2020

Who says that expository text can't be fun to read? Kerley has given us a wonderful example of how facts can be written into a narrative that brings the character to life for children. Eleanor was born at a time when women had very little to do outside the home. When her parents broke all traditional rules and allowed Eleanor to travel abroad and study in Europe, she relished the ideas that she could blossom and think for herself for the first time. Later when she marries Franklin Roosevelt even she felt for the first time that he actually respected her ideas. She became an excellent partner to him throughout his professional career because she reached out to people just to listen to their concerns. This trait served her well throughout her life and she became a strong proponent for Human Rights all over the world. Fotheringham provides illustrations that float in different places on each page and enhances the meaning of the words.

Building Zaha: The Story of Architect Zaha Hadid

Written and Illustrated by Victoria Tentler-Krylov

Orchard Books

2020

Here is another wonderful expository picture book about the life of Baghdad's Zaha Hadid who began during her early years to explore the designs in all the buildings around Baghdad. Her work as an architect eventually took her all over the world to design as critics of her work constantly questioned her designs but she forged ahead and created buildings that "*showed harmony between humans and their surroundings.*" Eventually her work and designs as a young adult finally landed her the job of being the first female to design an art museum in the United States. The illustrations on each page reveal all the ways she accomplished it!

Red Shoes

Written by Karen English

Illustrated by Ebony Glenn

Scholastic Press

2020

Malika knew the minute she glimpsed the red shoes in the store's window that those were the perfect shoes for her. One day when Malika arrives home, her Nana had those beautiful shoes waiting for Malika. Soon those red shoes were helping her swish and click all over the floor. On each page, English gives you all the moves that Malika makes in her new red shoes and often uses rich vocabulary that will excite your young listeners. However, as with all growing children, those beautiful red shoes soon became too small and began to pinch her feet and she had to say good-bye to her favorite red shoes. The wonderful thing that happens in the story after the shoes became too little for Malika, a lady walking by the Resale shop and immediately buys them to take with her to Africa where they once again become the property of a little African girl.

The Worrysaurus

Written by Rachel Bright

Illustrated by Chris Chatterton

Orchard Books

2020

You will love the opening lines of this book for your young readers: *“On a hot and sunny morning, under lovely clear blue skies, a little Worrysaurus was opening his eyes.”*

With that one sentence you will have your listeners hooked and ready to follow the little Worrysaurus through the pages to find out all the adventures that awaits him as he explores all his worries. The font is enlarged on each page and often comes with very large phrases that appeal to young children. Throughout the story, little Worrysaurus reveals his fears and all the advice his mom gave him about how to chase the worry away! This one will provide the format for a rich discussion with your children to explore all the things they worry about and ways they can solve their worry problems!

Anne Frank The Girl Heard Around the World

Written by Linda Elovitz Marshall

Illustrated by Aura Lewis

Orchard Books

2020

This picture book is one of the best I've found available about the life of Anne Frank because it first lets the reader view Anne Frank as a child who does all the everyday things little girls enjoy before the story reveals the history of what it was like for Jewish people living in Germany during the 1940's. As you read you will learn that Anne was a child who loved to laugh, create mischief, tell jokes and riddles long before she had to flee Germany and go into hiding to keep from being put to death. When she was 13, the months of isolation in hiding began. During those months when she wasn't permitted to talk, she wrote and wrote and wrote. For two years she wrote! After her death, someone found all her writings and gave them to her father, the only survivor from the family. These writings became very famous and told the world about the day to day happenings of the eight people as they existed while in hiding for those two long years.

Young Adult Book Reviews

Educated (2018), Tara Westover, Random House, ISBN 9780399590504

Educated is a coming-of-age memoir by Tara Westover, born to survivalist outliers of the Mormon church in the mountains of Idaho, where her father makes a living selling scrap metal from a junkyard and later strikes gold in the Essential Oils fad. Distrustful of “the Illuminati,” her father’s term for formally educated people, doctors, and the government, Tara’s mother, a midwife and healer, “home schools” her children, which means they own a single math book, a speller, one science “picture book,” no history save for Mormon texts, and a handful of fiction titles. By the time the seventh and last child Tara is born, they have given up bothering with birth certificates or pretending to educate their later children. Likely mentally ill and obsessed with the Ruby Ridge debacle, her delusional father is stockpiling food and ammunition, planning for the government to target them. Isolated, there is no one to help when Shawn, one of Tara’s older brothers, begins to be physically abusive of the youngest three children, and her parents are complicit by turning a blind eye to their broken bones and crushed spirits. It is in this paranoid, patriarchal environment that one of the abused, a brother, now stuttering, gets accepted into Brigham Young University and shows Tara her way out. Seventeen and unprepared at BYU, having never set foot in a school and self-taught for the ACT, not even knowing about the Holocaust or the Civil Rights Movement, Tara finds sympathy from a faculty mentor. A true teacher, he takes Tara under his wing and nurtures her with the redemptive power of education until she takes flight—all the way to Cambridge University in England--where she earns a Ph.D.

in history and finds the courage to “self-create” (304).

Professional Book Reviews

Teaching English Language Learners: A Handbook for Elementary Teachers by Ann Morgan. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019. 100 pp. \$30.00 (paper). ISBN 978-1475843873.

Ann Morgan does an exquisite job of providing everyday information about teaching English Language Learners (ELL) to the busy classroom teacher. Within 100 pages, she is able to open elementary teachers' eyes to better understand ELLs, illustrate classroom strategies that can be implemented immediately, and explain assessments for obtaining accurate data on their learning and progress in second language acquisition. After reading this book, veteran, beginning, and preservice teachers will be better equipped to utilize the most effective teaching strategies for fostering the learning of English Language Learners who are in their classrooms.

Within these powerful pages, readers may be surprised at the important, but often overlooked information, and the special care that Morgan takes in acquainting teachers with common socio-emotional aspects of our English Language Learners, not only as students, but as children. For example, Morgan illustrates a vignette of a student who cared for his siblings and cousins at home, because his mom and aunt worked and slept odd hours. At school, he fell asleep in class and recess. Less sensitive or informed teachers may have thought he was lazy, but Morgan ensures that teachers understand this vital information as it brings focus to salient, nonacademic characteristics of ELLs. Of course, every ELL is different with some students native to the United States and others emigrating for different reasons from around the world. As a doctoral student focusing on English Language Learners and literacy, I discovered that within the first few chapters and with less than an hour of reading, I benefitted from many teaching strategies, experiences, and ah-ha moments that Ann Morgan gleaned throughout her 18

years of teaching. Through the resources provided in each of the ten chapters, teachers will find that what most consider daunting tasks, now are well within reach to help our ELLs adapt to a new environment in which they bring their culture and life experiences with them. In addition, readers will learn how to assess their ELLs in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to ensure accurate data is obtained. With this evaluative data, teachers will be better able to plan instruction based on students' language proficiency and determine if students' needs are bigger than just second language acquisition. Linked to these assessments of English Language Learners, readers will gain useful knowledge of strategies that can be immediately implemented into classrooms to better suit students both academically and culturally. Morgan even includes her own strategies developed for ELLs in her classroom, including "Dots Write" to organize writing ideas. One of the unique offerings of this book are the great online resources she provides that extend and enhance each chapter. Last, another beneficial and unique touch is found in Morgan's final chapter, entitled "What Teachers and Kids Say," which includes motivational advice from various elementary teachers and ELL students.

Throughout this concise, yet informative book, Ann Morgan embraces the vulnerabilities of every teacher by illustrating her missteps and flaws in teaching English Language Learners. These revelations helped me understand that I am not the only teacher to come up short in my instructional routines for these high needs students. With this realization, I became more comfortable on this journey of self-reflection and learning. Through reading and reflecting on Morgan's book, I revisited strategies learned years ago, but not actively incorporated into my teaching repertoire, such as utilizing active voice in order to keep the message simple for an ELL student. The new, unfamiliar literacy strategies, such as Six Word Memoirs, stimulated my

thinking about implementation into my classroom for my ELLs and for all students. Since every chapter included a section on key takeaways, I found myself re-reading the main points and revisiting my ELL teaching practices. To add to the practicality of this book, Morgan's classroom vignettes support ways for readers to envision the information or strategy being suggested, as well as imagining how to modify or adapt for my own classroom. For me, the most useful information of all was provided in the chapter "Making the Puzzle Pieces Fit". Here, a broader outlook on English Language Learners in the classroom is taken and illustrates what teachers can do even before new ELLs walk through the door. Next, she invites teachers to explore avenues to enhance the classroom environment to smooth the way for students to adapt to the new culture. My favorite example is incorporating a book talk during lunch for ELL students to enhance background knowledge, literacy development, and offer a safe place to enjoy lunch and a book. Without Morgan's simple suggestions, classroom teachers might overlook important ways to support ELLs as they ensure that their accommodations are being followed during instructional time. Given the persuasive perspectives and the effective instructional strategies that Morgan provided, I am in hopes that she will write another book to continue this positive momentum.

Because of this book's foundational and introductory nature, I think that university professors would love using this with preservice teachers. Also, beginning teachers will appreciate having this reference when faced with an unknown acronym for second language users or when advice is warranted on the cultural divide between home and school. Even veteran teachers opening the pages of this book can strengthen existing strategies for their classrooms.

Through this book, Ann Morgan created a valuable resource not only for educating ELLs, but also for the smooth transition of acclimating second language learners to their new environments. The easy organization, key takeaways, and efficacious strategies in this book are bound to give all teachers new and needed approaches to enhance their classrooms. Certainly, with Puerto Rico still recovering from Hurricane Maria, recent earthquakes, and with unstable countries like Venezuela threatening their citizens' safety, the United States is likely to become home to more and more second language users who need the support of a well-educated teacher of ELLs. This book could not have come at a more perfect time.

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McGregor, Tanny. (2019). *Ink & ideas: Sketchnotes for engagement, comprehension, and thinking*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. \$23.00 U.S.

Many scholars continue to seek a solution to the issue of students shunning the traditional lecture-notes-test instructional model. Although educators recognize the importance of taking notes as a self-created reference guide, this task, typically associated with a slideshow in the front of the room and the teacher lecturing, becomes mundane while students hurriedly copy information into notebooks. As a practicing middle school language arts teacher, I am constantly seeking strategies to increase engagement while helping students comprehend texts and clarify concepts. Tanny McGregor (2019) provides intermediate literacy teachers with an innovative way to promote engagement in the classroom through a new notetaking system, sketchnotes, in *Ink & Ideas: Sketchnotes for Engagement, Comprehension, and Thinking*.

McGregor answers many questions by beginning the book with her colorful FAQs. The questions are written from the perspective of a concerned educator, leery about implementing sketchnotes. McGregor reassures educators with advice for the smooth integration of sketchnotes. McGregor organizes the book into six chapters that discuss the benefits of sketchnotes, how to implement sketchnotes into direct instruction, and how to use sketchnotes for written communication within and outside of the classroom.

“More Than Just a Pretty Page” justifies utilizing sketchnotes by describing the strategy as “words and pictures together.” McGregor quotes William Allard (n.d.): “Words and pictures can work together to communicate more powerfully than either alone.” She describes how sketchnotes serve as visuals for students’ thinking and understanding, which are both processes not easily seen. Also, the nature of sketchnotes allows students to determine if their notes will be

linguistic, nonlinguistic, or a combination of both, which provides students with opportunities to choose how to demonstrate their understanding of text. McGregor also discusses the thinking processes that benefit from the use of sketchnotes, such as enhancing students' memory, evidenced in Mueller and Oppenheimer's (2016) research. In addition, McGregor cites research conducted by Kaimal, Ray, and Muniz (2016) who found that creating visual art reduced the stress hormone, cortisol, in 75% of their participants. McGregor implies that sketchnoting has the same effect on children. Finally, since children can create drawings and special fonts relevant to their notes, sketchnotes welcome students to display their learning in advantageous ways. In essence, Chapter One convinces readers of the educational benefits of sketchnotes, and ends with a section titled "Ink in Action" which relays a parent's animated, personal account about her son's love for sketchnoting vocabulary words. Each chapter also ends with a practice sheet for readers to give the strategy a go by cleverly sketchnoting that chapter's concepts.

One question in the FAQ section referred to the overwhelmed feeling teachers and students may have when presented with a blank sheet of paper to begin sketchnoting. Chapter Two, appropriately titled "One Blank Page = Unlimited Possibilities," provides a thorough explanation of how to combat those early feelings of nervousness. She goes on to suggest that teachers introduce sketchnotes by sharing the findings of research studies concerning memory and creating visual representations in student-friendly language and allowing students to sketchnote something of their own choice. Teachers should also allow students to look at others' sketchnotes, so that they can notice patterns in how the sketchnotes are created, such as color schemes, linguistic and nonlinguistic representations, and elements of individuality. McGregor also shows the importance of helping students realize that perfection is not a pattern or required

element of sketchnotes, since there is not a right or wrong way to sketchnote. Students simply have to determine how they can best make their thinking and understanding visual. The author suggests explicitly teaching students the visual elements and foundation of sketchnotes: lettering and fonts, connectors, frames and bullets, faces and figures, and words and pictures. Teachers can draw examples on their board, or display the examples presented in this book for students to see sample sketches they can create. Finally, McGregor suggests that teachers begin their first sketchnote experience in the classroom through a reading of a story or nonfiction text to practice sketchnoting.

“Becoming an Independent Inker” provides considerations for those who need to understand the smaller parts that make up the entire whole of the artistry behind sketchnoting. McGregor provides a vignette about her college friend, Karen, a very methodical thinker who appreciated the refinement of small details, while McGregor notes that she self-identifies as the complete opposite. McGregor states that this chapter is for those who can relate more to Karen. The author helps readers determine where to begin their sketchnoting on the blank sheet of paper. Then, she transitions into a discussion of color, with sample color wheels and potential color schemes alongside example sketchnotes for each color scheme described. The author also discusses how different colors can be used as the anchor, accessory, or accent color on the sketchnote. The chapter ends with the author providing suggestions to help educators determine what content should be displayed in their sketchnotes, which varies based on the task and importance of information being shared. Although the author suggests that readers who, like her, prefer to jump in and pay attention to smaller details later, could skip this chapter. Teachers will

appreciate her respect for differentiation. No doubt, McGregor offers useful information in this chapter for students who are struggling to get started on their sketchnotes.

“Sketchnote LIVE: Be in the Moment” is filled with pictures displaying the possibilities of sketchnotes for various activities in and outside of the classroom. The author demonstrates these strategies through sketchnoting, which further justified the usefulness of sketchnoting for more than students listening to a story or viewing a slideshow of unit content. In another section of the chapter, McGregor captures the aspect of sketchnotes that accounts for engagement and comprehension. The author provides strategies for taking sketchnotes “live” when interacting with read-alouds, music, audio content, excerpts from texts, direction instruction, marginal annotations, images and objects, and daily sketches. As a model for students, this chapter’s sketchnotes will serve as useful references for classroom display. Furthermore, Chapter Four purports that sketchnoting works for cross-curricular learning, and even personal and non-academic purposes.

“Thinking Ahead & Thinking After” prompts the reader to use sketchnotes both to plan and to reflect. Revamping the traditional T-chart and K-W-L chart by integrating sketches into notes instead of writing bullet points of facts and other information, and utilizing a new strategy called “Idea Banks” to sketch pictures, thoughts, words, and questions about a topic, students learn by thinking ahead. Then, remodeling traditional reflection strategies continues with symbol sketches that allow today’s students to demonstrate their understanding through visual representations of important symbols. Students can also synthesize their learning by creating sketches that capture the big ideas. Finally, instead of writing solely in a journal, students can sketch their reflections in meaningful ways. Providing students with sketchnoting opportunities

before and after new content can also allow teachers to gauge students' understanding through the students' use of sketchnoting.

“Sketchnote Tapas” offers a multiplicity of ways to use sketchnotes, such as creating visual representations for anchor charts, visual syntheses, and publishing formats for sharing sketchnoting. McGregor discusses these strategies and provides sample sketchnotes in well-placed “Try This” boxes throughout this chapter to encourage readers in this new endeavor.

Once readers reach the final chapter, they will be filled with innovative and dynamic ideas for implementing sketchnotes into their instruction. Additionally, sketchnotes, used across multiple content areas, support students' metacognition, memory, focus, and creativity. Teachers are encouraged to use sketchnotes in their own professional development, in workshops, and conferences to improve their own practice. The best aspects of this exciting and accessible text are McGregor's insertions of salient research throughout to substantiate sketchnoting's claims of improved engagement, comprehension, and retention, as well as her enthusiastic invitations to get busy sketchnoting. By the end of this book, MacGregor's contagious confidence in this research-based, instructional strategy will ensure that teachers of all levels of experience will find many ways to implement this innovation with students across varying interests and abilities.

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The Writing Teacher's Companion: Embracing Choice, Voice, Purpose, and Play by Ralph Fletcher. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. 2017. 176 pp. (paperback) \$34.99 U.S.

Throughout the history of mass literacy, the value of writing has been its relationship with reading, not so much the actual writing (Brandt, 2015). Literacy has shifted from small numbers of qualified authors limited by exclusive publishing outlets to widely-available, public access for authors of all ages and abilities. Ralph Fletcher, author of *The Writing Companion: Embracing Choice, Voice, Purpose and Play*, offers teachers a modern compendium from his lifetime of writing instruction to apply timelessly to current writing venues. Fletcher's book delivers 176 pages of "short, punchy, and digestible" (p. 9) chapters containing time-proven methods for supporting writing instruction.

Considering Brandt's (2015) treatise that writing is the new reading, Fletcher's book is especially relevant to the 90% of American students who engage social media, hundreds of times a day, with instantaneous publishing platforms such as Twitter and Instagram (Kircaburun, 2016). Fletcher's newest book belongs on the list of influential reads for teachers of all experience levels and in all subject areas. Whether a novice teacher of writing or a seasoned one, this comprehensive volume contains all the essentials of writing instruction. With its five expertly organized sections, further divided into 36 short chapters, this text also includes ingenious, easy-to-follow blue highlighting throughout to spotlight the most valuable professional epiphanies. The author understands and accommodates teachers who are experiencing what Fletcher calls 'new kind of poverty,' which is equated with decreased time to learn about writing, to teach writing, and to write themselves. Fletcher purports, "no sense in spooling out long, windy chapters nobody has time to read" (p. 9).

Like Fletcher, Kinloch (2011), author of *Urban Literacies: Critical Perspectives on Language, Learning, and Community* contends that ALL teachers, not just writing teachers, should be considered teachers of writing. Therefore, Kinloch's insistence that writing connects the work students are doing across the entire curriculum makes Fletcher's recent book a suitable companion for ALL teachers in every subject matter. Fletcher seems to know that many teachers may not consider themselves teachers of writing when he clarifies his compassionate aim in writing this book to serve as "sustenance for the writing teacher's soul" (p. 9). A central objective of this book is that teachers of all ages, content areas, and skill levels often experience a sense of professional isolation in the area of writing. Therefore, Fletcher proposes becoming a professional friend to teachers by helping the teaching community "see through the complexities to the underlying simplicities" (p. 8) of writing instruction strategies. As a doctoral student researching the writing instruction of preservice teachers, *The Writing Teacher's Companion: Embracing Choice, Voice, Purpose, and Play* will allow me to better support my community of teachers and educators. Teachers will appreciate his reminders to "remember that [writing] it's not just a process for students--teaching writing is also a process for us [educators]" (p. 165). Throughout, teachers will feel Fletcher alongside them in this vulnerable and brave journey to be teachers of writing. This book's personal tone allows readers a window into the vulnerable intersections of a writer's personal and professional lives. At 21, Fletcher's younger brother tragically died, yet this life event served as a catalyst for *Fig Pudding*, his first children's novel (Fletcher, 1995). While many writers specialize in one genre, over his life's course, Fletcher published picturebooks, children's novels, poetry, nonfiction, and most prominently, professional books for teachers. Early on, the respect and

admiration he has for the difficult job of classroom teachers of writing is encapsulated with this quote: "...a good teacher will reach into the chaos, find a place where writing works, pull it from the wreckage, name it, and make the writer aware of his or her emerging skill with words." (p. 2).

Readers will also love the simple and direct tone embedded in first chapter's title: "Keep It Simple" (p. 13). Fletcher emphatically states that students should write every day, explaining that practice equals improvement. In *Empowering primary writers through daily journal writing*, other researchers, such as Jones and East (2010), continue to concur with implementing authentic, meaningful, and daily writing. Not shy in his unwavering stance, Fletcher notes, "writing is one of my non-negotiables" (p. 45). Enhancing the mantra of daily writing practice, Fletcher admonishes teachers to enjoy the humor embedded in students' writing, cut themselves some slack, and remember "you learn as you go" (p. 17). Early on, Fletcher suggests teachers engage in powerful modeling through personal and professional writing alongside students during writing time. Subsequent chapters encourage teachers to pay particular attention to cultivating positive writing environments and attitudes. While teachers cannot change the past negative writing experiences, they can offer a fresh, exciting, and clean writing slate by encouraging a collaborative "home court advantage" (Fletcher, 2017, p. 33). One essential element of this home court advantage is a judgment-free writing community so young authors feel free to take risks in order to hone their writing skills.

Creating a writing space is just as important as any other element of differentiated instruction, according to Fletcher. He suggests teachers customize writing spaces to fit student needs, paying close attention to all ingredients of the physical environment. Also, Fletcher

makes a strong case for choice; “Giving young writers genuine choice is the best way I know to create an environment where they can flourish” (p. 53). Inviting students to choose the writing pieces they will take through the writing process adds autonomy and motivation for authors.

Fletcher (2017) further clarifies, “Students who are truly exercising choice are empowered to make decisions throughout the writing process” (p. 54).

Among the many strengths of this book are Fletcher’s expertise aligned with practical depictions of essential writing processes. Examples including writing conferences and minilessons, which are essential parts of improving writing skills. Conferencing is simplified by Fletcher as an ongoing conversation with students that will “grow strong writers if you do nothing more than point out what they have done well, and name it for them (p. 69)”.

Minilessons are viewed similarly as Fletcher also defines them as conversations with small groups to impart a focused, direct strategy for immediate application. Furthermore, he stresses the essential duo of teachers allowing students to determine the purpose and audience of their writing contributions, which are spotlighted with aforementioned blue highlights. The original terms associated with the writing process such as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing are quite present throughout Fletcher’s pages of practical information. Yet, they are mentioned in ways that aid writing fluency rather than as tools for discovering errors. Revising and editing are considered autonomous skills for calibrating self-corrections, illustrated by Fletcher’s statement, “We don’t want to corner the market on what makes a good piece of writing. They need practice developing their own criteria.” (p. 109).

While the heart of Fletcher’s book presents writing strategies in straightforward, human, and simplified terms, he finds ways to authenticate the writing process while increasing both

teacher and student writing capacities. Focused, empowered writing instruction that encourages student interest and excitement dominate this practical guide for either beginning teachers or established practitioners in an easy-to-digest format. Masterfully, Fletcher pens his way into improving the writing practice of all teachers willing to accept his professional companionship by way of this useful text. Fletcher's intentions, of both heart and head, are captured in these words, "I hope these pages will give you support and encouragement as you strive to nourish the young writer in your class, and create a place where they can thrive." (back cover).

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Maryann Manning Research Roundtable

This section features selected research by undergraduate and graduate students and is dedicated to the memory of [Dr. Maryann Manning](#), who was elected to serve as the 2015-2016 president of the International Literacy Association before her untimely passing in 2013.

Dr. Manning was a literacy professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and a passionate supporter of Alabama Literacy Association. Her mentoring of students, teachers, researchers and ALA members still impacts our state, nation and world today and inspires our organization to continue her tradition of investing in the lives of educators and students.

Exploring the Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic and Mandatory Quarantine on Teachers, Students and their Families

Abstract:

COVID-19 has transformed the way we teach, learn and live. This study explores the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on teachers, parents and students, analyzes the implications of unexpected virtual education on literacy instruction, and considers how the lived experiences of parents, teachers and students can inform our continued response to instructing and assessing during a pandemic.

The novel Coronavirus, dubbed COVID-19, has impacted almost everything about the way we live, learn and teach. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Just two days later, the United States declared a national state of emergency. In a press conference on Friday, March 13, 2020, Alabama Governor Kay Ivey announced that all K-12 schools in the state would close at the end of the school day on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. Shortly after, on April 3, 2020, Gov. Ivey issued a stay-at-home

order. On April 30 she lifted the stay-at-home order and transitioned the state into a safer-at-home order. This allowed some small businesses to reopen, but schools were to remain closed. By September, schools had reopened, either in person, virtually or utilizing a hybrid approach that included both in-person and virtual options.

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted many lives not only nationally, but globally as well. Children have been especially vulnerable (Golberstein, 2020) facing challenges that include stress, change, anxiety, depression, and isolation. Unexpectedly, students were abruptly removed from friends, family, teachers, a consistent schedule, and in some cases even primary needs such as food and shelter (LoBue, 2020). Recent studies indicate that students who are quarantined are facing more stress and navigating more family issues than usual (Bhullar, 2020). Research indicates that children in stressful situations such as social-distancing/online homeschooling fare better when they have support systems in place (The Learning Network, 2020). Students who have support are more likely to have better coping skills (Baeyans, 2017). This study was designed during the Spring of 2020 to explore how P-12 teachers, students and parents were affected by mandatory quarantine, school closures, and online learning. The results lend insight into the lived experiences of teachers, students and parents during the global pandemic and offer educators and parents opportunities to consider how to most effectively respond to the needs of students during quarantine and online learning, as well as when they return to the classroom.

The qualitative study utilized an anonymous survey to collect the lived experiences of teachers, parents and students. The survey was distributed by social media in May of 2020. It included

questions for parents and teachers about their experiences in quarantine and their children's and students' experiences learning online. Survey questions were designed to capture parent, teacher and student experiences early in the quarantine. There were 56 total respondents. Of these, 45 percent were parents of a P-12 student, 32 percent were teachers, and 23 percent were both a parent and a teacher. Of these, 46 percent of the participants' children attend a city school system, 29 percent attend a county school, 20 percent attend a private/charter/magnet school, and 6 percent were homeschooled prior to quarantine. Almost 70 percent of the teachers who responded teach in a county school system; the rest of the participants taught in a city school system. Of the parents who responded, more than half had to work from home due to the pandemic and less than half were working outside the home as usual or were unemployed because of Covid-19. Respondents identified their location as Alabama, Delaware, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The majority of the responses were from Alabama.

Two major themes emerged in the data: Fear and isolation. Parents and teachers expressed many fears, including anxiety about meeting basic needs and concern about their students.

Responses included:

"Groceries - I'm down to my last roll of paper towels."

"At first, it was a stressful feeling to have to adjust to a new normal. I was also fearful that my classroom families would not have food for their kids to eat."

"It has been somewhat stressful. We walked out of school for spring break and just didn't go back. I don't feel like I got closure with my students."

Respondents also worried about the mental health of their students and children. Responses included:

“My kids' emotional state. My daughter experienced depression”.

“My greatest concern has been for my students. Especially those who don't have adequate living situations or live in abusive environments”.

“My greatest fear would be contracting this disease and being asymptomatic and passing it on others unknowingly”.

Parents worried about not having the technology needed to complete online assignments and not having the skills or training to support their children learning at home. Teachers worried that their students would fall behind academically; it is very difficult to teach reading online.

“Not furthering knowledge. I was very worried for the students that didn't have a stable home life, whose parents weren't always there to begin with. Making sure those students had all the supports from me that they needed was a fear/challenge of mine”.

“That my kids won't be as prepared for the next school year as they would have been had they finished the school year. Also concerned about what school will be like for them when they do return to school”.

“Holding virtual IEP meetings with teachers, parents, and administrators while making sure confidentiality is occurring for students and families”.

Two categories of isolation emerged: Isolation from family and children being isolated from their school communities. In addition, parents had to adopt a teacher role in their children's education. With no prior experiences as an educator, parents experienced frustration and isolation trying to help their children succeed.

“Very stressful in the beginning. Teachers were amazing to organize and provide work for my kids. But as a single mum, it's been really hard to manage keeping my kids focused on their work and providing the support they need, while also getting my own work done.”

“We (daughter and I) stayed home from March 13 until we left for Memorial Day. My husband was essential. He would go to work each day and pick up needed items from the store once a week that I couldn't get from Walmart pickup. I worked as a teacher from home and found it really challenging on the days I had heavy loads of instruction and couldn't give attention to her needs”.

“I am an RN who works the Covid 19 unit daily. It has been a struggle. Keeping myself and my family safe from this virus has not been easy. Showers twice a day before work and after work. Donning PPE from head to feet. Making my children stay home and go nowhere, not even the grocery store. Unable to see their friends and grandparents. This all has been heart wrenching, scary, and overwhelming”.

Educators said they felt isolated from their professional communities and their students. Many expressed concern about what would happen when school opened again.

“I don't know exactly. I don't feel comfortable with any of us going back to work or school until there is a vaccine or effective treatment, because those are enclosed spaces you spend all day in with a lot of other people. So I'm afraid we may all be home and homeschooling for a long time.”

“It's different than anything we've seen or been through before. At times it can get lonely and, while we have the ability to talk to friends and family through technology, it's just not the same. Even as restaurants and businesses start to open, things are different. Masks, gloves, distance, and 10 or less has become the new normal. Simply put, it's not the same, and, we don't know if it ever will be.”

Despite the fear and isolation, many respondents mentioned being thankful in the midst of the pandemic. Parents said having technology like iPads and Chromebooks provided by schools for each student and offering Grab and Go meals for students was very helpful. Respondents also said they appreciated more time at home with family.

“My husband has been able to work from home allowing us more family time. We have tried new recipes, gotten lots of things done at home, saved lots of money by not eating out or driving all over the place. I have absolutely loved all the free online learning websites and

activities. They have allowed me to teach my daughter in ways I didn't know were possible, especially Boom Cards!"

Overall, data indicated that the parents, teachers, and students experienced stress, fear, and isolation but also gratitude during mandatory quarantine. While more studies are needed to explore the impact of the pandemic and home learning on students' academic, socio-emotional, and mental health, these data indicated that schools and families responded well to the sudden change and inherent stress, providing the tools, resources and support to the best of their abilities to support student learning.

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Call For Manuscripts

The Reading Paradigm

The Reading Paradigm (RP) is the peer-reviewed journal of the Alabama Literacy Association that provides research-based teaching ideas to literacy educators. The journal publishes articles covering topics such as applying literacy research to classroom practice and using strategies to help all learners succeed. Topics may include, but are not limited to, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and programs for diverse populations of literacy learners.

Full-length articles and brief Teaching Tips are accepted for consideration through peer review. In addition, RP publishes informal, personal essays from classroom teachers for the non-peer-reviewed Voices from the Classroom.

RP is published online twice each year in June and December. Submission deadlines are April 1 for June publication and October 1 for December publication.

Appropriate Submissions for Peer Review

RP welcomes well-written, original descriptions of research-based instruction that improves literacy learning from pre-K through college/university. Manuscripts must provide an appropriate blend of practical classroom application and solid theoretical framework and, where appropriate, include graphics (e.g., tables, charts, figures, photographs) that emphasize key ideas and add visual interest. The journal editors will not consider manuscripts under consideration elsewhere.

Full-length article manuscripts should be about 3,000 words in length (including main text, references and any sidebars), and should provide RP's practitioner audience with classroom ideas for literacy development based on sound research and/or theory. Articles should have a clear purpose, discuss the topic with some depth, and be written in a straightforward style.

Teaching Tips manuscripts should be no more than 3 double-spaced pages and should focus on a single, research-based application for improving literacy that can be readily implemented by readers.

Your manuscript will be evaluated on its contribution to the field, timeliness, freshness of approach, and clarity and cohesiveness of presentation. Before submitting your manuscript, please familiarize yourself with the voice, tone, and format typical of RP content. For all submissions, please provide a cover sheet that contains the name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number for each author.

Preparing Your Article or Teaching Tip

All submissions for peer review should conform to the style outlined in the APA 6th edition. All manuscripts must be submitted electronically at the link above. Text should be presented double-spaced in 12-point font, in .doc, .docx, or .rtf files.

Organizational and Visual Appeal

Make every effort to include subheadings (up to 3 levels of subheads can be accommodated), bulleted and numbered lists, figures and tables, or other visual elements in the text to increase readability and visual interest.



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Required Elements for Articles and Teaching Tips

Manuscript

Abstract of 100–150 words, written in the third person and without citations.

All in-text citations and corresponding references must be in APA 6th edition format.

Figures and tables:

If tables are included, they should be embedded at the end of the manuscript. Figures should not be embedded inside the manuscript or separate Word documents but rather should be submitted as separate, original image files (e.g., jpg, pdf, tif, eps) with a resolution of at least 300 dpi. All figures and tables must be referenced in the manuscript, and figure captions can be inserted with their callouts.

References:

Ensure that your references are correct and complete and that they adhere to the APA 6th edition reference structures. NOTE: References will not be fact checked in copy editing; it is the author's responsibility to verify the accuracy of all references and their corresponding citations.

Ensure that references include complete author initials with no space between initials, ampersand for multi-authored works, year, full titles of books including edition/volume, page numbers for book chapters, month for presentations, volume and issue number for journal articles, etc. Ensure that authors for a single source are listed in correct order.

Pull literature titles out into a separate reference list (e.g., Literature Cited). NOTE: Literature that is mentioned but not actually cited does not need a parenthetical citation or inclusion in a reference list. Only if it matters which published edition of the book was used are parenthetical citations and reference entries needed.

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Preparing Your Voices from the Classroom Essay

Voices from the Classroom essays share personal reflections on teaching experiences, advice for new teachers, profiles of exemplary teachers and classrooms, perspectives on current issues in literacy and education, and more. These informal, non-peer-reviewed pieces (no scholarly citations or reference list) are written by educators for educators. Submissions should be approximately 500 words and include a corresponding image or photo, if possible. Note that releases must be provided for use of any person's words or likeness.

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The review process includes a preliminary evaluation to determine appropriateness, double-blind peer review, and finally adjudication by the editors. Teaching Tips are evaluated by at least two members of the editorial review board, and full-length articles are evaluated by at least three review board members. Acceptance is determined by the reviewers' recommendations, available space, and balance of topics in upcoming issues. A decision is typically rendered 4 weeks from submission deadline. Publication date of accepted manuscripts is determined by the submission date.

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