

Teachers' Attitudes toward Shared Reading,

Guided Reading, and Learning Centers


by

Debra M Molzahn

A Research Paper  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the  
Master of Science Degree  
in

Home Economics

Approved: 2 Semester Credits



---

Dr. Donald Platz

The Graduate School

University of Wisconsin-Stout

May 2005

The Graduate School  
 University of Wisconsin Stout  
 Menomonie, WI 54751

ABSTRACT

Molzahn	Debra	M	
(Writer) (Last Name)	(First Name)	(Middle Initial)	
Teachers' Attitudes toward Shared Reading, Guided Reading, and Learning Centers			
(Title)			
Home Economics	Dr. Donald Platz	May, 2005	(51)
(Degree Program)	(Research Advisor)	(Date)	# of pages
American Psychological Association, 5 <sup>th</sup> edition			
(Style Manual Used in this Study)			

Teachers' attitudes toward implementing a balanced literacy program at the kindergarten level are varied. Some teachers believe children are being pushed into academics too early, others believe children should be taught how to read at the earliest level possible. Does participation in professional development activities change these attitudes? Does the number of years teachers teach make a difference in these attitudes? This study compared kindergarten teachers' attitudes toward using shared reading, guided reading and literacy centers in their classrooms before and after attending professional development activities at a Literacy Institute. Did teachers implement the strategies and ideas provided at the professional development training?

The data analysis showed that there were no statistical differences found for teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and centers before and after participation in the Literacy Institute professional development training and the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading and learning centers. There was a difference found in the relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers' attitudes toward guided reading. Teachers with eleven to fifteen years teaching experience felt that guided reading could be accommodated to use with any class size however, the other groups felt that class size mattered. Another area that came close was the statement regarding having sufficient training to implement shared reading in the classroom. All teachers, regardless of the number of years teaching, felt they had sufficient training to implement shared reading.

One of the concerns mentioned in the comment section of the survey dealt with the developmentally appropriateness of using guided reading in kindergarten. Another concern expressed was the difficulty teachers have implementing guided reading in classrooms that have more than 20 students.

## Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to thank God for giving me the courage and the insight to embark on this endeavor at this stage of my life. Next, I would like to thank my wonderful husband, Dave, who has consoled, encouraged and supported me throughout this entire process. Without his love and never-ending optimism I wouldn't have been able to complete this project.

My sons, Dan, Nick and Michael, have been absolutely wonderful. They have listened to me, shared their opinions and suggestions but most importantly have given up family summer vacations in order for me to fulfill my dream.

The professors I have had in my graduate classes are the best! Dr. Judy Rummel, Dr. Amy Gillett, Diane Klemme, Dr. Lorenz, and Dr. Karen Zimmerman have helped more than words can say!

My advisor, Dr. Donald Platz has been there to encourage me, to give me feedback and to answer my questions all within the convenience of a long-distance relationship via computer.

The support staffs at the UW-Stout library and Christine Ness have been available with simple e-mail messages. My principal, Mrs. Pam Haugh a Stout graduate herself, has stated, "Stout has the best program for educating early childhood teachers". I couldn't agree more!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
List of Tables.....	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
<i>Statement of the Problem</i> .....	4
<i>Purpose of the study</i> .....	4
<i>Research Questions</i> .....	5
<i>Assumptions of the Study</i> .....	5
<i>Definition of Terms</i> .....	5
<i>Limitations of the Study</i> .....	6
<i>Summary</i> .....	6
Chapter II: Literature Review.....	8
<i>Research Theories Supporting the Benefits of Early Reading Instruction</i> .....	8
<i>Research Studies Supporting the Best Instructional Practices for Early Reading Success</i> .....	10
<i>Shared Reading</i> .....	11
<i>Guided Reading</i> .....	12
<i>Learning Centers</i> .....	13
<i>Summary</i> .....	14
Chapter III: Methodology.....	15
<i>Purpose of Study</i> .....	15
<i>Participants and Demographics</i> .....	15
<i>Instrumentation</i> .....	17

<i>Data Collection and Analysis</i> .....	18
<i>Limitations</i> .....	19
<i>Summary</i> .....	20
Chapter IV: Results.....	21
<i>Demographic Information</i> .....	21
<i>Question 1</i> .....	21
<i>Question 2</i> .....	25
<i>Question 3</i> .....	33
<i>Question 4</i> .....	34
<i>Summary</i> .....	36
Chapter V: Discussion.....	37
<i>Limitations</i> .....	37
<i>Conclusions</i> .....	37
<i>Implications for Further Study</i> .....	40
References.....	41
Appendix A: Pre Survey.....	44
Appendix B: Post Survey.....	48

## List of Tables

Table 1: Age category of respondents .....	15
Table 2: Formal education of respondents.....	15
Table 3: Years of teaching experience.....	16
Table 4: Familiarity with shared reading, guided reading and literacy centers.....	21
Table 5: Comfortable using and teaching shared reading, guided reading.....	21
Table 6: Sufficient training to use shared reading, guided reading and literacy centers .....	22
Table 7: Guided reading.....	22
Table 8: Concepts of print.....	23
Table 9: Learning Centers.....	23
Table 10: Teaching concepts of print using shared reading .....	25
Table 11: Comfortable using shared reading.....	25
Table 12: Shared reading is essential to reading instruction.....	26
Table 13: Sufficient training to implement shared reading .....	26
Table 14: Comfortable teaching guided reading.....	27
Table 15: Guided reading is appropriate to use in kindergarten.....	27
Table 16: Guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size.....	28
Table 17: Sufficient training to implement guided reading.....	28
Table 18: Center activities should reinforce read-alouds and shared reading .....	29
Table 19: Sufficient training to implement literacy centers.....	29
Table 20: Guided Reading Can be Accommodated to Use with Any Class Size.....	30
Table 21: Posttest years of teaching experience using guided reading.....	32

## Chapter1: Introduction

The latest approaches to teaching literacy in elementary education appear to be endless: balanced literacy, read-alouds, phonics, phonemic awareness, shared reading, guided reading, learning centers, and independent reading. Educators hear these words and try to make sense of it all. Conflicting opinions on these approaches are common. Kindergarten should be a time for socializing and learning to get along, not learning how to read and write. Push them too early and they will fail. Don't push them enough and they will fail. Teach the skills in isolation. No, integrate them. It leaves kindergarten teachers scratching their heads. What are the attitudes kindergarten teachers have toward these approaches? What affect will professional development training have on teacher attitudes? Will further professional development be required? The researcher of this study hopes to find the answers to these questions.

Many studies, such as those conducted by Adams, Snow, Burns and Griffin, Hoffman, Roser and Battle point out the importance of reading to and with children starting at a very young age. Adams (1990) reported that children who come from environments that are not language and print rich are considered at-risk for reading failure. Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998, p. 137) wrote, "Literacy acquisition begins prior to entering school and relies on familiarity with the basic purposes and mechanisms of reading and language ability." Hoffman, Roser, and Battle (1993) confirmed that reading to children is the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in learning to read. The importance of learning to read should not be neglected or glossed over.

There are many opportunities to teach reading, or at least an awareness of the printed word, to children. Reading words that are in their environment: STOP, McDonalds, Pizza Hut etc., labeling common objects around the house or classroom, being a positive role model by



reading books, magazines and/or newspapers are some examples. It was previously thought that children would learn to read when they were ready and therefore early literacy was not strongly promoted. According to Piaget's theory (cited in Carlton & Winsler, 1999), learning will take place when a child is biologically ready. However, the National Reading Panel (2000) recommended that literacy instruction should begin as early as possible.

There are various approaches being used to teach young children how to read. Routman (2003) offered some guidelines that indicate the best practices in teaching reading. These include, but are not limited to:

- 1.1. Students need caring teachers who bond with their students and use a variety of approaches, resources and texts. They do not over rely on programs.
- 2.2. Phonemic awareness is necessary for students to become readers and most children acquire this awareness through rhyming and word play in rich, learning/literacy centers.
- 3.3. Creating original stories from children's language and experiences.
- 4.4. Shared Reading.
- 5.5. Repeated Readings.
- 6.6. Independent Reading.
- 7.7. Guided Reading.
- 8.8. The use of Learning Centers.

Shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

Every kindergarten child is entitled to receive a balanced instructional program that includes interesting daily read aloud stories, a chance to explore books independently, the ability

to participate in interactive and engaging stories in the form of shared reading as well as experience with nonfiction books.

There should be plenty of opportunities for the children to work in small groups for focused instruction such as in guided reading and in collaboration with other children in literacy centers. (The International Reading Association (IRA) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC; 1998, p. 4-19)

This position statement by the IRA/NAEYC emphasized that it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to make sure these opportunities are available. Regrettably, outdated and developmentally inappropriate practices are present in many classrooms. These outdated practices include:

- 1.1. Using increments of time to divide the curriculum into separate subjects rather than integrating the curriculum.
- 2.2. Requiring students to complete worksheets and do other seatwork rather than participating in hands on/minds on small group activities.
- 3.3. Reserving play centers only for those children who complete their seatwork early.
- 4.4. Expecting children to work individually and silently on most learning activities.

Current legislation, as part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, specifies that reading programs must be established in kindergarten through third grade in Reading First schools. This is to ensure that every student can read at or above grade level by the end of third grade (Stewart, 2004). One large school district in Northeast Wisconsin is taking this mandate seriously by implementing action to help ensure their students make the grade. According to Education Connections (Green Bay Area Public Schools, 2003-2004), this public school district has made reading development an important component of its kindergarten to twelfth grade

strategic plan. It is implementing a revised balanced literacy curriculum and obtaining the appropriate materials for use at the elementary level.

### *Statement of the Problem*

Current legislation specifies that children should be reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade. Various approaches are being used to teach children, as young as kindergarten, how to read. These include such programs as phonics, whole language, phonemic awareness, shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers and the list go on. It is not certain which programs are perceived to be better for children. Perhaps, by knowing the attitudes or believes teachers have toward three of the programs currently being used may help.

### *Purpose of the Proposed Study*

The purposes of this study are the following:

1. To compare the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward teaching shared reading, guided reading and using learning centers before and after professional development training at the Literacy Institute.
2. To determine the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers in their classrooms.
3. To determine the reasons for not implementing shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers if that is the case.

The data was collected through a survey distributed to more than 80 kindergarten teachers from a large Northeastern Wisconsin school district by mail prior to an August 9-12, 2004, Literacy Institute. A follow-up survey with stamped addressed envelopes was mailed in January 2005 after teachers have had an opportunity to implement the strategies presented at the

professional development. There was a deadline date of Nov. 17, 2004 for returning the first survey and January 11, 2005 for the follow-up survey.

### *Research Questions*

The following research questions will be addressed upon completion of the study:

1. Is there a difference in teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers before and after participating in the Literacy Institute professional development training?
2. Is there a relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers?
3. Is there a difference in the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers?
4. What reasons, if any, were given for not implementing the strategies presented at the Literacy Institute?

### *Assumptions of the Study*

It is assumed that the survey questions were answered honestly and that the same teachers completed the follow-up survey.

### *Definition of Terms*

For clarity of understanding, Routman (2003) helped to define these four items:

**Guided Reading:** An oral reading strategy where the teacher provides direct instruction in phonics and comprehension to small groups of children.

**Learning Centers:** A literacy center is a focal point in a classroom that is organized for independent, self-managed student work while the teacher is working with another child or with a small group.

**Phonemic Awareness:** An understanding about the structures and patterns of the spoken language. It means being able to discriminate between different consonants and to sequence each small unit of sound (phoneme) in a word.

**Shared Reading:** Utilizes books where the text is enlarged so all readers can see it. Mini lessons are taught that address concepts of print, punctuation, and other reading strategies using a fast-paced and interactive style. A single shared reading experience can address varying developmental levels of the students.

### *Limitations of the Study*

The following limitations of the study were identified;

1. The findings from this study cannot be generalized to all teachers.
2. Teachers may be participating in other professional development programs during the time between the two surveys that may affect the results.
3. There was only one district involved in the study that means a smaller sample size.
4. The three hours of professional development training may be a relatively short period of time for internalizing knowledge in each of the three areas: shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers.

### *Summary*

This chapter covered the current approaches to teaching balanced literacy at the kindergarten level. It cited studies that pointed out the importance of reading to and with children. It presented three specific approaches to teaching literacy: shared reading, guided reading and learning centers. In addition it defined key vocabulary words, and outlined the purpose and limitations of the study. The subsequent chapters will address a review of the

literature in Chapter II, the methodology and data analysis in Chapter III with Chapter IV discussing results and Chapter V providing discussion and conclusions.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter includes a discussion of research theories that endorse the benefits of early reading instruction. It will then be followed by research studies supporting the best instructional practices for early reading success, and conclude with specific studies and theories regarding shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers. It will conclude with a short summary.

### *Research Theories Supporting the Benefits of Early Reading Instruction*

Much attention has been focused on children's literacy experiences before they enter kindergarten. Wood (1988) went into great detail comparing the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky. Piaget's theory stated that children have to pass through stages of development before moving onto the next level. This theory indicated that teaching could only influence the course of intellectual development if the child is able to assimilate what is said and done. Assimilation, in turn, is controlled by the child's stage of development.

Vygotski's theory placed great emphasis on the role of communication, social interaction, and instruction to determine the path to development. Children unable to perform tasks, solve problems, memorize things, or recall experiences when they are left to their own devices often succeed when someone more knowledgeable and skilled helps them. This is known as the "zone of proximal development" (Wood, 1988).

Failing to give children literacy experiences until they are school age can severely limit the reading and writing levels they ultimately attain (IRA/NAEYC, 1998). Trelease (n. d.) emphasized that reading aloud to children helps them develop and improve skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Listening to others read stimulates an understanding of vocabulary and a language pattern, which in turn helps children learn to read.

West and Denton (2002) reported the results of a study involving kindergarten children that was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. This study was called The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K). The full ECLS-K base-year sample was comprised of approximately 22,000 kindergarteners that attended about 1,000 kindergarten programs during the 1998-1999 school year. To date three reports have been published on the young children's early school experiences. The study collected the initial information directly from the children, their families, teachers and schools in the fall of 1998. These children were followed through spring 2004 when they would be in fifth grade. One of the purposes of the study was to identify reading achievement in kindergarten and first grade. The findings from the reports thus far found that children who entered kindergarten recognizing their letters, were read to at least three times a week, had a positive outlook toward learning and were in very good or excellent health, performed better in reading than those who did not have these resources. Future reports based on the ECLS-K will explore the possible influences of factors such as class size, full day or part day kindergarten programs, teacher characteristics, school environment, parenting style, and parent involvement on children's scholastic success.

Early intervention research has focused on how to prevent early reading failure by designing tutoring programs in conjunction with regular classroom instruction as reported by Leslie and Allen (1999). There are factors that predict early success in an early literacy intervention program. Studies by Taylor, Frye, Short, and Shearer, (1992) designed a small group-tutoring program for struggling first grade readers. The goal of the program was to develop fluency through repeated reading of summarized children's trade books. Teachers modeled how to segment and blend individual sounds and how to use cueing systems for



decoding. This approach did not significantly reduce the reading ability gap for the first grade students in the program.

The IRA/NAEYC (1998) points out that there is no single method or single combination of methods that can successfully teach all children to read. Teachers must be knowledgeable about a wide range of methods for teaching reading and possess a strong knowledge of the children in their care so they can create the appropriate balance of methods needed for each child.

### *Research Studies Supporting the Best Instructional Practices for Early Reading Success*

Since studies indicate that there is no “one best” method or program to teach reading, educators should be familiar with a variety of strategies that are available and how to make them work. Rog (2001) went into great detail explaining a few of these strategies in her book, *Early Literacy Instruction in Kindergarten*. She believed, as did Cunningham and Allington (1997) that the single most important element in a classroom is a well-informed and effective teacher. The teacher should understand the developmental nature of learning to read, be able to accept individual differences and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the students. An outstanding teacher builds on children’s prior knowledge and helps to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning. Routman (2003) believed that unless teachers reach into students’ hearts, they have no entry into their minds. Holdaway (1979) believed that the strongest predictor of reading achievement is the quality of student-teacher relations.

According to Honig (1996), the primary goals of educators should be to enable children to enjoy books, to learn from literature, to read fluently, to understand grade appropriate material, to read from a variety of sources and to reach higher levels of comprehension. To enjoy books is a start but there is much more to reading. Children must learn the skills necessary to

read concepts of print, letter and sound identification and their connections, and phonemic awareness. They must then master sight words, fluency, and comprehension. Ehri, et al. (2001) pointed out that phonemic awareness instruction helps all types of children learn to read across a variety of conditions.

Attention has been paid to concerns about teaching skills in isolation and the use of workbook pages at too young an age. Studies indicate that an isolated drill in the basics approach hampers low-performing students because they have difficulty learning how to process new information effectively. On the other hand, when the basics are integrated into challenging meaningful curriculum, these same students easily learn the basics because the work is interesting and relevant (Neuman & Roskos; McLane & McNamee; cited in Routman, 2003).

It is important to adjust teaching strategies to meet the needs of children. Just what programs are developmentally appropriate for kindergarten children? This researcher is going into detail to describe three programs currently being introduced at the kindergarten level. These are shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers.

### *Shared Reading*

Shared reading is a program that many teachers routinely use. Routman (2003) believes shared reading is an integral part of a reading program. In shared reading, a learner or group of learners, sees the text, observes the teacher reading it with fluency and expression, and is invited to read along. At the kindergarten level, shared reading focuses primarily on enjoying and rereading new, familiar, and favorite texts. The teacher progresses word-by-word and line-by-line with a pointer. Students join in visually and/or orally. These repeated readings build confidence, fluency, and word familiarity, as well as provide practice in phonemic awareness and phonics. Rog (2001) pointed out some additional features of shared reading instruction. The text

is enlarged so that all the readers can see it, lessons are fast-paced and interactive, and a single shared reading experience can address a variety of developmental levels. Ideas were provided for using the program in the classroom such as utilizing student made books, overhead transparencies, and language experience charts. Also offered were suggestions for using a variety of materials to draw attention to the text such as Wikki Stix, highlight tape, reading wands and word frames.

### *Guided Reading*

Another program used in many classrooms is guided reading. The guided reading program is introduced to kindergarten students who are developmentally ready. The purpose of guided reading is to allow students to practice their reading with teacher support and prompting. In this program students assume more responsibility than they did in shared reading. Swartz, et al. (2003) described guided reading as a teaching method in which students read orally and the teacher provides direct instruction in phonics and comprehension. Groups of four to six students are each given their own copy of a book that is based on their instructional reading level. A student's reading level can be determined when the words can be decoded and comprehended with 90-95% accuracy. The teacher provides an introduction to the book that should focus on information specific to the book, unfamiliar vocabulary, unusual language structure, phonics, and word analysis. The students then read the book orally at their own pace using a soft voice. The teacher's role is to listen to the students read and note their reading behavior.

In a study conducted by the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA, 1998-1999), guided reading proved to be a significant factor in reading success when the following was utilized: text used was at the correct instructional level, flexible grouping strategies were used, explicit phonics instruction was given and children were taught the

reading strategies which were used to attack unknown words. Swartz, et al. (2003) describe guided reading as a teaching method in which students read orally and the teacher provides direct instruction in phonics and comprehension. They state the benefits of guided reading are to provide an opportunity to improve fluency, comprehension, grammar, phonics and word analysis as well as to provide teachers with a means to evaluate and tailor instruction for students.

Rog (2001) is concerned when guided reading is required in kindergarten. That necessitates inordinate amounts of time in which the children are working independently. Also, increased pressure on teachers to have children reading in kindergarten has often meant limiting or usurping such crucial activities in playing, building with blocks, painting, acting out stories, and even reading fiction and nonfiction aloud. (as cited in Routman, 2003, p.159)

### *Learning Centers*

One approach utilized in classrooms are learning centers. Learning centers are activities children work on independently or in small groups to reinforce lessons they have been taught. Brain research such as the study conducted by Jensen (1998) suggests that teachers should provide choices to make learning relevant, personal and engaging. By using choices the learning becomes intrinsic and motivated to keep the children's attention.

Debbie Diller (2003) an educational consultant and teacher published a book detailing how to make learning centers work. She believes there should be ninety minutes of literacy instruction built into every day. That time should be used to develop a gradual release of responsibility. At the very beginning of the learning to read process, modeling must occur. The teacher is responsible for modeling the use of materials and methods used through the use of read

alouds, shared reading and writing, guided reading and writing and the use of mini lessons. The next part of the scaffolding process was described as “handholding”. The children practiced using the materials and strategies with the teacher guiding them. Finally the children reach the stage of independence. The children are able to work without teacher guidance at centers. They can work alone, with partners or with small groups using the materials and strategies previously taught.

### *Summary*

This chapter was a review of literature and studies that are currently available regarding the benefits of early reading instruction and the best instructional practices currently being used. The single most important element in a classroom is a well-informed and effective teacher. The teacher must be informed on current research and best instructional practices. Research indicates that there is no single method or single combination of methods that can successfully teach all children to read. Teachers must be knowledgeable about a wide range of methods for teaching reading and possess a strong knowledge of the children in their care so they can create the appropriate balance of methods needed for each child. Three programs used to guide children toward independent reading are introduced at the kindergarten level. These are shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers.

### Chapter III: Methodology

Chapter three will explain the purpose of the proposed study and the methodology used. It will include a description of who the participants were, how they were selected, and additional demographic information. A discussion of the instrument used and the data analysis will follow. Finally, the limitations of the proposed study will be discussed.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was as follows:

1. To compare the beliefs of kindergarten teachers toward teaching shared reading, guided reading and using learning centers before and after professional development training at a Literacy Institute.
2. To determine if there is a relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and learning centers.
3. To determine the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers in their classrooms.
4. To determine the reasons for not implementing shared reading, guided reading and learning centers if that is the case.

#### *Participants and Demographics*

The participants for this study were 81 kindergarten teachers from a large Northeastern Wisconsin school district. The participants were selected using a cluster sample taken from all of the kindergarten teachers in the district. Within that subgroup, 42 teachers who signed up to attend the Literacy Institute were requested to participate. Thirty-three responded to both of the surveys.

The researcher collected data by distributing surveys prior to the Literacy Institute to 81 kindergarten teachers in a large northeastern Wisconsin school district in August 2004. There were 41 surveys returned indicating they would be attending the professional development training provided by the district. This was approximately a 50% return rate. In January 2005, a follow-up survey was mailed to these 41 teachers and 33 surveys were returned. This is a return rate of 80.5%.

---

Table 1

*Age category of respondents*

Age (years)	Number	Percent
20-30	8	24.2
31-40	4	12.1
41-50	10	30.3
51+ years	11	33.3

---

Table 2

*Formal education of respondents*

Degree	Number	Frequency
Bachelor's	7	21.2
Bachelor's + credits	15	45.5
Master's	11	33.3

---

Table 3

*Years of teaching experience*

Number of years	Number	Frequency
01-05	6	18.2
06-10	4	12.1
11-15	6	18.2
16-20	7	21.2
21+	10	30.3

*Instrumentation*

The instrument used was a survey consisting of twenty-five questions. The selected teachers were asked to complete the survey that contained the following sections: general information, education, and attitudes regarding early literacy, degree of implementation and a comments and concerns area. It contained a check off area, a Likert scale, and three short answer questions. There is no reliability or validity information regarding the survey, since the researcher designed it. The instrument was constructed with input from experts in research design and given to five individuals for field-testing before being distributed to the selected subjects. The surveys were coded in order to allow for comparisons of attitudes and implementation before and after attendance at the Literacy Institute. A follow-up survey was sent five months after attending the Literacy Institute. This survey asked if there were any changes incorporated into their classroom as a result of attending the 2004 Literacy Institute and to provide any new comments they had concerning literacy at the kindergarten level.



### *Data Collection and Analysis*

Surveys were mailed to all 81-kindergarten teachers in the district. Forty-two teachers returned the first survey stating they would be attending the professional development training. Thirty-three of those teachers returned the follow-up survey. The participants were asked to return by mail, using the United States Postal Service, a completed-coded survey prior to attending the professional development at the Literacy Institute. Pre-addressed stamped envelopes were mailed along with the survey for ease in returning. There was a deadline date identified on the survey. A follow-up survey using the same process took place five months after attending the Literacy Institute. A reminder was e-mailed to participants who did not respond.

The research questions addressed in this research paper and the answers given in the research questionnaire to be compared were:

1. Will there be a difference in teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and centers before and after participation in the literacy Institute professional development training? Section three, questions 1-10 of both surveys were used to compare teachers' attitudes regarding early literacy.
2. Is there a relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and learning centers? Section one; question six was compared to section three, questions 1-10 to answer that specific question.
3. Will there be a difference in the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading and learning centers? Comparing the responses in section four, questions 1-3 in both surveys answered that particular question.

4. The reasons given for not implementing the strategies presented at the Literacy Institute were addressed in section five under the comments and concerns section.

The answers to the written questions from before and after attending the Literacy Institute were compared. This comparison determined if teachers implemented shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers as a result of attending the Literacy Institute and to what degree they were or were not implemented.

A number of statistical analyses were used in this study. The Statistical Program for Social Sciences was used to analyze the data and cross-tabulate frequency counts and percentages. A T-Test was used to compare responses from the first survey to the second survey to answer question one and question three by using the Likert scale questions. An ANOVA and Student –Newman-Keuls Test was used for the multiple comparison questions.

The comments and concerns responses were used to record the responses of teachers not implementing the strategies presented at the Literacy Institute. The comments were also used to explain what strategies the teachers did incorporate into their instruction and what concerns they have for the future.

### *Limitations*

The following limitations were identified:

1. The findings from this study cannot be generalized to all teachers.
2. Teachers may be participating in other professional development programs during the time between the two surveys which may affect the results.
3. There was only one district involved in the study which means a smaller sample size.

4. The three hours of professional development training may be a relatively short period of time for internalizing knowledge in each of the three areas: shared reading, guided reading, and learning centers.

*Summary*

This chapter explained the purpose of the study and the methodology used to distribute collect and analyze data. It included a description of who the participants were, how they were selected, and incorporated additional demographic information.

## Chapter IV: Results

This chapter includes a description of the final participants along with an item analysis using the statistical data from the survey to answer each of the research questions.

All of the final 33 participants were full-time Caucasian female teachers. They varied in age from 20 to over 51. The majority have Bachelor's degrees plus additional credits and have been teaching 21 years or longer.

*Question 1. Is there a difference in teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and centers before and after participation in the Literacy Institute professional development training?*

Teachers were asked to rate ten statements regarding their attitudes toward early literacy in section three of the pre and post survey. The ratings were "1" strongly disagree to "5" strongly agree. These statements were:

1. Teaching concepts of print should be done in kindergarten using shared reading.
2. I am comfortable using shared reading in my classroom.
3. Shared reading is essential to reading instruction in kindergarten.
4. I have had sufficient training to implement shared reading in my classroom.
5. I am comfortable teaching guided reading in my classroom.
6. Guided reading is appropriate to use in kindergarten.
7. Guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size.
8. I have had sufficient training to implement guided reading in my classroom.
9. Center activities should reinforce read-aloud and shared reading instruction.
10. I have had sufficient training to implement literacy centers in my classroom.

A Paired Samples Test indicated there were no statistical significant differences between the August and January surveys found at a 95% confidence level. Section 3, statement number four, which stated, "I have had sufficient training to implement shared reading in my classroom was close to being significance at .071, which came close to the .05 significance that is required.

In regard to teacher attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and learning centers after attending a Literacy Institute the valid percentages using frequency counts and percentages in the post survey for each of the ten statements can be found on the following tables:

---

Table 4

Belief: Familiarity with shared reading, guided reading and literacy centers (Section Two)

	A little familiar	Familiar	Very familiar
Shared reading instruction		24.2 %,	75.8%.
Guided reading instruction	3%	27.3%	69.7%
Literacy centers		21.2%	78.8%

---

Table 5

*Belief: Comfortable using and teaching shared reading, guided reading (Section Three)*

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Shared reading instruction	3.0%	6.1%	15.2%	75.8%
Guided reading instruction	3.1%	18.8%	40.6%	37.5%

---

Table 6

*Belief: Sufficient training to use shared reading, guided reading and literacy centers (Section Three)*

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Shared reading instruction		6.1%	18.2%	75.8%
Guided reading instruction	6.1%	27.3%	24.2%	42.4%
Literacy centers	3.0%	9.1%	36.4%	51.5%

Table 7

*Belief: Guided reading (Section Three)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Appropriate to use in kindergarten	6.1%	9.1%	21.2%	36.4%	27.3%
Can be accommodated to use with any class size	15.2%	12.1%	21.2%	30.3%	21.2%

Table 8

*Belief: Concepts of print (Section Three)*

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Teaching concepts of print using shared reading (Section Three)	3.0%	9.1%	9.1%	78.8%

Table 9

*Belief: Learning Centers (Section Three)*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Using learning centers to reinforce read-alouds and shared reading (Section Three)	3.0%	3.0%	18.2%	36.4%	39.4%

Findings of Question 1: Was there a difference in teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and centers before and after participation in the literacy Institute professional development training?

The research used Paired Samples Test that indicated no statistical significance found in any of the attitudes regarding the early literacy statements located in section three. Statement

number four; “I have had sufficient training to implement shared reading in my classroom” came close to a 95% confidence level. A significance of .071 was found which is very close to .05.

Upon reading the comments there was a teacher who wrote, “I haven’t been formally trained in balanced literacy. Attending workshops and team teaching have helped”. Another comment stated that there are discrepancies in literacy instruction between kindergarten classrooms. Some teachers are well trained and use the knowledge while others are not. The comments and concerns portion of the survey indicated that some teachers made the following changes in their classrooms as a result of attending the Literacy Institute:

- Incorporated many of the ideas presented such as reading the room, playing phonemic awareness games, providing literacy baskets, book nooks, and word walls. They scaffold instruction to meet the individual needs of students.
- Increased the number of centers in the room and decreased the number of students at each center at any given time. Rearranged and restructured the classroom to accommodate centers.

Although there wasn’t a statistical difference between the surveys, the comments section of the survey showed that teachers implemented what they learned at the training in their classrooms.

*Question 2: Was there a relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers’ belief’s toward shared reading, guided reading and learning centers?*

Teachers were asked to check the number of years teaching experience they had in section one, question six. These results were compared to section three, questions 1-10 to answer that specific question. Using cross tabulation of frequency counts and percentages the following



tables show the results of comparing years teaching experience and teacher attitudes regarding early literacy:

---

Table 10

*Belief: Teaching concepts of print using shared reading*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.83
06-10	4	4.75
11-15	6	4.33
16-20	7	4.86
21+ years	10	4.50
Total	33	4.64

---



---

Table 11

*Belief: Comfortable using shared reading*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.83
06-10	4	4.25
11-15	6	4.50
16-20	7	4.86
21+ years	10	4.60
Total	33	4.64

---

Table 12

*Belief: Shared reading is essential to reading instruction*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.67
06-10	4	4.25
11-15	6	4.50
16-20	7	4.86
21+ years	10	4.90
Total	33	4.70

Table 13

*Belief: Sufficient training to implement shared reading*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.67
06-10	4	4.50
11-15	6	4.50
16-20	7	4.86
21+ years	10	4.80
Total	33	4.70

Table 14

*Belief: Comfortable teaching guided reading*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.17
06-10	4	4.50
11-15	6	4.60
16-20	7	4.14
21+ years	10	3.70
Total	33	4.13

Table 15

*Belief: Guided reading is appropriate to use in kindergarten*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.00
06-10	4	4.00
11-15	6	3.33
16-20	7	4.00
21+ years	10	3.40
Total	33	3.70

Table 16

*Belief: Guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	3.83
06-10	4	4.25
11-15	6	2.17
16-20	7	3.43
21+ years	10	3.20
Total	33	3.30

Table 17

*Belief: Sufficient training to implement guided reading*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.17
06-10	4	4.25
11-15	6	3.50
16-20	7	4.57
21+ years	10	3.80
Total	33	4.03

Table 18

*Belief: Center activities should reinforce read-alouds and shared reading*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.50
06-10	4	3.75
11-15	6	3.50
16-20	7	4.29
21+ years	10	4.10
Total	33	4.06

Table 19

*Belief: Sufficient training to implement literacy centers*

Number of years teaching	Number of participants	Mean score
01-05	6	4.33
06-10	4	4.25
11-15	6	4.17
16-20	7	4.86
21+ years	10	4.20
Total	33	4.36

Using a One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Test with a Student-Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test, no statistical differences were found comparing the statements in section three regarding shared reading and learning centers with the years of teaching experience.

Significance was almost found when the number of years of teaching was compared with statement number seven, "Guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size". The .051 score is very close to the required .05 significance. Table 20 presents the posttest results using the ANOVA with the Student Newman Keuls test.

---

Table 20

*Guided Reading Can be Accommodated to Use with Any Class Size*

---

Group number	Years teaching	Number of teachers	Subset for Alpha = .05	
			1	2
3	11-15	6	2.50	
5	21+	10	3.40	3.40
1	01-05	6	3.67	3.67
2	06-10	4		4.00
4	16-20	7		4.00
Significance			.053	.596

---

Even though there was no other statistical significant results found comparing the years of teaching experience with the other nine statements, it was interesting to look at the mean scores on the post survey indicated by the tables. By applying the Likert scale ratings of 1 to 5; 1 being strongly disagree, 3 being neutral and 5 indicating strongly agree, there were some interesting scores regarding years teaching experience and the ten statements found in section three. The total mean scores shown on all the statements, except those regarding guided reading had a rating of over 4.0, which means, "agree". In general, the teachers, regardless of the number of years they have been teaching, agree with all the statements presented in the survey except for

those regarding guided reading. The statement “Guided reading is appropriate to use in kindergarten” had a total mean score of 3.70 and “Guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size” had a total mean score of 3.30. This may indicate that it is easier and more comfortable for teachers to find time for guided reading when there are fewer children in the classroom.

Findings of Question 2: Is there a relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers’ beliefs toward shared reading, guided reading and learning centers?

Given the information provided in the statistical analysis, the number of years of teaching experience does not appear to have a significant impact on teacher’s beliefs toward shared reading and learning centers. Tables 10 through 19 show the mean scores on the statements in section three. The beliefs dealing with shared reading; the comfort level, sufficient training and the need for using this strategy, scored strongly agree across all levels of teaching experience. However, in regard to guided reading there was significance found with the statement that guided reading could be accommodated to use with any class size. Group 3 is statistically different than groups 4 and 5 as is shown in table 20 above. Teachers with 11-15 years of experience differ in their beliefs than teachers with 6-10 years and 16-20 years experience.

By looking at the individual mean scores in tables 14, 15 and 16, teachers with 21 years or more years of teaching experience scored their comfort level with teaching guided reading, the appropriateness of using guided reading in kindergarten and having sufficient training to implement guided reading between neutral and agree. Teachers with 11 to 15 years experience rated the appropriateness of guided reading in kindergarten at 3.33 and having sufficient training at 3.50, which is closer to the neutral score. Perhaps these teachers believe that guided reading is not appropriate and would possibly change their beliefs if they were given more training.

Tables 18 and 19 dealt with literacy centers. Teachers across the board agreed that they have had sufficient training to implement literacy centers in their classrooms with mean scores ranging from 4.17 to 4.86. The belief that center activities should reinforce read-alouds and shared reading showed a slight variance. The mean scores for teachers with 6 to 15 years teaching experience were around 3.50 and the mean scores for the other groups were above 4.0. This could indicate that teachers in the 6 to 15 years experience feel that literacy centers do not necessarily have to reinforce a read-aloud or shared reading book but could be used to reinforce some other literacy skill or introduce a new skill.

*Question 3: Is there a difference in the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading and learning centers?*

The responses in section four, degree of implementation, statements 1-3 were compared using the pre and post surveys. The three statements were compared using the scores on a Likert scale. "I use shared reading in my classroom", "I use guided reading in my classroom" and "I use literacy centers in my classroom". There were no significant statistical differences between the August and January surveys found at the 95% confidence level. By using Paired Samples Test, an area that came close to the required statistical significance of .05 was section four, statement 1. "I use shared reading in my classroom" which had a significance of .083.

However, even though the question of years experience was not a part of the researchers original question, there was a statistical difference of .05 found using the Student-Newman-Keuls Test comparing the years of teaching experience with the question of using guided reading in the classroom. Teachers in group 3 differed significantly from those in groups 1 and 2. Teachers with 11-15 years teaching experience use guided reading in their classrooms sometimes



as compared to those with 1 to 10 years using them always. The following table illustrates these results.

Table 21

*Posttest years of teaching experience using guided reading*

Group number	Years teaching	Number of teachers	Subset for Alpha = .05	
			1	2
3	11-15	6	3.00	
5	21+	9	3.56	3.56
4	16-20	7	3.86	3.86
1	01-05	6		4.50
2	06-10	4		4.75
Significance			.266	.143

*Question 4. What reasons and concerns, if any, were given for not implementing the strategies presented at the Literacy Institute?*

The reasons given for not implementing the strategies presented at a Literacy Institute were addressed in section five under the comments and concerns section. The main ideas were condensed into five major concerns: time, parents, child development, class size and instruction.

☐ *Time:* The preparation for this style of teaching is crushing. Literacy was taking up too much time. Children were getting disruptive. I needed to add more time for free choice, art, games and read-alouds for my particular class. Can't seem to have enough time to fit everything in.

⊖ *Parents*: Complaining that we are expecting too much. We are pushing kids too much. Social skills and play need to be a strong focus.

⊖ *Child development*: Guided reading is not developmentally appropriate. Not all children are developmentally ready for independent work. Mastery is required in so many areas that there isn't a solid foundation on which to build.

⊖ *Large class size*: Frustrated trying to incorporate all the components presented at the institute. Interruptions and management of a large class doesn't foster the flow of teaching literacy in the manner presented.

*Instruction*: There are discrepancies in literacy instruction between kindergarten classrooms. Some teachers are well trained and use the knowledge others are not.

#### Findings of Question 4

The "comments and concerns section" of the survey addressed concerns expressed by NAEYC, Rog, and Routman and Holdaway. The NAEYC (1998) stated that there should be plenty of opportunities for the children to work in small groups for focused instruction such as in guided reading and in collaboration with other children in literacy centers. The teachers in this survey indicated that class size and the varying developmental levels of children prevented them from implementing guided reading in the manner presented at a Literacy Institute.

Rog (2001) mentioned the increased pressure on teachers to have children reading in kindergarten often meant limiting crucial activities such as playing, building with blocks, acting out stories and reading fiction and nonfiction aloud. This was a concern listed by some teachers and expressed by some parents to the teachers.

Routman (2003) believed that unless teachers reach into students' hearts, they have no entry into their minds. Holdaway (1979) believed that the strongest predictor of reading

achievement is the quality of student-teacher relations. There are strong indications that the teachers involved in this study care deeply for their students. Not only did they participate in the in-service training in the summer on their personal time but they also participated in this study to voice their opinions in the area of child development and early literacy.

#### *Summary of Chapter Four*

This chapter included demographic information along with an item analysis using the statistical data from the survey to answer the research questions. There were a variety of tables presented which broke down the information to help make the results easier to visualize. The results of this study indicate that there are many ways to teach early literacy to children. Since studies indicate that there is no “one best” method or program to teach reading, educators should be familiar with a variety of strategies that are available and learn how to make them work for their particular class.

## Chapter V: Discussion

Teachers' attitudes and opinions toward implementing a balanced literacy program at the kindergarten level are varied. Some teachers believe children are being pushed into academics too early, others believe children should be taught how to read at the earliest level possible. The emphasis on how to teach early literacy in kindergarten continues to evoke a variety of opinions and emotions in educators. School districts could use this study to examine how teachers respond to these changes, evaluate the effectiveness of their literacy training and determine what changes could be incorporated into the curriculum and classroom.

This chapter will include limitations of the study, conclusions of each of the research questions and finally implications for further study.

### *Limitations*

There are limitations in this study. The questions or statements on the survey instrument were not balanced. In section 3, attitudes regarding early literacy, four statements addressed shared reading, four questions addressed guided reading and only two addressed literacy centers.

The terminology "attitudes" and "beliefs" used in section three could have been confusing. The headline stated "Attitudes Regarding Early Literacy" and the directive statement read, "Please rate these statements on the scale of 1–5 regarding your beliefs toward teaching balanced literacy..."

### *Conclusions*

Question 1: Will there be a difference in teachers' attitudes toward shared reading, guided reading and centers before and after participation in the literacy Institute professional development training?

According to this study, no statistical differences were found after comparing the pre and post surveys regarding this question. Perhaps the Literacy Institute did not offer any new information that would cause teachers to alter or change their beliefs. Another reason could be that the teachers need more than the few hours of training that was provided at the Literacy Institute. Possible more in depth training over an extended period of time would produce a change in attitude.

Question 2: Is there a relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers' attitudes or beliefs toward shared reading, guided reading and learning centers?

There was a statistical difference found regarding one area of guided reading. This area was that guided reading could be accommodated to use with any class size. This study shows that teachers with eleven to fifteen years of experience differ significantly than teachers with either six to ten years or sixteen to twenty years experience in their belief that guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size. Perhaps the teachers with eleven to fifteen years teaching experience completed college courses that emphasized a different curriculum. Since the group is limited in size, these teachers may not accurately represent this group. Finally, there were no differences found among the various groups in shared reading and learning centers.

Question 3: Will there be a difference in the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading and learning centers?

There were no statistical differences in the degree to which teachers implement shared reading, guided reading and learning centers in their classrooms. A possible explanation could be that the teachers were already using guided reading and learning centers at a level they felt comfortable with and felt no changes were necessary. This could also mean that the teachers had already implemented all the Literacy Institute ideas from earlier training. The one area that came

close was the use of shared reading in the classroom. More teachers started using shared reading in their classrooms as a result of attending the Literacy Institute. This could be due to the fact that more resources became available during the period after the Literacy Institute.

Question 4: What reasons, if any, were given for not implementing the strategies presented at the Literacy Institute?

The five major reasons provided in the comment and concerns section were; time, parent input, child development, class size and instruction. Teachers are not given adequate time to prepare and carry out the strategies and there is not enough time in a day to implement these strategies without sacrificing the other required teaching curriculum. One must also remember that five and six year olds need time to socialize, play and have free choice time. Parents have expressed concerns about expecting too much too soon from their children in the area of reading. Not all kindergarten children are developmentally ready for independent work and many don't have a solid reading foundation on which to build. To effectively teach the manner presented at the Literacy Institute, smaller class sizes are necessary. Finally, additional instruction would be beneficial in order to become more comfortable with teaching these strategies.

In conclusion, perhaps the age and number of years teaching is not significant when it comes to teaching reading to kindergarten children. What appears to be important from the literature review is to continue to educate teachers on the most current research involving educating young children. The study indicates that teachers realize the importance of learning to read however, it must be done in a developmentally appropriate manner. Furthermore, the study concluded that adequate time during the day and small class sizes are essential to successfully implementing these strategies.

Educators have to always keep in mind the most important aspect of reading and that is the individual child. Every child is unique and learns in his or her own way. Teachers must be up to that challenge and districts must do everything they can to support the teachers. That should include providing the training, the materials, the smaller class size and the necessary resources. Teachers have to love what they are doing, instill a love of learning in their students and keep themselves abreast of the changes going on in education.

#### *Implications for Further Study*

This survey and analysis were distributed to just one districts' kindergarten teacher population. A larger sampling would prove more beneficial since it would reduce statistical error, provide greater teacher input and potentially increase teacher diversity.

The demographics of the groups were almost identical. The teachers were all fulltime, female Caucasians. A more diverse sampling regarding gender and race could be made if the research were conducted in an area that hired more male teachers in the early childhood field and if more teachers were of a different race.

Another area to possibly explore is to compare the degree of education the teachers have with the statements to see if there is significance. Another avenue to explore could be to see how many teachers are continuing their education in the field of early reading/literacy.

## References

- Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.
- Carlton, M., & Winsler, A. (1999). Beginning school ready to learn parental involvement and effective educational programs. *School Psychology Review*, 28(3), 335-337.
- CIERA. (1998). *Improving the Reading Achievement of America's Children*. University of Michigan School of Education: Author.
- Cunningham, P., & Allington, R. (1997) *Classrooms that work: They can all read and write*. New York: Harper.
- Diller, D. (2003). *Literacy work stations. Making centers work*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse
- Ehri, L. C., Nunes, S. R., Willows, D. M., Schuster, B. V., Yaghoub, Z., & Shanahan, T. (2001, July/August/September). The national reading panel report. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36 (3), 250-287.
- Green Bay Area Public Schools. (2003-004). *Education connections*. Green Bay, WI: Author.
- Hoffman, J., Roser, N., & Battle, J. (1993). From the modal to a model. *The Reading Teacher*, 46, 496-503.
- Holdaway, D. (1979). *Foundations of literacy*. New York: Scholastic.
- Honig, B. (1996). *Teaching our children to read*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Incorporated.
- International Reading Association and National Association for the Education of Young Children (1998). Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children. *The Reading Teacher*, 52, 193-216.
- Jensen, E. (1998). *Teaching with the brain in mind*. Alexandria, VA:



- Leslie, L., & Allen, A. (1999, October/November/December). Factors that predict success in an early literacy intervention project. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 34(4), 404-424.
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (1997). *Developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Reading Panel. (2000, December). Part 1: Phonemic awareness instruction: Report. In *Report of the National Reading Panel* (pp.2-9-2-52). Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Resources.
- Rog, L. (2001). *Early literacy instruction in kindergarten*. Newark, DE: The International Reading Association, Inc.
- Routman, R. (2003). *Reading essentials*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Snow, C., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington DC: National Academy Press.
- Stewart, M. (2004). Early literacy instruction in the climate of no child left behind. *The Reading Teacher*, 57, 732-741.
- Swartz, S., Shook, R., Klein, A., Moon, C., Bunnell, K., Belt, M., et al. (2003). *Guided reading & literacy centers*. Carlsbad, CA: Dominic Press, Inc.
- Taylor, B. M., Frye, B., Short, R., & Shearer, B. (1992). Classroom teachers prevent reading failure among low-achieving first grade students. *The Reading Teacher*, 45, 592-598.
- Trelease, J. (n. d.). *Reading aloud – Are students ever too old?* Retrieved July 3, 2004 from [http://www.education-world.com/a\\_curr/curr081/shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr081/shtml)
- West, J., & Denton, K. (2002). *Children's reading and mathematics achievement in kindergarten and first grade*. NCES 2002-125 Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics.

Wood, D. (1988). *How children think and learn*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Appendix A: Pre Survey

## Research Questionnaire

### KINDERGARTEN LITERACY SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to make a comparison between kindergarten teachers' attitudes before and after in-service training. The results will be used to complete a Master's Thesis paper. Your responses will be coded in order to compare your responses before and after participation in the in-service training. A follow-up survey will be sent to you in January 2005. Please understand that by returning this survey and signing the attached sheet you are giving informed consent and agreeing to allow your responses to be used in completing the thesis paper. You have the right to withdraw your participation at any time. Your identity will be kept confidential. Please return the survey using the provided stamped addressed envelopes before August 8, 2004.

#### SECTION ONE GENERAL INFORMATION

Please tell me about yourself by checking the appropriate boxes.

1. Gender:     male             female
  
2. Your Age:
 

<input type="checkbox"/> 20-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 41-50	
<input type="checkbox"/> 31-40	<input type="checkbox"/> over 51	
  
3. Race:
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-racial	Please list _____
  
4. How much formal education do you have?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's	<input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Area(s) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's + Graduate Credits	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate Degree	
  
5. Employment:
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Student Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Time Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time Teacher
------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------
  
6. Years of teaching experience:
 

<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 years	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 20 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 years	

#### SECTION TWO EDUCATION

Please rate these statements regarding familiarity with literacy on a scale of 1-4. If you are not familiar at all circle the 1, if you are very familiar circle the 4.

	Not familiar			Very familiar
1. Are you familiar with shared reading instruction?	1	2	3	4
2. Are you familiar with guided reading instruction?	1	2	3	4
3. Are you familiar with literacy centers?	1	2	3	4

## Research Questionnaire

### SECTION THREE ATTITUDES REGARDING EARLY LITERACY

Please rate these statements on the scale of 1-5 regarding your beliefs toward teaching balanced literacy in a kindergarten classroom. If you strongly disagree with the statement, circle the 1. If you strongly agree with the statement, circle the 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. Teaching concepts of print should be done in kindergarten using shared reading	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am comfortable using shared reading in my classroom	1	2	3	4	5
3. Shared reading is essential to reading instruction in kindergarten.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have had sufficient training to implement shared reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am comfortable teaching guided reading in my classroom	1	2	3	4	5
6. Guided reading is appropriate to use in kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5
7. Guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have had sufficient training to implement guided reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Center activities should reinforce read-alouds and shared reading instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have had sufficient training to implement literacy centers in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5

### SECTION FOUR DEGREE OF IMPLEMENTATION

This section is to determine the degree to which you currently implement these strategies in your classroom. Please rate these areas on a scale of 1-5.

	1	2	3	4	5
	never	seldom	sometimes	almost always	always
1. I use shared reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I use guided reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I use literacy centers in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5

## Research Questionnaire

### SECTION FIVE: COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

This area gives you the opportunity to share what worked and what didn't work in learning about literacy.

List the sessions, if any, that you will be attending during the 2004 Literacy Institute.

List or explain ways in which you incorporate Balanced Literacy Ideas and Centers in your classroom.

Any additional comments or concerns you have concerning literacy at the kindergarten level. (Use the back of this paper if necessary).

Thank you for sharing your valuable time. A follow-up survey will be mailed to you in January 2005. A copy of the results will be sent to anyone who is interested in the spring of 2005 by contacting me at [dmolzahn@new.rr.com](mailto:dmolzahn@new.rr.com)

-----

I understand that by returning the kindergarten literacy survey and signing this paper I am giving my informed consent and agreeing to allow my responses to be used in completing a thesis paper. I understand that my identity will be kept confidential, this paper will be kept in a secure place separate from the completed survey and that I have the right to withdraw my participation at any time.

---

Signature

Date

Appendix B: Post Survey





## Research Questionnaire

### SECTION THREE ATTITUDES REGARDING EARLY LITERACY

Please rate these statements on the scale of 1-5 regarding your beliefs toward teaching balanced literacy in a kindergarten classroom. If you strongly disagree with the statement, circle the 1. If you strongly agree with the statement, circle the 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree
1. Teaching concepts of print should be done in kindergarten using shared reading	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am comfortable using shared reading in my classroom	1	2	3	4	5
3. Shared reading is essential to reading instruction in kindergarten.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have had sufficient training to implement shared reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am comfortable teaching guided reading in my classroom	1	2	3	4	5
6. Guided reading is appropriate to use in kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5
7. Guided reading can be accommodated to use with any class size.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have had sufficient training to implement guided reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Center activities should reinforce read-alouds and shared reading instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have had sufficient training to implement literacy centers in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5

### SECTION FOUR DEGREE OF IMPLEMENTATION

This section is to determine the degree to which you currently implement these strategies in your classroom. Please rate these areas on a scale of 1-5.

	1	2	3	4	5
	never	seldom	sometimes	almost always	always
1. I use shared reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I use guided reading in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I use literacy centers in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5

## Research Questionnaire

### SECTION FIVE: COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

This area gives you the opportunity to share what worked and what didn't work in learning about literacy.

List or explain changes that you have incorporated into your classroom as a result of attending the 2004 Literacy Institute training on Balanced Literacy Ideas and Centers.

Provide any new comments you have concerning literacy at the kindergarten level. (Use the back of this paper if necessary).

Thank you for sharing your valuable time. A copy of the results will be sent to anyone who is interested in the spring of 2005 by contacting me at [dmolzahn@new.rr.com](mailto:dmolzahn@new.rr.com)

-----

I understand that by returning the kindergarten literacy survey and signing this paper I am giving my informed consent and agreeing to allow my responses to be used in completing a thesis paper. I understand that my identity will be kept confidential, this paper will be kept in a secure place separate from the completed survey and that I have the right to withdraw my participation at any time.

---

Signature

Date