Implementation of Best Practices in Reading and Writing Interventions to Foster Growth in

Literacy Skills in a Diverse Second Grade Classroom

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Abstract

This action research project was designed to implement best practices in literacy instruction in order to best meet the diverse literacy needs of 2nd grade students through the use of The Daily Five Literacy Program. Students received lessons over a 27 week period in the four areas identified in the research that support literacy development: Oral Language Development, Writing, Reading and Spelling.

The research design of this study includes pre- and post-test student assessments, anecdotal records and implementation of tools to enhance the four areas of literacy development. The results indicate that the implementation of The Daily Five program is a viable literacy management system that supports the diverse differentiation needed to foster literacy growth in all students.

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Action Research

Chapter One-Introduction

Many people travel through a gateway to escape the bustling life of the city and find year-round recreation on the largest mountain in the state of Oregon and in its surrounding foothills. Spring provides hiking trails lush with the scents and sights of newly formed flowers and foliage. Summer brings cool lakes and rivers to be enjoyed. Fall gives way to sights of beautiful autumn colors and winter provides months of pure-white snow to be played upon. Throughout all of the four seasons, this much sought-after recreational area provides a plethora of activities to be enjoyed such as hiking, skiing, and photography opportunities of the majestic mountain and all that is found within its slopes and foothills. At a mere 21 miles east of the largest city in Oregon, this gateway is the home-away-from-home for many.

This gateway is central to the over-arching community. Its main artery is a busy highway that runs right through a community of diverse people with six elementary schools, grades K-5; three middle schools, grades 6-8; and one high school, grades 9-12. Each of the schools are dotted along this main artery which ascends dominantly, winding through the foothills of this majestic mountain and weaving through its lush, green foothills.   The community of which these 10 schools serve is made up of one small-size city and several smaller towns and even smaller villages or communities. It is a unified district that used to be divided between five districts before consolidation and encompasses approximately 425 square miles (_____ District website, June 21, 2009).

The population of the largest city that this school district serves is 5,385 with a female population of 50.9% and a male population of 49.1%. People living in this city are mostly age 18-64 at 69.1% with people under the age of 18 coming in at 30.9% and age 65 or over at 8.7%.

The median age is 32.5. Thus, this is a young population with not many elderly people in retirement age as residents. The average family size is 3.18. CityTownInfo.com's projected growth for the city is 46.2% or approximately 2,500 new residents over the next five years.   The racial makeup of the city is 93.9% White, 0.1% African-American, 0.7% Asian, 1.2% American Indian & Alaskan, 4.1% Hispanic, 1.7% Other and 2.1% Mixed Race. The median family income is $52,543 which is higher than that of its neighboring cities (CityTownInfo.com, 2000). The other small towns and villages that this school district serves are not listed as they represent very small populations. As a community, the Hispanic population is small compared to the percentage of Hispanic families in the researcher's elementary school which is approximately 14%.

The district's educational philosophy is twofold and includes its vision: "The district and our community will work together to develop educated, healthy, and responsible citizens." While its mission is: "To provide a high quality educational system that inspires all students to actively pursue educational excellence and responsible citizenship." The district's school board is comprised of six men and one woman (_____District website). The district's 10 schools, and a small amount of distance learning for families who qualify, averages about 4,200 students. Enrollment fluxes due to the transient population that comes for work in the agricultural industries as well as the service industries surrounding the mountain activities. The district spends $7,253 per pupil in current expenditures. It spends 54% on instruction, 42% on support services, and 4% on other elementary and secondary expenditures. The district has 21 students for every full-time equivalent teacher with the Oregon state average being 20 students per full-time equivalent teacher. In the district, 16% of students have an IEP (Individualized Education Program). An IEP is a written plan for students eligible for special needs services. The district

serves 8% English Language Learners (ELL). ELL students are in the process of acquiring and

learning English Language skills (education.com, 2006-2009).

The district, like many other districts this year, has had to strategically respond to

substantial reductions in funding due to the economic downturn in the state of Oregon. State

support funding is proving unstable given the current economic climate. During the 2008/09

funding year, the state has mandated two mid-year funding reductions. The district has absorbed

those reductions by cutting planned expenses and accessing fund balance reserves, which will be

reduced in half by year end (_____ District website). The district has been very creative,

offering severance and retirement incentives to reduce the workforce. According to the

superintendent, she and the human resources director have had the pleasure of meeting with the

House Ways and Means chairperson for the state of Oregon in which the district's incentive

program was shared (School Staff Meeting, May, 2009). The district is faced with a three

million dollar shortfall for the coming year, 2009-10. The reductions included:

- 2.0 fte school administrators
- 6.5 fte licensed high school staff
- 5.0 fte licensed middle school staff
- 12.0 fte licensed elementary school staff
- 3.5 fte licensed special program staff
- 16.5 fte classified support staff
- 1.0 fte support staff transferred to non-General Fund source
- $44,000 reduction in extra-duty assignments for licensed staff
- $263,000 reduction in operating funds (computers, textbooks, supplies, etc.)
- $44,000 Administrator, Supervisor, Confidential staff salary freeze

There were 23 retirements that included both certified and classified staff and many volunteer

resignations. Incentive programs included $20,000 cash for full-time employees; prorated for

other part time employees and call back rights up to 24 months. (_____ District Incentive

Program, March, 2009). Since positions will not be refilled, administrators and district personnel

have had to be very creative in class configurations and teacher assignments. Many elementary

schools in the district have gone to grade level blends while the middle and high schools will see

larger class sizes. The district was successful in passing a school bond in the fall of 2008. Plans

for this new bond are to build a new high school and complete needed repairs in each of its

school buildings.

The researcher is beginning her first year at a different elementary school, having

transferred from the position of English Language Learner (ELL) Specialist shared between two

other elementary schools in the district for the past two years. This prior experience gave the

researcher the opportunity to teach in the morning at the poorest school in the district and in the

afternoon at the most affluent school in the district.

The researcher's new assignment is a balance of both poor and affluent families as well

as transient and established families. It is a two-story building and is the oldest in the district,

originally constructed in 1931. Since then, there has been an addition which added classrooms

that extend behind the school. Unlike the other five elementary schools in the district which are

more rurally situated, the elementary school is thought of as a "city" school since it is in the heart

of the largest city that the school district serves in its expanse of 425 square miles and has neither

grass nor field for recess play.

The vision of the elementary school is, "To promote success for all students, _____

fosters a caring and supportive learning community, committed to one's intellectual, social, and

emotional growth." Its vision: "We seek to provide a safe learning environment that encourages

students of all backgrounds to be creative thinkers who are excited about learning and about

becoming productive citizens" (_____School website, June 21, 2009). The elementary school

serves approximately 380 students, K-5. Again, this is an average due to the transient nature of

the district as a whole and this school in particular. There are:

- Two Kindergarten teachers/classes,

- one all day and one half-day,

- two first grade teachers/classes,

- one first/second blend teacher/class,

- two second grade teachers/classes,

- two third grade teachers/classes,

- one third/fourth teacher/class,

- one fourth grade teacher/class,

- two fourth/fifth grade teachers/classes, and

- one fifth grade teacher/class.

In addition to classroom teachers, the elementary school has one full-time English Language

Development Specialist/English Language Learner Specialist, one full-time Reading Specialist,

a three-quarter time Child Development Specialist (counselor), a three-quarter time Learning

Specialist (Special Education teacher), a part time PE Specialist and a part time Music

Specialist. The building also houses the district Talented and Gifted (TAG) coordinator and the

Title I (Reading) coordinator. In addition to these licensed positions, the elementary school

employs many paraprofessionals to assist in student learning and overall operations of the

school. Due to the Incentive Program, there have been many shifts in assignments and room placements, resulting in a new Reading Specialist (Title I), blended classrooms, a newer Learning Specialist and a promotion from secretary to head secretary for one of the classified personnel. The resulting changes will no doubt bring change and new perspectives to the school.

The staffing makeup is one administrator, 21.6 Full time teachers with an average experience of 16.8 years. 27.8% of these teachers have a Master's Degree or higher. 90% of the classes are taught by teachers who meet federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher, resulting in 10% of classes being taught by teachers who do not meet the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher. There are 8.9 fulltime equivalent classified personnel (paraprofessionals) employed at the elementary school and 7.7 'other staff' (Oregon Department of Education School Report Card, 2007-2008).

Enrollment equals 363 with 14% of students in English Language Development (ELD/ESL) programs. The elementary class size is as follows:

Elementary Class Size	Number of Classes in School	This School	State Average
Fewer than 20 students	1	7.7%	26.9%
20-25 Students	8	61.5%	46.7%
26-30 Students	3	23/1%	23.3%
More Than 30 Students	1	7.7%	3.0%

(2007-2008 School Report Card)

Of the 61 actively served students in the ELD program the makeup is:

- 1 student identified as Samoan,

- 1 identified as Black,

- 1 identified as Hungarian,

- 1 identified as Arabic,

- 1 identified as Tarasco or Native American,

- 2 identified as Russian, 3 identified as Romanian, and

- 51 identified as Hispanic

(_____ district School ELL Roster, 6-21-2009).

The elementary school is a school-wide Title I school meaning that the school has met the

minimum requirement of 40% free and reduced lunch qualification (_____District Website,

June, 2009). Since the school is a school-wide Title I school, each K-5 student is served through

a combination of mainly pull-out with some push-in services in both reading and Math. The

Title I and Special Education staff work closely together, providing some overlapping services

(Title One Reading Specialist, personal communication, February 23, 2010).

Special Education services are provided through one full-time Learning Specialist and

one half-time Speech Pathologist. The Speech Pathologist serves 20 students on IEPs for

Communication Disabilities that include: Autism Spectrum, articulation, and/or language

services. The Learning Specialist currently has a case manages 36 students who qualify for

Special Education Services with an additional 6 students served who are case managed by the

Speech Pathologist. In addition to this, the Learning Specialist currently has 14 new referrals

for Special Education services in process. The Learning Specialist and her team of two

paraprofessionals serve students in a combination of pull-out and push-in services, depending on

the needs of the student and what works best with the classroom teacher (Learning Specialist &

Speech Pathologist personal communication, March 15, 2010).

The researcher is going to be teaching second grade and is new to the school for this

upcoming school year, 2009-10. The researcher's class configuration contains 16 boys and 9

girls with four students classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). Of the four ELLs, all

are Latino (Hispanic) comprised of two girls and two boys. In addition to this, there are two

male students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for speech.

The elementary school sponsors a Back to School Night with an Ice cream Social and at

least two Literacy Nights each year. The researcher is looking forward to working alongside the

other dedicated teachers and staff and learning more about the unique culture of this school.

Action Research Proposal

Chapter Two-The Issue

With the recent No Child Left Behind Legislation and growing concern of our nation's reading ability there has been a revolution of new theories, or tweaking of theories and newly or refined best practices that have been offered to bolster our nation's literacy skills. Since this new legislation and the responses of action by all interested and/or invested parties, there has been growth in our nation's literacy skills. The Nation's Report Card communicates the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Based on results of the (NAEP) assessments for fourth and eighth grade, The Nation's Report Card reported,

> In comparison to both 1992 and 2005, the percentage of students performing at or
>
> above the *Basic* level increased, but there was no significant change in the
>
> percentage of students at or above the *Proficient* level…White, Black, and
>
> Hispanic students all scored higher in 2007 than in the first assessment 15 years
>
> ago at both grades 4 and 8. However, improvements for minority students did not
>
> always result in the narrowing of the achievement gaps with White Students.
>
> (The Nation's Report Card [for] Reading, 2007, pp. 2-3).

According to the NAEP, students are rated *Basic* when he/she exhibits "Partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at a given grade level" whereas *Proficient* "Represents solid academic performance. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter." There is third level of *Advanced* that is given if a student's knowledge and skill "Represents superior performance" (The Nation's Report Card [for] Reading, 2007, p. 6.)

In Oregon, reading scores at the third grade level ranked 31st in the nation. For a comparison, the state of Washington ranked 11th (Oregon Department of Education, 2005).

At the research site, "Reading results are just below the state average of 85% at 81%. Writing scores are very low at 34%" (_____Grade School, School Improvement Plan 2008-09, p. 1). The researcher has included the writing results because reading and writing are interrelated and support one another. "When we read, when we write, we read and write about something in particular-a text lies in front of us in reading or just behind the mind's eye in writing" (Pearson, P., Raphael, T., Beson, V., Madda, C. as cited in Gambrell, 2007, p. 44).

Acquiring less than 'Proficient' literacy skills affects each individual as well as society overall. It has been widely theorized that low literacy skills have been linked to delinquency and incarceration, for example, "Many incarcerated youths have failed to learn to read. The fact that youths who have deficits in reading are disproportionately represented in correctional institutions suggests that the juvenile justice system has become the default system for many youths who have reading problems" (Christle & Yell, 2008, p. 148).

The researcher has observed first-hand that students who cannot read by third grade are placed in special education programs, are more likely to drop out of school and contribute less to society either through incarceration or living on welfare and/or through the dependence on others. Conversely, the researcher has observed that gaining proficiency in literacy skills will likely lead to completion of high school, college attendance and the attainment of higher paying professional jobs.

Students who score low on statewide reading and writing assessments lead to a school's low rating of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Not meeting AYP can have serious ramifications for the school and school district, not to mention the families, students and

teachers. Finally, students who cannot read or have deficits in his/her reading suffer from low

self-esteem, poor self-image and apathy toward learning in general (Gambrell, 2007; Beers,

2003).

The issues outlined above form the premise for the research and provide the impetus for

differentiation that will be implemented by the researcher during the upcoming school year.

These issues have shaped the research question: "How does a teacher meet the diverse

individual literacy needs in her second grade classroom?"

Literature Review

Literature on meeting the diverse reading and writing needs of students and helping each to

grow to his/her own 'next level' reflects much support for the need of differentiation in teacher

instruction.   Prior knowledge is cited as one of the most important aspects in reading ability and

growth thereof (Gambrell, 2007; Clay, 2005; Marzano, 2001 Beers, 2003; Gillet, Temple &

Crawford, 2008). With this assertion comes the instructional challenge of meeting the needs of

diverse learners in one's classroom. Each student has prior knowledge and background

experiences, they just aren't all the same and often times are not the prior experiences that lend

themselves to reading and/or writing readiness. The challenge of the teacher is to meet each of

his/her students where they are and guide each student to where they need to go. According to

Levy (2008):

Students enter classrooms with different abilities, learning styles, and

personalities. Educators are mandated to see that all students meet the standards

of our district and state. Through the use of differentiated instruction strategies,

educators can meet the needs of all students and help them to meet and exceed

the established standards (p. 1).

The researcher's class contains rich diversity that will require the use of differentiation and

background building. Crawford (2004) states,

No two children start out at the same level, have the same aptitudes, use the same

learning strategies, experience the same influences outside of school, and progress

at the same rates. Effective education of any kind begins with recognition of such

differences. It builds on what students already know-and on what motivates them

to know more. (p. 29).

The term *literacy* encompasses reading, writing, speaking and listening. Other factors

that influence literacy gains are motivation and relevancy, considerations of special needs such

as in the cases of special education students and English Language Learners, and the use of

appropriate assessment tools to study, diagnose and chart growth in students' literacy abilities.

The researcher will first explore best practices for teaching reading. Next, the researcher

will review the best practices for teaching writing. Then, the researcher will discuss the

literature on the importance of oral language (speaking and listening) in literacy development.

Next, the researcher will identify provisions for motivation and relevancy and considerations of

specials needs for English Language Learners and her Special Education student. Lastly, the

researcher will turn to assessment, reviewing the most appropriate and up-to-date tools to study,

diagnose and chart growth in student literacy for her second grade classroom.

First, it seems important to state a definition and give a historical perspective of the term

Best Practice:

Best practice, in its broadest term, means evidence-based best practice. This

term refers to an instructional practice that has a record of success that is both

trustworthy and valid. There is evidence that when this practice is used with a

particular group of children, the children can be expected to make gains in reading

achievement (International Reading Association, 2002a, 2002b).

The International Reading Association (2002a, 2002b) states that best practices are deemed

'trustworthy and valid' when the evidence provides:

- *Objective* data that any evaluator would identify and interpret similarly.

- *Valid* data that adequately represent the tasks that children need to accomplish
  to be successful readers.

- *Reliable* data that will remain essentially unchanged if collected on a different
  day or by a different person.

- *Systematic* data that were collected according to a rigorous design of either
  experimentation or observation.

- *Refereed* data that have been approved for publication be a panel of
  independent reviewers.

Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley (2007) stated, "In our view, evidence-based instruction

involves teachers making decisions using 'professional wisdom integrated with the best

available empirical evidence'" (Allington, 2005, p. 16). Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley

go on to say, "According to Allington, such a definition honors the wisdom and evidence

derived from professional experience while at the same time recognizing the important

role of empirical research." It is the above working definition that the researcher is

referring to in the following literature review.

Reading

According to a recent study of reading instruction, (National Reading Panel, 2000) best practices in reading are those that incorporate development in the following five areas:

- Phonemic Awareness-an understanding that spoken words are made up of sounds (phonemes)

- Phonics-the ability to decode written letters and words

- Vocabulary-exposure to and the learning of words (in this case, English words)

- Fluency-the ability to read with automaticity and prosody

- Text Comprehension-the ability to understand the meaning of text

Best practices in phonemic awareness (Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, 2007) includes exposing students to songs, nursery rhymes and books with rhymes and alliteration that promote word play. Phonemic awareness is one of the best predictors of success in learning to read (Ehri & Nunes, 2002; National Reading Panel, 2000).

While most researchers agree that "children do need systematic phonics instruction, there is no one best way to teach phonics" (Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, 2007, p. 176). Best practices for teaching phonics include a variety of activities such as letter-sound, spelling, and analogy instruction in the first stages. As students begin to come in contact with larger words, best practices include activities working with morpheme usage to unlock pronunciation, spelling and meaning of polysyllabic words (Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley).

It has been said that vocabulary (words) is the currency of education (Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, 2007). Best practices in vocabulary instruction include five guidelines as suggested by Blackowicz & Fisher (2002) and the National Reading Panel (as cited in Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, 2007). They say that the effective vocabulary teacher:

- Builds a word-rich environment in which students are immersed in words for both incidental and intentional learning and the development of "word awareness"

- Helps students develop as independent word learners

- Uses instructional strategies that not only teach vocabulary but also model good word-learning behaviors

- Provides explicit instruction for important content and concept vocabulary, drawing on multiple sources of meaning

- Uses assessment that matches the goal of instruction (p. 179)

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), fluency plays a critical role in the overall reading process. This is because fluent reading incorporates accurate, automatic word recognition along with the expressive rendering of text and serves as a bridge between decoding instruction and comprehension (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003). The best practices in fluency instruction include activities aimed at developing and enriching automaticity and prosody, the two most important components in fluency (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003). These activities include (Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, 2007):

- Reading-While-Listening
- Paired Repeated Readings
- Authentic Repeated Reading
- Fluency Oriented Oral Reading
- Fluency Development Lesson (FDL)

Fluency is a primary focus of reading development during the second and third grades (Chall, 1996; Stahl & Heuback, 2005). This is of particular interest since the researcher's sample consists of second grade students.

Comprehension is the "essence of reading" (Durkin, 1978, 1979, and the ultimate goal of successful literacy (Pressley, 2006). Comprehension is the outcome of effective reading and encompasses the execution of all four of the above components: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary and fluency. According to Block & Pressley (cited in Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, 2007) best practices for teaching comprehension include teaching students how to:

- Activate many comprehension strategies to decode and drive word meanings.

- Size up a text in advance by looking at titles, text features, sections, pictures, and captions about what will be in a text.

- Stop to reread and initiate comprehension processes when the meaning of single sentences or paragraphs is unclear.

- Generate interpretations that make sense, confirm or change predictions based on the text, construct images expressed in the text, as questions (i.e., wonder), and notice or generate answers as they read.

- Come to a fictional text expecting to (and making certain that they do) note the setting, characters, and story grammar early on; and making certain that they watch for problems to develop, solutions to be attempted, and resolutions to occur.

- Come to an informational text watching for textual features, access features, unique types of information that appear in a specific genre, important points, the sequence of details, and conclusions.

- Connect to ideas in the text based on their personal experiences, knowledge of other texts, and general world knowledge, making certain that these connections are made quickly and do not divert attention from the actual text but rather help the reader understand the text better.

- Summarize the text, making sure it includes information gained form story grammar or textual features, and, if they can't, teach the students that this is a signal to reread.

- Continue to reflect on the text after reading, deciding how to shape the knowledge base for their personal use (pp. 225-226).

Comprehension is the mark of mastery works in reading and is the natural outgrowth of employing all of the tools a reader has to understand and make meaning of the text.

Writing

The researcher has found that while there is a great deal of literature pertaining to best practices in reading, the literature for best practices in writing is scant. Many of the reviews echoed this sentiment stating that there needs to be more research done. Best practices in writing center on feedback, grammar, spelling and conventions.

Feedback is identified as one of the best practices a teacher should use while developing young writers. One way to do this is to alert students to the pattern of errors they commit within and across their own writing assignments (Weaver, 1998). Rather than focusing on traditional grammar instruction, teachers can use strategies and lesson plans for examining and correcting errors. This can be done between teacher and student and with peer review.

Research has shown grammar instruction to have little positive effect on writing. Teaching formal grammar to students has "a negligible or even harmful effect on improving students' writing" (Routman, 1996; p. 119). Hillcocks said (cited in Gambrell, 2007), "a heavy emphasis on mechanics and usage results in significant losses in overall quality." The National Council of

Teachers of English urged teachers to discard traditional school grammar instruction (Brozo,

2003).

Research suggests a strong relationship between spelling and writing. When students

struggle with spelling, they use up valuable cognitive resources they might otherwise use for

other aspects of writing (Singer & Bashir, 2004). Moats says, "Even more than reading, writing

is a mental juggling act that depends on automatic deployment of basic skills such as

handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation so that the writer can keep tract of such

concerns as topic, organization, word choice and audience needs" (2005-2006; p. 12).

According to Bromley (2005), knowledge of conventions is important whether students write

with pencil and paper or use a computer and word processor since grammar and spell checkers

do not catch all errors.

Best practices for teaching writing (Crawford, 2004; Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, 2007;

Peregoy & Boyle, 2004) include using:

- Writing to create meaning and make connections to a student's world

- The Language experience approach (LEA)

- Writer's Workshop including direct-instruction mini lessons

- Word Work

- Writing as process-*planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing for a real audience*

- Inventive spelling

- Shared writing

- Providing a print-rich environment for students

- Engaging, playful vocabulary instruction

Although vocabulary instruction is not considered a writing convention (it takes its place in reading instruction), it is an important contributor to good writing. Zarry (1999) found that students who received vocabulary instruction that engaged them in playful activities used the words they learned more often in their writing and wrote narratives of a higher quality than student who did not receive such instruction. The students received a thesaurus and were encouraged to select their own words to use in their writing and create their own definitions and sentences for each word.

Based on the above research, it is clear to the researcher that best practices for writing instruction are student-focused, interactive and planned with student engagement at the center.

Oral Language

According to Bromley (cited in Gambrell, Morrow & Pressley, p. 245), "Oral language is an important contributor to writing because both depend on the same cognitive abilities." Vygotsky (1978) theorized that children's early speech is a precursor to inner speech, which in turn results in the ability to think in words. Morrow and Tracey say (cited in Gambrell, Morrow and Pressley, 2007),

> Babies begin to acquire information about literacy from the moment they are
> born. They continue to build on their knowledge of oral language, reading, and
> writing as they go through early childhood and beyond based on the experiences
> they have at home and in school (p. 57).

The ability to listen and speak is usually mastered in the preschool years. Language acquisition is an important precursor to literacy skills in school age children. Rice states, "…language

development serves as an important foundation for later reading skills" (cited in Miller-Power & Shagoury-Hubbard, 2002; p. 23).

Babies begin to utter sounds and form words and toddlers begin to string words into sentences, however, this normal progression does not happen for everyone at the same pace. More and more, teachers receive students who have language deficits either due to a developmental problem, or limited English proficiency. While limited English proficiency and special education should not be lumped of in the same category, as they are two separate and deserving realms of attention, these two distinct categories call for the need for best practices in language development. In addition to this, the researcher has witnessed first-hand, the need for oral language development in students who do not fall into either of the above two categories. For this reason, the researcher will focus on best practices that can be used to foster language development in ALL children.

Best practices for oral language development (Peregoy & Boyle, 2005; Crawford, 2004; Gambrell, Morrow and Pressley, 2007) include:

- Explicit instruction in language including the five elements of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Fluency and Comprehension.
- Family Literacy Programs to scaffold language use at home
- Language Experience Approach-students see the connection between spoken and written words
- Engaging in conversation in the classroom-allowing talk to be part of the learning process
- Cognate-recognition strategies for ELL students
- Read Alouds
- Shared Reading

- Interactive Reading

- Acting-out of words and ideas

- Flash cards

- Songs, chants and rhyming activities

- TALK, TALK, TALK

The above best practices support Vygotsky's (1978) belief that thought and knowledge emerge

from oral language that is embedded in social interaction.

Motivation and Relevancy, Special Needs

"Choice is highly motivational and puts children in charge of their learning" (Boushey &

Moser, 2006, p. 20). Student choice and ownership in learning is a key ingredient in motivation

as an example of this assertion from Morrow, Gambrell and Pressley (cited in Boushey & Moser,

2006, p. 20):

> We would like to see more student choice in reading lessons and greater
>
> encouragement of students to read a great deal, including many more
>
> communications to students that reading provides great pleasure, and that
>
> choosing to read is choosing to do something that is fun. We would also like to
>
> see more emphasis on students' choosing to do be strategic, to be impressed more
>
> with the message than to be in charge of their reading and the processes they use
>
> during reading, that is, with the idea that they are to become self-regulated
>
> readers. Perhaps if that emphasis on self-regulation were heightened, there would
>
> be more automatic transfer of mental comprehension processes to novel texts.

Boushey and Moser (2006) go on to say that children need to have purpose for their reading

and writing and that "Purpose + Choice = Motivation" (2006, p. 21).

In the researcher's experience, relevancy includes providing topics that students may

choose that have meaning for them as well as providing diverse reading and writing materials to

support students' cultures and learning styles. Having books in multiple languages and books

that portray multiple cultures and ethnicities can make students feel valued. Posting signs in the

two dominant languages (in the researcher's case, English/Spanish) can further aide in providing

a meaningful and safe environment for students. In addition, the researcher is working toward

bilingualism in English/Spanish, taking language classes in effort to understand and be able to

converse in her students' native language.

Consideration for special education students is also a factor in effective literacy instruction.

Since each special education student is on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), conferring

with the learning specialist in the building usually provides valuable insights for meeting the

needs of special needs students. It has been the experience of the researcher that the learning

specialist can offer strategies and a history of what works and does not work for a particular

child. During the course of the researcher's action research project, she will consult regularly

with the learning specialist in effort to best meet the needs of her single student on an IEP.

Assessment and Interventions

The researcher collaborated with the Title I Coordinator for her district about the use of

appropriate assessments. During this collaboration, assessments were identified based on

protocols of the district and specific school site. During the course of the action research, the

researcher will:

- Use assessments to establish baseline data and chart growth for reading and writing including but not limited to:

    o Running records

    o DRA2

    o Student Writing Work samples

    o 6-Traits Scoring Guide for Writing

    o Sitton Spelling Cloze

    o Dutro-ELD Express Oral Language Test

- Implement interventions through instructional programs and processes to guide each individual students' growth in reading and writing including but not limited to:

    o Explicit Modeling & Instruction of Best Practices in Reading and Writing

    o Guided Release in Reading and Writing strategies

- Track each student's growth and make necessary adjustments for removing the roadblocks for each student's learning in the areas of reading and writing which include the development of oral language and spelling.

Summary

In the above literature review the researcher has focused on best practices in literacy instruction. The researcher began her presentation of the literature review with an overview of the need for differentiation in instruction. Then, she identified reading, writing, spelling, oral language, motivation and relevancy, considerations of special needs, and assessment and interventions as the components of literacy instruction. Next, the researcher presented a definition the term literacy as well as a working definition of *best practices* including a historical

perspective. Lastly, the researcher reported current research in the best practices of reading, writing, spelling and oral language as well as discussed the importance of motivation, relevancy and special needs and the use of assessment tools to determine interventions in effort to remove obstacles in literacy development for each of the second grade students in her classroom. While this is a large undertaking, the researcher is confident that this action research project will be beneficial to identifying student needs and expanding development in literacy for each of her 25 second grade students.

Action Research Proposal

Chapter Three-The Goal of the Action Research Proposal

The researcher's goal of this action research project is to identify and implement best

practices in literacy instruction to meet the individual literacy needs of her second grade

students. Individual gains in literacy development and measured growth in abilities are the

researcher's central goal. In the literature review, the researcher concisely presented current best

practices for literacy instruction including the components of reading, writing, spelling, and oral

language as well as the considerations for relevancy, motivation, special needs of students and

appropriate assessment instruments to identify and chart literacy growth. The researcher's goal

is to implement strategies within the best practices identified in the research while considering

the extraneous variables of relevancy, motivation, special needs of students and appropriate

assessments in order to remove roadblocks which hinder literacy development in each individual

student in order to answer the research question: "How does a teacher meet the diverse

individual literacy needs in her second grade classroom?"

This action research project will include diverse data collections. These data will include:

Student interval assessments as well as anecdotal/conferring notes in the areas of Oral Language,

Writing, Reading and Spelling.

Student Interval Assessments

The DRA2 will be used for baseline information in reading. According to the DRA2

Program, students entering second grade should be at a level 18. By the end of second grade,

students should be at a level 28. The DRA2 Assessment has three sections: Reading

Engagement, Oral Reading, and Teacher Analysis. The assessment is differentiated in that it

measures various indicators based on levels. The levels fall into four categories: "Emergent Readers," "Early Readers," "Transitional Readers" and "Extending Readers". Therefore, all three sections contain developmentally-appropriate indicators. The Reading Engagement section has questions that seek to gain insight into the student's motivation, reading preference and support at home.

The Oral Reading section includes an introduction and preview in which the teacher makes note of specific behavior levels indicative of the level of the test and includes a book introduction and running record.

The third section, Teacher Analysis is conducted after the student is finished and includes a miscue analysis and percent of accuracy. With the instrumentation that the DRA2 provides, a teacher can identify a student's independent, instructional and frustration reading levels.

The following table gives an overview of the three sections and its differentiation for the four levels (Table adapted from the DRA2 Kit).

Reading Level	Reading Engagement	Oral Reading Fluency	Printed Language Concepts/Comprehension
Emergent Readers	-Support Reading at Home -Favorite Book -Book-Handling Skills	-Use of Cues -Monitoring/Self-Corrections -Accuracy	-Directionality -One-to-One Correspondence -Letter/Word
Early Readers	-Book Selection -Sustained Reading	-Phrasing -Monitoring/Self-Corrections -Problem-Solving Unknown Words	-Previewing -Retelling -Reflection -Making Connections
Transitional Readers	-Book Selection -Sustained Reading	-Expression and Phrasing -Rate -Accuracy: Word Analysis	-Previewing/Prediction -Retelling -Using Nonfiction Text Features -Reflection -Making Connections -Interpretation
Extending Readers	-Wide Reading	-Expression and	-Use of Text Features

	-Self-Assessment/Goal Setting	Phrasing -Rate -Accuracy: Word Analysis	-Nonfiction Text Features -Prediction -Summary -Literal Comprehension -Interpretation -Reflection

Beginning this school year, the DRA2 will be used as the common, K-5 district-wide reading assessment. Thus, it is fitting that the researcher implements this instrument. Additionally, teachers will now administer the DRA2 instead of the Reading Specialist or other personnel. The researcher supports this, knowing first-hand how important it is that the test be done correctly. Each teacher will be trained in administering the new DRA2 and, in carrying out the administration of this assessment, will be able observe the students' strengths and weaknesses in order to guide instructional decisions and implement best practice needs for each individual student's success (Beaver, 2007)..

The 6-Trait Scoring Guide (Adapted from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2010) will be used to gather baseline data in writing. As with the reading instrumentation, the Curriculum Director for the district has decided that the 6-Trait Writing Guide and Rubric is to be the common assessment for writing for K-5, district wide, therefore the researcher will become familiar with this process and implement it as the common assessment for her students.

Baseline data (pre-test) will be extracted from the Sitton Spelling Cloze (Sitton, 2006) in October with a post-test to follow in March. The Sitton Spelling Cloze tests spelling "in context" with spelling words embedded in a paragraph story. Thus, the spelling assessment falls into both categories of reading and writing.

Baseline data in the form of the English Language Development, A Focused Approach Express Oral Language Test (Dutro, 2008) will be used to find the student's oral language level. Although this test is primarily used to find the English language level of English Language

Learners, the researcher has observed its use by other teachers in a mainstream classroom with much success in the area of diagnosing issues with oral language development. Many students today, ELL or not, have difficulty stringing coherent sentences together that make good use of grammar and since oral language is the precursor to reading and writing (Crawford, 2004) this is one of the three important parts when combined with reading and writing , of literacy development. A reasonable amount of growth to expect is one language level per school year, with the exception of the "Intermediate" level. This level is the level that students usually continue in for two years.

All four of the above assessment areas are highly subjective, as no two children are alike and they will no doubt be at varying levels in their literacy development. Thus, the researcher's goal of literacy growth is individualized for each student and will be documented in his/her literacy development grid which is detailed below and labeled.

Data Collection and Maintenance

Data collected will be organized and maintained in the following:

The researcher will keep a binder with a section for each student that contains the relevant assessments as well as a grid for each student documenting his/her growth in DRA2 levels, writing scores, spelling and oral language scores as well as a class penseive indicating the best practices that have been implemented, anecdotal notes and individual goals.

The researcher will use the above data to make decisions on implementation of best practices to meet the literacy needs for each individual student as well as to inform and guide whole group instruction, mini-lessons, small group instruction and one-on-one conferring with students in effort to foster the growth of literacy development in her second grade students. The

student assessments, grids, tracking of implementation of best practice interventions and observation notes will be shared with families at parent-teacher conferences two times in the upcoming school year in effort to show pre and post data supporting growth as well as strengths and weaknesses. These documents will be used to collaboratively identify literacy goals for each student with each family and student as well as for celebrating individual growth and success.

Action Research Proposal

Chapter Four-Action Plan

The issue to be examined in this action research project is literacy growth in second grade students. The researcher will be analyzing methods for literacy programs that may be effective in meeting the diverse literacy needs of students with the implementation of best practices in reading, writing, spelling and oral language.

The issue is significant due to the ramifications of lack of literacy growth in students by the third grade. The researcher has the opportunity to work with second grade students and her ultimate goal is to remove the obstacles that may be impeding literacy growth in her students. The researcher knows that each student will have his/her own strengths and weaknesses and is exploring literacy programs that have been effective in facilitating as much one-on-one and small group instruction in her classroom as possible. As a second grade teacher, the researcher is cognizant of the role that proficient literacy skills will play in the success of her students in the upcoming intermediate grades. In this chapter, the researcher will examine possible solutions to this issue and identify the method she will try out in her classroom to meet her goal to as well as explain the action steps for implementation of this plan in effort to answer the research question, "How does a teacher meet the diverse individual literacy needs in her second grade classroom?"

Possible Solutions

North Clackamas School District in Clackamas, Oregon offers a solution to meeting the needs of diverse literacy learners. The district adopted a literacy curriculum that incorporates reading, writing and oral language development (North Clackamas School District, 2007). The curriculum is implemented district wide, K-6. It is called "Treasures" and is this district's

solution for providing less fragmentation in the instruction of reading, writing and oral language. The classroom teacher uses the Treasures curriculum which utilizes a basal and many instructional materials such as vocabulary cards, picture cards and charts. The classroom Treasures kit encompasses lessons for reading and writing and has put much effort into balancing the basal with multicultural elements. The English Language Development Specialists utilize the Treasure Chest part of the curriculum. It contains grade level language lessons designed to complement the reading and writing instruction that takes place in the regular classroom. Due to this scope and sequence-based curriculum, weekly collaboration between the classroom teacher and specialist is a must. The curriculum is built upon the best practices in literacy instruction as outlined by the researcher in Chapter Two of this paper. These include instruction in: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension (Treasures Reading Curriculum, MacMillan/McGraw-Hill, 2006). When the researcher used this curriculum as a third grade teacher in this district she found it to be user-friendly with very little prep needed and when combined with a Writer's Workshop model for writing instruction, it completed a balanced literacy program.

The Treasures curriculum, however, has some drawbacks. It is a scripted program which some teachers really like while others do not since it may narrow the focus and limit the teachable moment. While collaboration with the specialist is a good thing, time does not always allow for this which can lead to fragmentation in learning for the ELL students. If one is not an ELL student, one misses the direct instruction in language development (although the classroom curriculum does provide some). Lastly, it is expensive. Curriculum adoptions are one of the largest expenses that a district incurs.

Although the researcher considers many of the components of the Treasures curriculum to be positive, she rejects this solution for her classroom since it is not a curriculum available to her in her district and the scripted nature of the curriculum felt constraining at times and did not lend itself well to exploration based on student interest.

Another possible solution is literacy centers. The researcher has used these in the past and found that the creativity of students is definitely encouraged in this type of program. Beth Newingham, a second grade teacher who has implemented literacy centers in her classroom, in her Blog writes, "Managing a group of independent readers while you are conferring with readers and meeting with small groups can be challenging!" (Classroom Management in a Reading Workshop, 3-15-2007, retrieved 7-18-2009). She goes on to show with the use of many descriptive pictures that she has posted, how she successfully implements literacy centers while she conducts reader's workshop with her students.

One important component of literacy development is oral language. A classroom literacy program must contain opportunities for much oral interaction and literacy centers are a viable way to accommodate this (Bodrova, Leong, Hensen, & Hennniger, 1999). Literacy centers can also be included in a room set up with math, science and other centers. Based on the researcher's experiences, the implementation of centers provides a natural exploration of and purpose for learning as well as allows for topics to be implemented based on student interest and facilitation of the teachable moment. The researcher has been successful in implementing literacy centers as part of her centers-based early childhood classroom. Students visited the centers to apply learning that had been directly taught in whole group lessons.

The researcher is aware that her present-year second grade student students will fall somewhere between preschool and fourth grade level in reading and/or writing. For second

grade students, literacy centers may be effective and can be differentiated to include written instructions for students who can read and follow directions.

One possible drawback of managing literacy learning through centers may be the preparation and planning involved by the teacher. Another is the accessibility to the many props and materials one needs to have lively centers. The researcher does not reject this solution in its entirety since she can see how attending to students' diverse needs by working in small, focused skill-based groups as well as conferring one-on-one with students would be feasible within the literacy centers time block. The researcher also possesses much realia, props and materials to provided engaging centers.

A third possible solution is the implementation of a program called "The Daily Five-Fostering Literacy Independence in the Elementary Grades." The Daily Five is a classroom management system that is built to foster literacy growth in students and create opportunities for the classroom teacher to conduct on-going assessments, implement interventions based on these assessments and create independent readers and writers. It is a system that was developed by two sisters who work in elementary schools. One is a grades K-2 multi-age teacher and the other is a literacy specialist. They say, "The Daily Five is more than a management system or a curriculum framework-it is a structure that will help students develop the daily habits of reading, writing and working with peers that will lead to a lifetime of independent literacy" (Boushey & Moser, 2006).

The researcher has not used this system before but has observed parts of it being carried out in her colleagues' classrooms. It has five components that are completed by students daily during a literacy block of 90 minutes: Read to Self; Read to Someone; Work on Writing; Listen to Reading and Spelling/Word Work. In the researcher's district, while the Daily Five is done

each day of the week, it is usually complemented with Writer's Workshop a few days a week

also. Colleagues usually have the Daily Five literacy block in the morning or afternoon, with the

Writer's Workshop taking place opposite of it, in the afternoon or morning. That is to say, the

two do not run together.

Not all of the researcher's colleagues have implemented the Daily Five at her new school

site, but those who have report positively about it. The Daily Five was implemented the previous

school year, school-wide at the researcher's afternoon school. One of the most-reported positive

aspects of the implementation of this program is that after the students are trained in the system

of the Daily Five, teachers can attend to individual needs by forming groups based on a specific

need and conferring with individual students about reading and writing strategies. The sisters

say, "Through lessons and guided practice, we gradually build behaviors that can be sustained

over time so children can easily be trusted to manage on their own" (Boushey & Moser, 2006).

The researcher feels that the Daily Five contains many of the same features that she was

successful with in implementing literacy centers in the past since each of the daily five activities

can be viewed loosely as "centers". After studying the Daily Five program, observing fellow

teachers as they implemented it, and comparing it to other ways of setting up opportunities for

literacy learning, the researcher accepts this option as a viable solution to the issue of meeting

the diverse literacy needs of her second grade students.

Another compelling factor in this decision is the anticipated support of other teachers who

are also implementing the Daily Five. The researcher will have rich resources in the Title I

Coordinator, Reading Specialist and fellow teachers. In addition, the elementary school

principal has studied the Daily Five and is familiar with its implementation. The Daily Five

works well with Writer's Workshop, which is another part of the full implementation of literacy

development activities that the researcher intends to implement. Within the Daily Five and the

Writer's Workshop structures there will be facilitation of oral language development activities.

Best practices in reading, writing, spelling and oral language development will fit nicely

into the structure of the Daily Five and the implementation of Writer's Workshop. The other

aspects of relevancy, motivation, special needs and assessment that the researcher has identified

as important in the development of literacy will be provided for in the successful implementation

of the Daily Five.

Action Plan

This action research project will begin in August before school starts and continue until the

end of March. The following table explains the timeline in detail:

August	Before school starts:
	• Acquire materials needed and set up classroom conducive to the Daily Five system
	• The researcher will gain consent form the principal and district office to follow through with this action research proposal.
	• Create logs for collaboration documentation
	• Create the student binder to collect assessment data and anecdotal notes
	• Create plan book
	During In-service Week:
	• Collaborate with teachers about the Daily Five and Writer's Workshop and re-read the Daily Five book and its sequel "Café" in order to begin implementation of the program
	• Attend workshop on Regie Routman-Writer's Workshop
	• Attend English Language Development refresher course
	• Attend Title I literacy workshops
September	• At Back to School night, the researcher will present the informed consent forms with a brief explanation of the research being done.
	• The researcher will implement the Daily Five and Writer's Workshop, following the guidelines provided with each design.
	• The researcher will begin assessment of reading, writing and oral language, gathering a baseline in each and recording them in the student grid
	• The researcher will implement best practice interventions based on the needs of the students as gained from the assessments and record these in plan book.

September-May	• The researcher will continue to implement best practice interventions and instruction based on the needs of the students as gained from baseline assessments and on-going observations.
October	• The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them • The researcher will share the assessment data with parents/guardians at conference/report card time and collaboratively state goals
November	• Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students
December	• The researcher will conduct the reading writing and oral language assessments that were conducted in the fall and record findings in student grid • The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them
January	• Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students
February-March	• Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students • During the last week of February and the first week of March, the researcher will conduct assessments in reading, writing and oral language and record findings in student grid. • The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them. • The researcher will share the data with parents/guardians at conference/report card time and collaboratively state goals. • The researcher will analyze and interpret all of the results of this action research project. The final project will be completed and turned into the researcher's faculty advisor by March 26th, 2010.
April	• Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students
May	• The researcher will conduct assessments in reading, writing and oral language and record findings in student grid • The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them • The researcher will share the data with parents/guardians at report card time and collaboratively state goals.

The researcher is anxious to begin this action research plan in her effort to meet the diverse

literacy needs of her second grade students. The sisters, Boushey and Moser (2009) encourage

this effort by saying,

We agree with the findings of Pressley (2006) and Taylor, Pearson, Clark and

Walpole (2000) that the more effective classrooms have a distribution of whole-

class, small-group, and side-by-side instruction. The more whole-class teaching

offered, the lower the academic achievement in any school. Café (part of the

Daily Five) includes a system for managing grouping plans in our classrooms in a

simple yet comprehensive way to ensure growth for all our students. Diagnosing

students' strengths and needs as readers and designing a path of instruction and

practice for students is what we learned in our graduate studies in the disciplines

of special education and reading…each student deserves a plan tailored to his or

her needs (pp. 9-10).

Meeting the individual, diverse literacy needs of each of a teacher's 25 students is an in-

depth task. The researcher is looking forward to implementing the Daily Five in order to

facilitate this goal. Based on the literature uncovered in this research, the ability to read and

write at grade level by the end of second grade has a significant impact on a student's success in

future grades. A third grader's ability to read and write proficiently is a predictor of college

attendance, professional success and avoidance of criminal activity. The researcher is committed

to implementing the best practice interventions that will foster growth in each of her students and

is up to the challenge since each student both requires and deserves individualized instruction.

Action Research Proposal

Chapter Five-The Results

This Action Research began in August of 2009 with the revamping of the physical space and concluded in March of 2010 (Appendix A- Updated Timeline). Guiding the research over the course of these seven+ months, the underlying question was, "How does a teacher meet the diverse individual literacy needs of students in a second grade classroom?" The goal: To "try out" The Daily Five Literacy Program; implementing the five segments of literacy entailed in the program as follows: Read to Self, Read to Someone, Work on Words, Work on Writing and Listen to Reading. More specifically, the researcher began a quest to determine whether The Daily Five Literacy Program would successfully enable her to tailor instruction in order to best meet the individual and diverse literacy needs of each of her 25 students.

In the following pages the researcher will relay to the reader the framework of The Daily Five Program and the necessary adjustments made based on the constraints of time and resources in order to best meet both the individual and collective needs of the students. After that, the researcher will highlight best-practices in literacy instruction; meeting individual literacy needs including assessments and data-driven instructional decisions while sharing the pre and post assessment scores in Oral Language Development, Writing, Spelling and Reading. Next, the researcher will discuss the importance of relevancy, motivation and special needs assessment. Finally, the researcher will give an opinion about whether The Daily Five Literacy Program was effective for meeting the diverse literacy needs of second grade students, whether this opinion can be generalized to other populations and what "Next Steps" the researcher would like to take in order to continue to best meet students' individual literacy needs.

The Framework of the Daily Five Literacy Program and Adjustments Made

At the researcher's site, the second grade literacy block takes place from 7:40-11:15, Monday-Friday (Students begin coming into the classroom at about 7:30). The literacy block includes 30 minutes of Title One pull-out and 30 minutes of ELD pull-out on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Neither program takes place on Wednesdays, resulting in a longer block of uninterrupted time that the researcher utilizes for a longer Writer's Workshop. Here is a look at The Daily Five with Conferring throughout the week:

Literacy Block 7:30-8:00	Literacy Block 8:00-8:30	Literacy Block 8:30-9:00	Literacy Block 9:00-9:30	Recess 9:30-9:45	Specials *Except Wed 9:45-10:15	Literacy Block 10:15-10:45	Literacy Block 10:45-11:15
D5: 1st Rotation: Read to Self *Attendance Confer w/SS A, B, C Monday	_____- Speech D5: 2nd Rotation: Read to Someone Confer w/SS D, E, F	D5: 2nd Rotation: Read to Someone Weekend Report Confer w/SS G, H, I	D5: 4th Rotation: Work on Words Confer w/SS K, L, M Snack/Read Aloud 9:15-9:30	R	Mon PE	Flooding Reading Groups Confer w/SS N, O, P	ELD: D5: 5th Rotation: Students Free-Write in Journals 11:00-Sharing of writing Confer w/SS Q, R, S
D5: 1st Rotation: Read to Self *Attendance Confer w/SS T, U, V Tuesday	D5: 2nd Rotation: Read to Someone Confer w/SS W, X, Y	D5: 3rd Rotation: Work on Writing Morning Message Confer w/SS Repeat with SS based on needs	D5: 4th Rotation: Work on Words Confer w/SS Snack/Read Aloud 9:15-9:30	E	Tuesday Music	Flooding Reading Groups Confer w/SS	ELD: 5th Rotation: Students Free-Write in Journals 11:00-Sharing of writing Confer w/SS

D5: 1st Rotation: Read to Self *Attendance Confer w/SS Wednesday	**Music 8:15-8:45**	Writer's Brainstorm Topics & Modeled Writing: Prewrite Confer w/SS	Workshop _____-Speech Confer w/SS Rough Draft Snack/Read Aloud 9:15-9:30	C	Wed. Writer's Work Shop Edit & Revise	Writer's Workshop Final Copy	Intervention Teams-Writing
D5: 1st Rotation: Read to Self *Attendance Writer's Workshop-Cont. Thursday	D5: 2nd Rotation: Read to Someone Confer w/SS	D5: 3rd Rotation: Work on Writing Writer's Workshop-Cont. Confer w/SS	D5: 4th Rotation: Work on Words-Writer's Workshop-Cont. Confer w/SS Snack/Read Aloud 9:15-9:30	E	Thursday PE	Flooding Reading Groups Confer w/SS	ELD: 5th Rotation: Students Free-Write in Journals 11:00-Sharing of writing Confer w/SS
D5: 1st Rotation: Read to Self *Attendance Confer w/SS Friday	D5: 2nd Rotation: Read to Someone Confer w/SS	D5: 3rd Rotation: Work on Writing Morning Message Confer w/SS	D5: 4th Rotation: Library 9-9:25	S S	Friday Snack Mr. Snow 9:50-10:10	Flooding Reading Groups Confer w/SS	ELD: 5th Rotation: Students Free-Write in Journals 11:00-Sharing of writing Confer w/SS

The framework of The Daily Five took time to implement. As early as the first day

of school in September, the researcher began introducing The Daily Five. Some students had

some background knowledge, having used The Daily Five, or parts of it, the previous year in

first grade; other students had none. The researcher followed the steps outlined in The Daily
Five book and carefully implemented each stage, beginning with Read to Self. Once students
built up stamina to about 15 minutes, she began to confer with individual students on a daily
basis as well as meet with small groups to begin instruction and interventions in reading and
writing. Based on what the researcher gained from conducting the one-on-one or small group
meetings, she created the next mini-lesson to address needs that the whole class presented.
Students and teacher meet at the carpet an average of four times a day for a quick, 5-10 minute
mini lesson on such things as hand-writing, spelling (in context with modeled writing), fluency,
word accuracy, comprehension and vocabulary.

Methods of Best Practices in Literacy Instruction; Data-Driven Instruction:

The researcher continued implementing the components of Read to Someone with
Checking for Understanding, Work on Words and Work on Writing. The researcher did not
implement Listen to Reading until February, due to lack of technological devices to enable
students to listen to books on tape or audio. Instead, the fifth rotation of The Daily Five
morphed into a "Free-write" time for students to write in his/her journals. The students
absolutely loved this time of day! This was a time when they could write whatever they wanted
with no "workshop." Student work reflected that they did utilize the tools learned during
workshop time in their free write time, showing a great carry-over of learning.

As of this writing, the students have built up an average of 35-45 minutes of Read to Self,
20-30 minutes of Read to Someone, 20-30 minutes of Work on Words, 30 minutes of Work
on Writing and 20-30 minutes of Listening to Reading per day. Some students are writing
chapter books and typing them on the computers; some students are making picture books;

others are writing multiple paragraphs of research on a topic of interest and still others are writing memoirs and letters to others. There are pairs of students who are voraciously reading the same chapter book, picture books or non-fiction texts while other small groups are examining author's craft/purpose and giving it a go in their own book writing.

The Daily Five program has moved from being teacher directed to being student-led. Students now rely on one another as "experts" for help in the writing processes of pre-write, rough draft, revision, editing and final copy as well as peer editing and spelling. Second grade students employ a plethora of strategies and tools including self-editing using our class-adopted editing marks, word-walls, core word sheets in each student's Literacy Portfolio, as well as punctuation charts, grammar charts and dictionaries. Each of these strategies and tools were modeled by the teacher repeatedly and handed off in the gradual release of responsibility to the students. (Please see Appendices B and C for tools created/used).

In the beginning stages of the implementation of The Daily Five program, students received much direct teaching and scaffolding. For example, the Morning Message began as a modeled writing activity, moved to shared writing with students writing along with the teacher in their journals. During this shared writing stage, strategies for reading and writing such as sounding-out, blending, chunking, segmentation and word families were taught. The 6-Traits were modeled and discussed, with students practicing at this time as well as at Free-Write time. Now, in March, students take turns writing the Morning Message independently.

As students are working independently, the researcher continues to confer with students. The researcher has created an "Individual Student Literacy Development" grid that is kept in a notebook with a divider for each student. In each student's section, she keeps the writing

rubric and scored writing pieces, the spelling assessment and the oral language assessment.

DRA2 assessments are kept in a file for each student in a DRA2 Toolbox. The student's reading

development progress is included in the above mentioned grid (Appendix D).

The grid is utilized for the purpose of goal-setting and celebration with and by the student. The

visual portrayal of his/her progress helps each student to take ownership for his/her learning and

progress.

Pre and Post Assessments in Literacy Development:

All students have made progress in each of the areas of Oral Language, Writing, Reading

and Spelling. Since children are unique and each comes to school with his/her own "package,"

the growth that one student makes cannot be expected from another. Children are on a journey,

not in a race to a finish line.

Getting to know each of the 25 students, finding out what makes each one "tick" and then

designing instructional plans and practices with learning opportunities is the art of teaching, in

the researcher's opinion. It is both a challenge and a true blessing. One of the challenges was

the carrying out of assessments to show growth or lack thereof. The researcher carefully

conducted each of the assessments used in course of the action research, save for a handful of

DRA2s at the beginning of the year. The researcher, having conducted each assessment, was

blessed by tons of "golden nuggets" in terms of how her students learn, process information, and

what each student needs to "unlock" or remove obstacles in his/her learning. This cannot be

understated as we continue in this day of assessment! Assessment for the attainment of a score is

very different than formative assessment done to guide one's teaching. The information

gleaned in the conduction of assessments drives instructional decisions, plans and practices.

The following graphs contain the baseline and current literacy growth data gathered for

individual students in the areas of Oral Language Development, Writing, Reading and Spelling:

*Oral Language:* Graph constructed from Oral Language Levels Sheet (Appendix E).
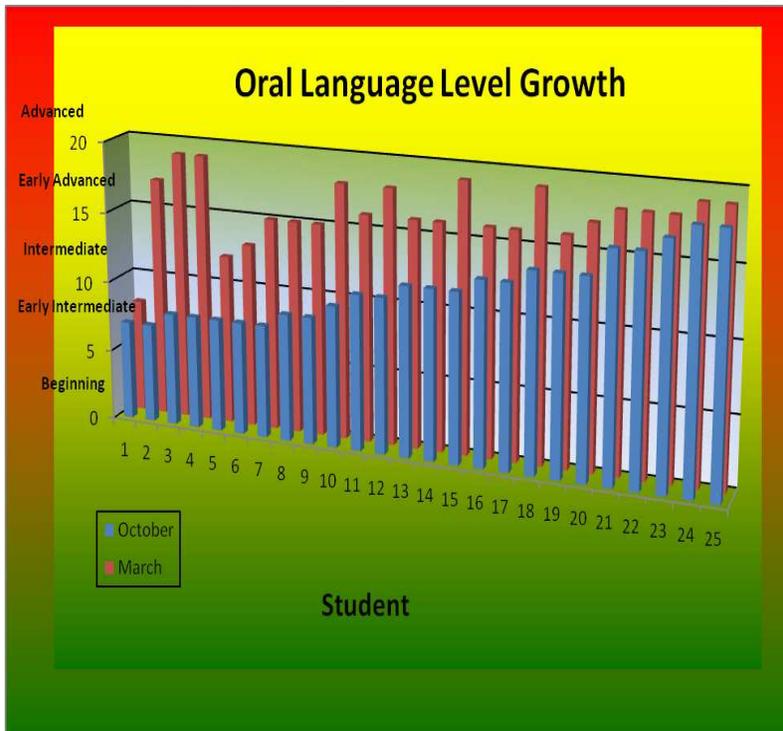
Students must be given many, diverse opportunities to talk each day (Allington, 2010 IRA/ORA Conference). In September, the average score on the Express Test was 11.72/20. In March, the average score rose to 16.48/20. All students, save for one, increased

his/her oral language skills at least 1 level (or one year's growth).

Writing: Graphs constructed from 2nd Grade Assessment Recap (Appendix F).

2nd Grade Baseline Writing Scores Using the

6-Traits* Writing Rubric October, 2009
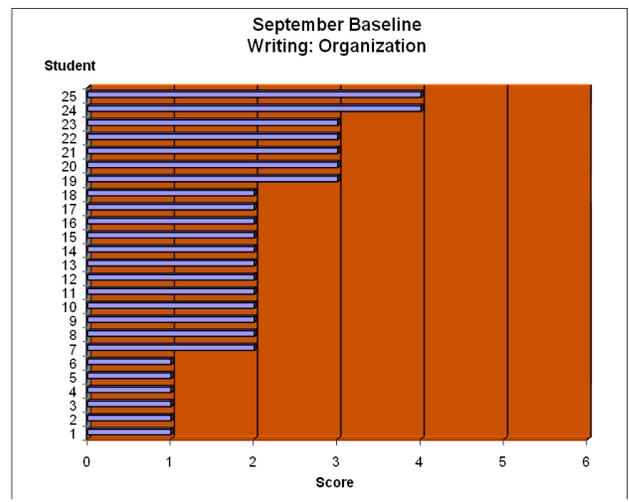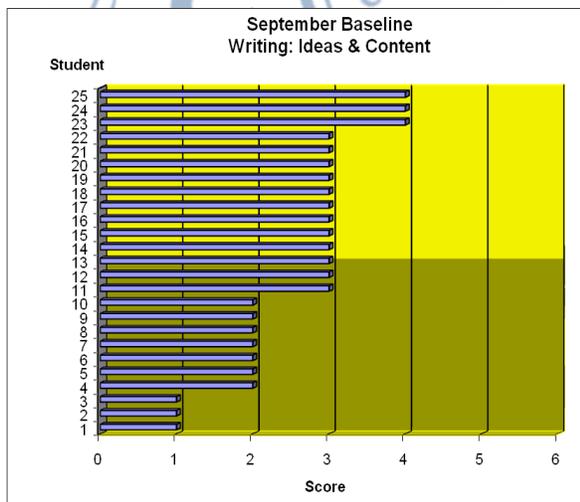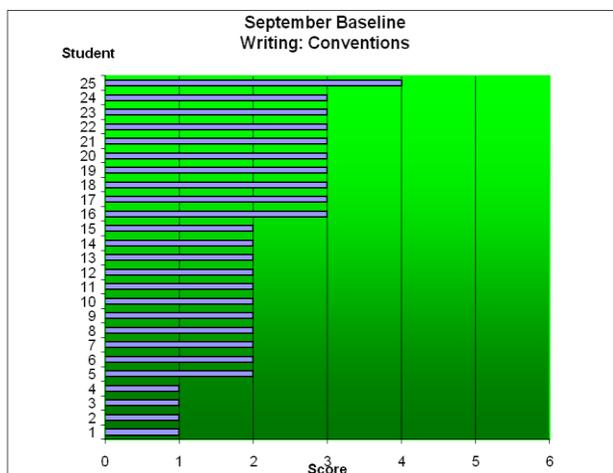
Interpretation/Analysis:

Conventions: 1/25 students scored above grade level at a 4, 9 students scored at grade level with

a 3, 11 students scored below grade level with a 2 and 3 students scored lowest at a 1. (14

students below grade level)

Ideas & Content: Students scored highest overall in the Ideas & Content strand with 3/25

scoring above grade level at a 4, 12 scoring at grade level with a 3, 7 scoring below grade level at

a 2 and 2 scoring lowest at a 1. (9 students below grade level)

Organization: 2/25 students scored above grade level at a 4, 6 students scored at grade level with

a 3, 11 students scored below grade level with a 2 and 4 students scored lowest at a 1. (15

students below grade level)

Plan/Interventions: SPED Referrals for three students, based on Writing, Reading, Math and

OT observations.

Work on Writing:

- Provide multiple opportunities to write each day. Continue Writer's Workshop model on Wednesdays with editing and revising throughout the week.

- Complete 6-Traits Writing Rubric in student-friendly vocabulary so that students may plan, edit and revise his/her work in alignment with it.

- Work on Words activities

- Continue to work with all students on Conventions, Ideas and Content each day with more of a focus on Conventions and Organization since those scores were the lowest.

- Pull small groups during Daily 5 time and tailor instruction in each strand for students who are below grade level.

Oral Language Work:

- Continue modeling how spoken language can be transferred to written language.

- Read to Someone

- Listen to Reading

- Encourage students to use complete thoughts/sentences in his/her oral language activities such as "Turn and Talk" times, Response Times and Sharing Times. Use Reader's Theater/Writer's Theater for fluency.

- Sing songs and chant chants for fluency and vocabulary learning.

Reading:

- Continue to provide and encourage choice of "Just Right Books."

- Pull small groups during Daily 5 time to work on strategies for word accuracy,

  vocabulary, comprehension and fluency.

- Do multiple Read Alouds daily.

- Read to Self

- Read to Someone

Additionally:

- Continue work with Vocabulary Workshop to build student vocabulary in oral language,

  written language and reading.

- Send home student writing rubric with a writing sample scored so that parents may be

  partners in student achievement.

*While all 6 traits in writing are taught, 2nd graders in our district are only scored on the above

three traits.

End of 2nd Trimester Writing:

Students had multiple opportunities
for writing each day with diverse purposes
each week. In addition, the researcher
created a scoring rubric based on the 6-
Traits scoring guide (Please see Appendix
C) that was adopted by the district for
the 2nd grade level teachers to use to score
student writing. Teachers met in Interven-

tion Teams and PLCs to target writing needs as well as plan instruction based on the data. The criteria for reaching grade level increases with each trimester. The fall grade-level expectation was to score 3s in all three areas of Ideas & Content, Organization and Conventions. Winter trimester's expectation was to score two 4s and one three. Spring's expectation is to score a 4 in all three areas. Each student has made individual progress in all three areas. 23/25 students have met or exceeded the 2nd trimester expectation.
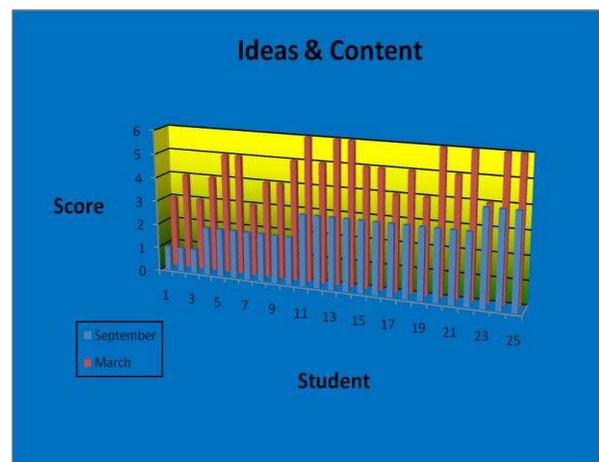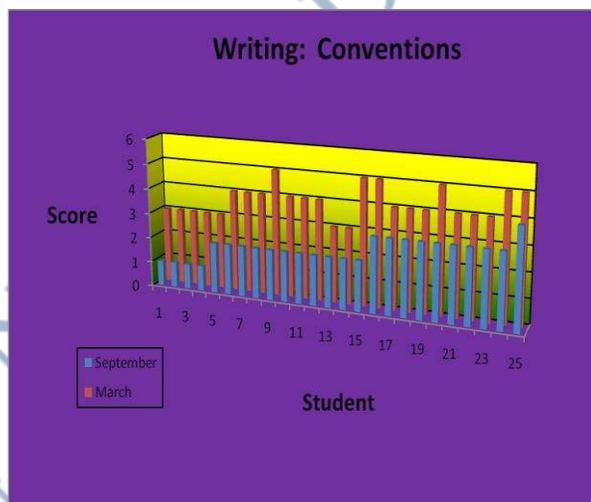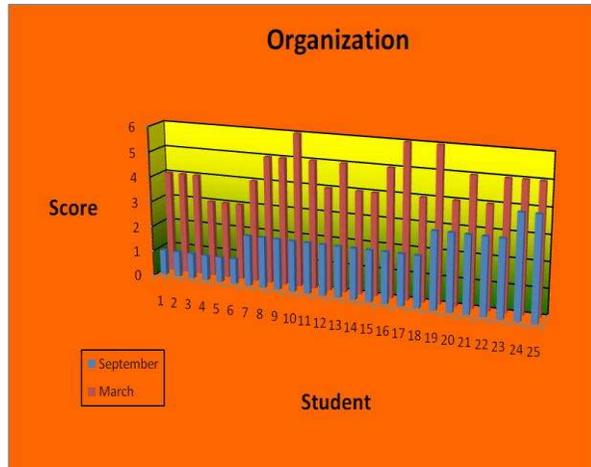
Reading: Graph constructed from 2nd Grade Assessment Recap (Appendix F).
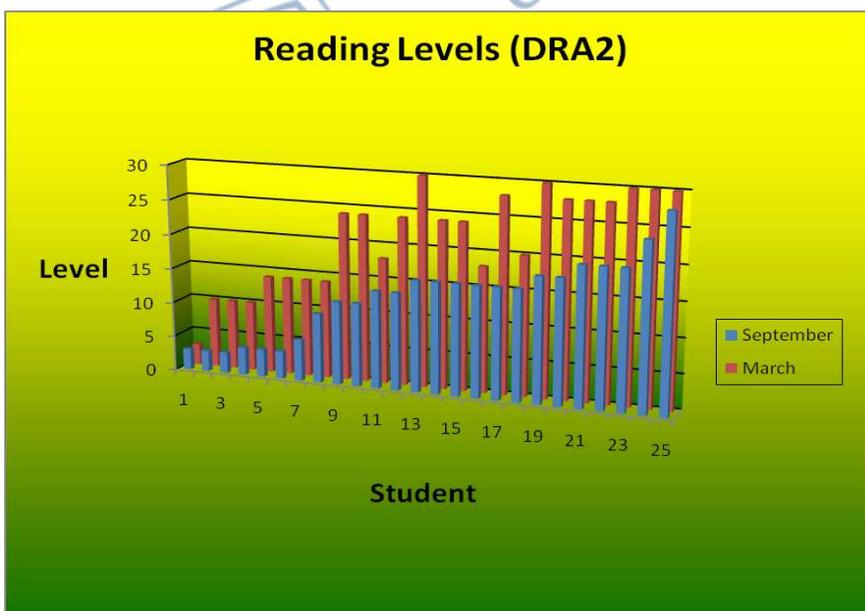
Students had multiple, uninterrupted reading times each day. All students made progress, save for one. Reasons for this will be discussed in the *Relevancy, Motivation and Special Needs* section to follow.

As with Writing, the grade-level expectations continue to increase each trimester. The expectation for fall was to be at a level 20. The expectation for 2nd trimester is a level 24 and the expectation 3rd trimester is a level 28. In September, only 5/25 students were reading on or above grade level. Students came into 2nd grade as follows:

DRA2 Level 3	DRA2 Level 4-6	DRA2 Level 10-12
3 Students	4 Students	3 Students
DRA2 Level 14-16	**DRA2 Level 18**	**DRA2 Level 20-28**
8 Students	2 Students	5 Students

At the end of the 1st trimester, students were at the following levels and receiving the interventions listed by the classroom teacher during The Daily Five and during Title One Pullout:

2nd Grade Student DRA2 Scores/Reading Groups:

Reading Specialist	Classroom Teacher	Paraprofessional
3 3 4 Need intensive interventions including PA/P, Segmenting, Blending, etc…	8 10 10 10 10/12 Need interventions for accuracy, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary.	16 16 16 16 16 Need accuracy strengthening and fluency, fluency, fluency practice.
Paraprofessional	Paraprofessional	Paraprofessional
18 20 20 Need consistent practice in fluency, comprehension and vocabulary.	28 28 28 28 28 Need explicit instruction in interpretation, reflection and connections. Need time responding to text through discussion and written response regarding text features.	30 30 30 30 Need time responding to text through discussion and written response regarding text features.

At the end of the 2nd trimester, in March, students were at the following DRA2 levels

and receiving the following interventions:

2nd Grade DRA2 Scores & Subsequent Reading Groups

Reading Specialist	Paraprofessional	Paraprofessional
3* Need intensive interventions including PA/P, Segmenting, Blending, etc… Needs to work on reading stamina (Engagement).	10 10 * 10 *IEP Need intensive accuracy, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary instruction and practice. All need to work on reading stamina (Engagement).	14 14 * IEP (Needs to work on reading stamina.) Need intensive fluency and comprehension instruction and practice. Need to work on Reflection and Connections
		Paraprofessional
		14/16 14/16 * Need fluency and comprehension instruction and practice.
Paraprofessional Did Not pass DRA2 24 in **Fluency only**; comprehension shaky.	**Classroom Teacher** Passed DRA2 24	**Classroom Teacher**
18 20 20 Need fluency, fluency, fluency instruction and practice. Need to work on **reading stamina (Engagement). They tend to read for less than 15 minutes per sitting.**	24 24 24 24 24 Need consistent practice in fluency, comprehension and vocabulary. Need explicit instruction in interpretation, reflection and making connections. Need time responding to text through discussion and written response regarding text features.	28 28 28 28 30 30 30 30 30 Need explicit instruction in interpretation, reflection and making connections. Need time responding to text through discussion and written response regarding text features.

As of this writing, students continue to make progress with 14/25 reading at or above

grade level (DRA2 Level 24+).

Spelling: Graph constructed from 2nd Grade Spelling Tracker (Appendix G).

The district requires teachers
to submit student spelling scores
based on the Sitton Cloze Spelling
Assessment . Each student has
made progress. In October, only
3/25 students scored above 80%.
By March, 18/25 scored above 80%
with 8 of the 18 at 100% and 2 of the
remaining between 90 and 93%.
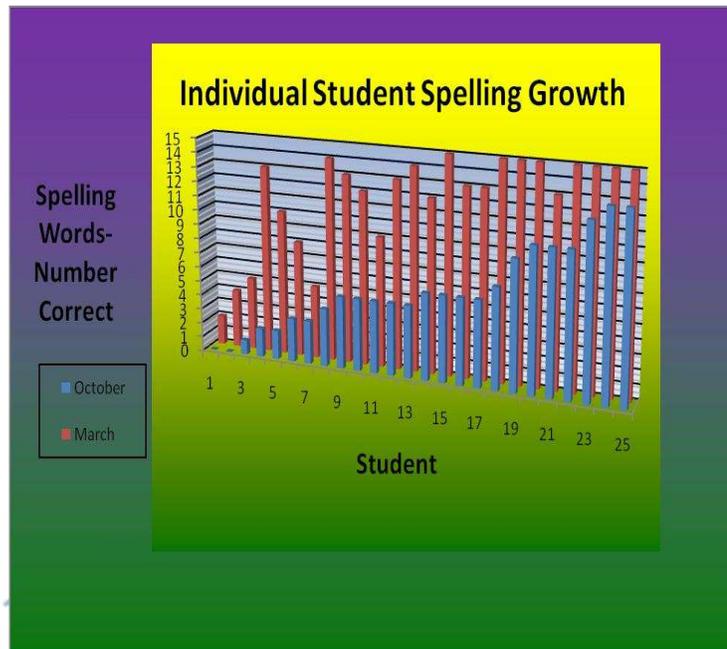
Motivation and Relevancy, Special Needs:

Students must see the relevancy in what they are doing at school. In the researcher's

classroom students are given choice; choice on writing topics and a variety of texts as well as

choice on how students choose to work. The sisters, Gail and Joan, who created The Daily Five

say, "Purpose + Choice = Motivation" (2006, p. 21). The researcher maintains this assertion and

has witnessed first-hand the power of this equation. All students are engaged in learning and are

motivated to read and write. In fact, during the Math block in the afternoon if a student

finishes his/her work early they eagerly ask, "Can I read, can I write now?" It brings joy to this

researcher's heart to see the joy in each student' eyes when given the opportunity to follow

his/her own heart in learning. The second grade students are self-regulating their time and their

purposes in the classroom and keeping themselves motivated and to learn with topics, texts and

materials that provide relevancy and meaning to each of them.

In the area of special needs, the researcher has referred four students for Special Education testing and evaluation due to his/her lack of consistent growth given all the interventions put into place this year. Two have been identified as learning disabled, with one of these two students also being diagnosed by the family pediatrician as having ADHD. A third student has been diagnosed with ADD and the fourth child referred for testing is scheduled for the end of May. While not a proponent of medication for the treatment of ADHD/ADD, the researcher has seen a significant improvement in two students' academic progress. Three of the four students referred for Special Education testing and evaluation were prompted by parent concerns/ requests. The researcher has found that the recommendations given by the Special Education Evaluation Team have been invaluable to understanding how each of the students learn and process information, aiding in designing and implementing instructional plans and activities for the success of the student.

The researcher has seen improvement in all four ELL students. Three of the four students have met the writing criteria expectations for the current trimester as well as improved in spelling and oral language. All four students continue to be reading below grade level. However, considering the lack of support in English at home with research that supports second language acquisition as a process that takes place over a period of 7+ years, the students in this 2nd grade classroom have made exceptional strides.

Conclusion

The researcher, having "tried out" The Daily Five Literacy program and using its subsequent CAFÉ for instructional and assessment purposes, strongly recommends this

as a viable option to attain the goal of meeting the individual and diverse literacy needs of

students. As students gain independence in the structure of The Daily Five program, the teacher

is able to meet one-on-one and in small groups with students to tailor instruction for each

individual student's needs. The program also instills ownership in each student for his/her

 learning and literacy progress. The Daily Five program is not a rigid, scripted program, but

rather a system for management of individual literacy development that may be tweaked and

molded to fit each classroom teacher's needs, as well as each student's needs. Finally, the

researcher does believe that the results detailed above may be generalized to other populations

such as different grade levels, school settings and programs.

Next Steps:

The researcher would like to fortify the Listen to Reading time by providing more

access to technology that enables the use of audio books. To this end, the researcher has written

a grant to attain funds to purchase MP3 players and digital recordings of books for students to

use. The researcher has received the grant and is currently shopping around for the best deal in

order to be able to purchase as many MP3 players and digital recordings as possible with the

funds.

In addition to this, the researcher has ordered and received 36 new texts to add to the

classroom library to enhance motivation and relevancy through multicultural exposure and real-

life events around the world.

Another step the researcher would like to take is to offer an after school enrichment

program to provide additional support for students who may not be receiving support in

academics at home. The researcher will invite the eight students who are one year or more

below grade level to attend one day a week on Thursdays. During this time students will

receive another dose of targeted instruction in reading, writing and Math (since the new Math adoption relies heavily on reading and writing.) There will be a large focus on celebration and sharing in order to give students another opportunity to shine. It is the hope of the researcher that this after school intervention time will help students feel more connected with school and enrich his/her attitude toward learning.

Lastly, the researcher would like to have access to 5-6 net book computers for use in the classroom on a daily basis. Rather than having 25 lap top computers, the 5-6 net books would provide for small group instruction and differentiation in writing as well as technological skills. The net books would take up less space than lap tops; providing more room for students who are working on other tasks.

These are a few of the "Next Steps" the researcher would like to implement. There will, no doubt, be more as the researcher continues her quest to seek out the best practice interventions and implement differentiation of instruction and learning opportunities in order to best meet the diverse literacy needs of each of her 25 students.

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Appendix A- Updated Timeline:

(The updates are in blue font)

August	Before school starts:
	• Acquire materials needed and set up classroom conducive to the Daily Five system.

Wow! This was a huge undertaking! The classroom that I took over was in pretty bad shape and in need of repairs and many updates. My husband, son and I spent over 100 hours painting, repairing and updating the physical space to best meet student/learning needs. We scavenged for unwanted furniture, student tables, chairs and materials to use. In the end, every member of my family helped to organize, set up and plan every aspect of the physical space now present in our classroom. One of my esteemed colleagues graciously gave me her classroom library! It was like Christmas-only bigger-on that day! I was moved to tears. Her words were, "I am giving you these books because I know that if anyone can make Daily Five work in their classroom, it is you, Kerri." I am very thankful for her support! The very best investment we made was painting the classroom. The students and families love it and it makes for a very happy, comfortable place to be.

Before:

After:

Before:

After:

- The researcher will gain consent form the principal and district office to follow through with this action research proposal.

Done and granted (Appendix H).

- Create logs for collaboration documentation

These include notes from grade level meetings, staff development and staff meetings as well as teacher-specialist collaboration.

- Create the student binder to collect assessment data and anecdotal notes

Binders include: Daily Five Penseive, Individual Student Literacy Assessments, DRA Student Files, Student Literacy Portfolios and Flooding Lesson Plans as well as Lesson Plan Binder.

- Create plan book

	My Lesson Plan Book is teacher-created each month on the computer and customized each week to meet student needs. During In-service Week: • Collaborate with teachers about the Daily Five and Writer's Workshop and re-read the Daily Five book and its sequel "Café" in order to begin implementation of the program *Done and on-going.* • Attend workshop on Regie Routman-Writer's Workshop *Our district did not end up offering this. There was a meeting offered through Concordia but it was not a night I could attend. The amazing news is that our school has been selected to have Regie and her team come next year and guide us through the next three years in writing development. In addition, I was given Regie's books to read and have implemented strategies from her Workshop model in my daily teaching.* • Attend English Language Development refresher course *At the time of writing, this was planned. Our district did not end up offering this.* • Attend Title I literacy workshops *I attended these and learned a plethora of valuable strategies for vocabulary building and writing ideas. One of which is Morning Message. This has been a cornerstone of our writing development and has enabled me to implement many best-practice strategies with my students through modeled, shared and independent writing as well as self and peer-editing practice.*
September/ October	• At Back to School night, the researcher will present the informed consent forms with a brief explanation of the research being done. *Our staff chose not to have parents come into the building for this. We had an Ice Cream Social outside. It was decided that I did not need informed consent from parents since everything I am doing is what I would do anyway. I did share with parents that I am in the course of studying to earn my Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a Reading Endorsement and have shared the many implementations being done through newsletters and one-on-one conversations.* The researcher will implement the Daily Five and Writer's Workshop, following the guidelines provided with each design. *Done and on-going.* • The researcher will begin assessment of reading, writing, spelling and oral language, gathering a baseline in each and recording them in the student grid *Done and on-going. Please see example attached. I also added Spelling since or district requires the tracking of this. Please see Spelling Tracker (Appendix F) and Literacy Recap Sheet (Appendix F).* • The researcher will implement best practice interventions based on the needs of the students as gained from the assessments and record these in plan book. *Done and on-going.*

September-March	• The researcher will continue to implement best practice interventions and instruction based on the needs of the students as gained from baseline assessments and on-going observations. *On-going. Please see Classroom Literacy Assessment Charts with Plan for Interventions as well as the Writing Rubric (Appendix B) I created to guide our grade level team in consistent writing development instruction and scoring.*
October	• The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them *On-going. I meet with each of my 25 students AT LEAST weekly. For the "At Risk" students (students who are 1 or more years behind) I meet/double-dip them every-other-day or about three times weekly, if not daily.* • The researcher will share the assessment data with parents/guardians at conference/report card time and collaboratively state goals *This was AMAZING to have to show/share to/with parents! I had student writing samples with the Writing Rubric attached and scored so that parents could see what students are expected to be able to do. I also created a "Writing Process Chart" for our classroom and gave one to each family for use at home. I have always been firm believer in educating the family so that student success is a partnership between student, family and teacher/school. We also developed a new report card for this year that is aligned with state standards. I was happy to be a part of this team. The district moved conferences to December, so this took place then rather than October.* *It was decided that the other 2nd grade teacher and I would receive support from our Reading Specialist and PE Specialist each Wednesday for ½ hour. They work with our students while we meet to collaborate and plan writing interventions, score pieces and discuss how to best meet student needs in writing.* *Created a Lesson Plan template that works for me for use in Flooding/Guided Reading.* *Referred four students for SPED testing. Wow! This took about 1 hour per referral including time to gather student work, fill out form and attach other evidences.*
October-March	• Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students *On-going.*
December	The researcher will conduct the reading writing, spelling and oral language assessments that were conducted in the fall and record findings in student grid *DRAs and Writing Samples were repeated in December; Spelling assessments in January and Oral Language Assessments will be done in March with a total of two (Pre and Post test) of these done due to the fact that students can memorized the responses.* • The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them *Done*

January	• Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students *On-going*
February-March	• Attend the IRA/ORA to glean new instructional practices for implementation in order to improve differentiation • Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students • During the last week of February and the first week of March, the researcher will conduct assessments in reading, writing, spelling and oral language and record findings in student grid. • The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them. • The researcher will share the data with parents/guardians at conference/report card time and collaboratively state goals. • The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them • The researcher will share the data with parents/guardians at report card time and collaboratively state goals. • The researcher will analyze and interpret all of the results of this action research project. The final project will be completed and turned into the researcher's faculty advisor by <u>March 26th</u>. *Done* *February:* *Eligibility meetings for 2/4 students I referred for SPED testing in early October. Gained valuable insights into how to tweak my instructional approaches with these two children!*
April	• Continuation of implementation of best practices in literacy based on needs of students
May	• The researcher will conduct assessments in reading, writing and oral language and record findings in student grid • The researcher will use the data to confer with students and create goals based on them • The researcher will share the data with parents/guardians at report card time and collaboratively state goals.

Appendix B-The Five Steps of the Writing Process:

The 5 Steps of the Writing Process

Step	Description	Strategies
1. Prewriting	*I can think about what I am going to write. I can organize my thoughts before I begin to write.*	*Talking* *Brainstorming* *Graphic organizers* *Research* *Listing* *Field Trips* *Drawing*
2. Drafting	*I can write my ideas down on paper. I can use inventive spelling so that I don't stop writing.*	*Taking notes* *Organizing thoughts into paragraphs* *Writing a first draft*
3. Revising	*I can revise my writing piece by adding or taking away parts in order to make my writing more clear and interesting. I can share my writing and get input from my peers and/or my teacher.*	*Peer revising* *Conferencing* *Share Chair or Author's Chair*
4. Editing	*I can edit my writing piece, making sure that I capitalize the letters that I need to, use indentation where I need to, use the right punctuation and organized my piece so that it has an introduction, 3 or more supporting details and a conclusion. I can fix my spelling errors.*	*Peer editing* *Checklists* *Rubrics* *Editing Checklists* *Proofreading*
5. Publishing	*I can write my piece in final form and draw a picture to support my writing. I can share my writing with others.*	*Reading aloud* *Reading to a group* *Displaying in the Room* *Printing the books* *Web publishing*

Created by Kerri Convery 2009

Appendix C-Traits Writing Rubric:

2nd Grade 6-Traits Writing Rubric

Trait ▼ Score ►	Beginning 1	Emerging 2	Developing 3	Capable 4	Experienced 5	Exceptional 6
Conventions:						
Capitalization	Print sense is still emerging	Random use of upper and lowercase letters	Capitals for beginning sentence, proper names, titles still inconsistent	Capitals for beginning sentence, proper names, titles and greetings evident	Capitals for sentence beginnings, proper names, titles and greetings	Accurate for sentence beginnings, proper names, titles and greetings
Punctuation	None used	None or random	Period or other punctuation is present somewhere	End punctuation and comas used in greetings evident	End punctuation and commas usually correct-some varied uses present	End punctuation and commas usually correct-some varied uses present
Spelling	Pre-phonetic or not present	Phonetic, some decodable and/or simple words spelled correctly	Phonetic spelling decodable; accurate spelling of some words	Grade level high use words mostly correct; phonetic spelling easy to decode	Usually accurate for grade level words, "hard" words spelled phonetically	Grade level words and "hard" words spelled logically, if not accurately
Grammar & Usage	Not present	Part of a grammatical construction is present	Inconsistent; correct use of simple possessive pronouns (my/mine), singular plural pronouns.	Subject/verb agreement, tense still spotty, correct use of parts of speech (noun→verbs), begin using contractions	Usually accurate	Accurate
Paragraphing	Not present	Not present	Not present	Spotty or not present	First line indented	Consistent indentation for paragraphs
Ideas & Content:						
The Big Idea	Ideas are unclear; print sense is just beginning	Idea(s) is/are conveyed in a general way throughout text, labels, symbols	The Big Idea is stated in the text	The Big Idea is clear, but general-a simple story or explanation	The Big Idea is clear, the topic is narrowed	The Big Idea is clear and original; the topic is narrowed
Supporting Details	None present	None present in the text	Minimal (1-2) supporting details present	Supporting details (3+) are present in the text	Supporting ideas are relevant, logical and mostly accurate	Supporting details are relevant, accurate and specific
Pictures, Graphs, Charts	Not clear	Connect with a word, label, symbol	Offer supporting details	Support text	Clarify the text	Enhance the text
Focus	Not present	Unclear or extremely limited	Limited to one sentence (or repeats same idea)	Generally on topic	Writing stays on topic	Writing stays on topic
Development	Not present	Not present	Simplistic	Adequate; easy to follow	Complete	Generous and complete
Organization:						
Grouping of Related Ideas	No grouping of related ideas to maintain a consistent focus	Little grouping of related ideas to maintain a consistent focus	Some grouping of related ideas to maintain a consistent focus	Consistently groups related ideas to maintain a consistent focus	Always groups related ideas to maintain a consistent focus	Strategically groups related ideas to maintain a consistent focus
Big Idea with Introductory Sentence & Supporting Details	No development of an idea with an introductory sentence, supporting details (sentence/s)	Little development of an idea with an introductory sentence, supporting details	Some development of an idea with an introductory sentence, supporting details	Consistently develops an idea with an introductory sentence, supporting details	Always develops an idea with an introductory sentence, supporting details	Strategically develops an idea with an introductory sentence, supporting details
Sequencing	No sequencing of 2 or more events with evidence of planning	Little sequencing of 2 or more events with evidence of planning	Some sequencing of 2 or more events with evidence of planning	Consistently sequences 3 or more events with evidence of planning	Always sequences 3 or more events with evidence of planning	Strategically sequences 3 or more events with evidence of planning
Narrative: Logical sequence of events	Write a brief narrative: No movement through a logical sequence of events	Write a brief narrative: Little movement through a logical sequence of events	Write a brief narrative: Sometimes moves through a logical sequence of events	Write a brief narrative: Consistently moves through a logical sequence of events	Write a brief narrative: Always moves through a logical sequence of events	Write a brief narrative: Strategically moves through a logical sequence of events
Narrative: Setting, Characters, Objects and Events	Write a brief narrative: No description of setting, characters, objects and events	Write a brief narrative: Little description of setting, characters, objects and events	Write a brief narrative: Some description of setting, characters, objects and events	Write a brief narrative: Consistently describes setting, characters, objects and events	Write a brief narrative: Always describes setting, characters, objects and events	Write a brief narrative: Strategically describes setting, characters, objects and events
Description/Expository: Main Ideas	Write a brief description/ expository: No development of main ideas	Write a brief description/ expository: Little development of main ideas	Write a brief description/ expository: Some development of main ideas	Write a brief description/ expository: Consistently develops main ideas	Write a brief description/ expository: Consistently develops main ideas	Write a brief description/ expository: Strategically develops main ideas
Description/Expository: Details to Support Main Idea	Write a brief description/ expository: No use of details to support the main idea	Write a brief description/ expository: Little use of details to support the main idea	Write a brief description/ expository: Some use of details to support the main idea	Write a brief description/ expository: Consistently uses details to support the main idea	Write a brief description/ expository: Always uses details to support the main idea	Write a brief description/ expository: Strategically uses details to support the main idea

Rubric created by Kerri Convery and adapted from NWREL 6-Traits Beginning Rubric for K-2

Appendix D-Student Literacy Development Progress Grid Sample (Created by Kerri Convery, 2009):

Student Name 2009-2010
Literacy Development

Reading DRA2

1 K Fall	2 K Winter	3 K Spring	4 1st Fall	6 1st	8 1st	10 1st Winter	12 1st	14 1st	16 1st Spring	18 2nd Fall	20 2nd	24 2nd Winter	28 2nd	30 2nd Spring/3rd Fall	34 3rd Winter	38 3rd Spring/4th Fall
									September 09	December 09		March 10				

Spelling Sittion

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
				October 09								March10		

Writing 6-Traits

Ideas & Content — September 09 — December 09 — March 10

Organization — September 09 — December 09 — March 10

Conventions — September 09 — Dec & March

1 Beginning	2 Emerging	3 Developing Fall Target	4 Capable Spring Target	5 Experienced	6 Exceptional

Oral Language Dutro-Express Test

1 Beginning	2 Early Intermediate	3 Intermediate	4 Early Advanced	5 Advanced	6 English Proficient
	October 09		March 10		

Appendix E-Oral Language Levels (Dutro-Express Test, 2008) Student Data Sheet:

Student	October 2009	March 2010
1	7/20 EI (2)	17/20 EA (4)
2	17/20 EA (4)	17/20 EA (4)
3	11/20 I (3)	16/20 EA (4)
4	8/20 EI (2)	15/20 EA (4)
5	16/20 EA (4)	16/20 EA (4)
6	10/20 EI-I (2/3)	18/20 EA (4)
7	11/20 I (3)	18/20 EA (4)
8	15/20 EA (4)	19/20 EA (4)
9	13/20 I (3)	16/20 EA (4)
10	16/20 EA (4)	18/20 EA (4)
11	12/20 I (3)	16/20 EA (4)
12	12/20 I (3)	16/20 EA (4)
13	9/20 EI (2)	15/20 Ea (4)
14	8/20 EI (2)	19/20 EA (4)
15	14/20 I (3)	19/20 EA (4)
16	7/20 EI (2)	8/20 EI (2)
17	13/20 I (3)	16/20 EA (4)
18	8/20 EI (2)	13/20 I (3)
19	14/20 I (3)	17/20 EA (4)
20	18/20 EA (4)	18/20 EA (4)
21	8/20 EI (2)	12/20 I (3)
22	18/20 EA (4)	19/20 EA (4)
23	12/20 I (3)	19/20 EA (4)
24	14/20 I (3)	16/20 EA (4)
25	9/20 EI (2)	15/20 EA (4)

Appendix F-2nd Grade Assessment Recap (Reading and Writing Scores):

	Expectation in September	Baseline-Sept/Oct	1st Trimester				2nd Trimester			
	Reading	Writing	Reading	Writing			Reading	Writing		
Expectation Level	DRA2 18		DRA2 20	3's in 3 Traits I/C, org, conv			DRA2 24	(1)3, (2)4's I/C, org, conv		
Assessment	DRA2	2nd gr scoring guide/Writing Sample	DRA2	2nd gr scoring guide/Writing Sample			DRA2	2nd gr scoring guide/Writing Sample		
Record Student Scores:	Baseline			3	3	3		3	4	4
Student Name	Sept. 09	I/C, O, C	Dec. 09	I/C	O	C	March	I/C	O	C
(ELL)	10	1,1,2	10	2	3	2	14	4	4	3
	14	4,2,2	16	3	3	3	18	4	5	5
	12	2,1,2	20	4	3	3	24	4	4	4
(IEP-Speech)	4	2,1,2	10	3	2	3	14	3	3	4
	20	2,2,3	30	4	4	4	30	5	5	5
* 3/6/10	4	3,2,2	10	5	3	3	10	5	4	3
	20	3,2,3	28	4	4	3	28	6	6	5
	16	3,3,3	30	3	3	3	30	4	4	4
	12	3,3,3	16	4	3	3	24	6	6	5
	24	3,2,2	30	3	3	3	30	5	5	5
(ELL)	14	3,2,3	18	5	4	4	24	6	5	4
	16	4,3,3	16	4	4	3	24	6	5	4
	16	2,1,2	16	4	3	3	24	5	4	4
* (Other Health Impaired)	3	2,2,1	4	3	2	3	10	5	4	3
	28	3,3,4	30	5	3	4	30	6	5	5
(ELL)*	3	1,1,1	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
	16	3,4,3	20	3	3	3	20	6	5	4
(ELL)	6	2,2,2	8	4	3	3	14	4	4	3
	20	3,3,2	28	3	3	3	28	5	4	4
	16	3,2,3	28	4	3	3	28	5	6	4
*(IEP-LD&Other Health Impaired)	3	1,2,1	4	2	3	2	10	4	4	3
	18	4,4,3	30	5	3	4	30	6	5	4
	18	3,2,2	28	3	3	3	28	5	5	4
(IEP-LD)	4	1,1,1	12	3	4	3	14	3	4	3
	16	2,1,2	16	3	3	3	20	4	3	4
*Referred for SPED Eval										

Appendix G-2nd Grade Spelling (Sitton, 2006) Tracker Student Data Sheet:

Student	Oct. 2009	March 2010
1	+4/15 (26%)	+14/15 (93%)
2	+6/15 (40%)	+12/15 (80%)
3	+5/15 (33%)	+13/15 (86%)
4	+5/15 (33%)	+12/15 (80%)
5	+12/15 (80%)	+15/15 (100%)
6	+3/15 (20%)	+8/15 (53%)
7	+13/15 (86%)	+15/15 (100%)
8	+10/15 (66%)	+15/15 (100%)
9	+10/15 (66%)	+13/15 (86%)
10	+6/15 (40%)	+15/15 (100%)
11	+6/15 (40%)	+12/15 (80%)
12	+2/15 (13%)	+13/15 (86%)
13	+3/15 (20%)	+5/15 (33%)
14	+1/15 (6%)	+5/15 (33%)
15	+13/15 (86%)	+15/15 (100%)
16	+0/15 (0%)	+2/15 (13%)
17	+5/15 (33%)	+9/15 (60%)
18	+5/15 (33%)	+13/15 (86%)
19	+5/15 (33%)	+14/15 (93%)
20	+6/15 (40%)	+13/15 (86%)
21	+0/15 (0%)	+4/15 (26%)
22	+10/15 (66%)	+15/15 (100%)
23	+9/15 (60%)	+15/15 (100%)
24	+2/15 (13%)	+10/15 (66%)
25	+7/15 (46%)	+15/15 (100%)

Appendix H-Parent Consent Waiver for Action Research Project:

Parent Consent Waiver
For Action Research Proposal/Project
Kerri S. Convery
Concordia University
2009-2010

Since the Action Research proposal/project that the researcher plans to conduct

encompasses best practices, strategies and programs required as an educator to best meet

student needs, parent consent is not needed to carry-out the practices, strategies and

programs described herein.

_____
Administrator

_____
Advisor