

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RUNNING RECORDS AND STANDARDIZED  
ASSESSMENTS

Approved January 2, 2013 by Dr. Karen Stinson

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RUNNING RECORDS AND STANDARDIZED  
ASSESSMENTS

---

A Seminar Research Paper

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

University of Wisconsin-Platteville

---

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirement for the Degree

Master of Science

Education

---

By:

Rebecca Vacha

2012

## ABSTRACT

This study involved 9, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who participated in both the Fountas and Pinnell Running Record and the Scholastic Reading Inventory. The results of these two assessments did not correlate, as the Scholastic Reading Inventory score was much lower. A six week intervention was used to determine if teaching context clues, prefixes, suffixes, root words, and figurative language would aid in the growth of Scholastic Reading Inventory scores.

Pre- and posttest data indicated that the students who participated in the six week intervention improved their reading scores on the Fountas and Pinnell Running Record and the Scholastic Reading Inventory. In conclusion, intervention strategies would be helpful in supporting the needs of students completing the Scholastic Reading Inventory.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL PAGE.....	1
TITLE PAGE.....	2
ABSTRACT.....	3
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	5
a. Overview	
b. Statement of Problem	
c. Purpose of the Research	
d. Significance of the Problem	
e. Delimitations of the Research	
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	9
III. METHODOLOGY.....	17
IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	23
V. SUMMARY.....	27
a. Summary	
b. Research Questions	
c. Conclusions	
d. Recommendations	
VI. REFERENCES.....	31

## Introduction

Testing is a part of today's curriculum. Students are tested to determine individual performance, teacher performance, school performance, district performance, state performance, and even national performance. It is important that each student be tested to determine their level of achievement and growth, but what about the students who have difficulty with testing? For example, students who complete the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) may score at the basic level, but when completing the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System score proficiently for their grade level. How is it determined if these students really need interventions on their reading skills? Both tests vary significantly, but are ultimately supposed to assess the same skills. Below is a short definition of each assessment:

The SRI is a universal screener and standardized assessment. This assessment is an 'objective, research-based assessment of reading comprehension skills' (SRI; Scholastic, Inc. 1999). The SRI measures students using a computer program that adjusts to the students reading abilities. The scores are measured in lexiles which estimate the reading ability and text difficulty. A score is then calculated that allows the educators to determine the comprehension level for each student and then to uncover any curriculum needs based on the overall results (Scholastic, 2009.).

The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System; (2008) includes student passages and teacher recording forms at 26 different reading levels. Students read a passage while the teacher times the student's reading rate and records any errors. The record gives the educator the opportunity to learn about the reader including: accuracy, self-correction rate, comprehension score, and fluency rate. The comprehension component is set up as a

conversation piece between the teacher and the student. It provides information about what the student understands within, beyond, and about the text (Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, 2008).

Ultimately the goal is to meet the needs of the students in reading and understanding passages, particularly in assessments. What are those needs? How can those needs be met? Small group interventions may be the answer. Teaching students how to 'read' a test could be what aids them in their testing career.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study is designed to determine if small group interventions focusing on specific comprehension skills could create higher SRI scores. The problem to be addressed is "Why don't SRI and Fountas and Pinnell Running Record scores correlate?" and "Why do students who take the SRI score significantly lower on that assessment than they do on the Fountas and Pinnell Running Record?"

This study is needed to determine which students need remedial reading compared to students who need an intervention on specific test taking skills. There is no specific conclusion determining whether or not teaching specific reading skills will have an effect on standardized testing results.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This project will teach the following reading comprehension skills in small group intervention: context clues, figurative language, topic sentences, prefix, suffix, and root words. The student's will be assessed using Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment's Running Record (Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, 2008), and the SRI. At the end of the six week period, students will meet with the teacher three days a week, for half an hour interventions. The two scores will then be compared to note the differences between the SRI assessment and the Fountas and Pinnell Running Record.

Hypothesis: Students who receive a small group intervention that focuses on specific comprehension skills will experience higher SRI and Fountas and Pinnell Running Record scores.

Research Questions:

- Will an intensive six week intervention increase students independent reading skills?
- Will the intensive six week intervention increase standardize test taking skills for the SRI?
- Why do the student's Fountas and Pinnell and SRI scores vary significantly and what factors cause the difference in these scores?

### **Significance of the Study**

Students are required to take an abundance of tests throughout their academic career. The results from this study are expected to determine if teaching-explicit reading strategies to a targeted group of students will increase the student's independent reading levels and assessment scores.

### **Study Delimitations**

The outcome of this study was delimited in the following ways:

- This study was limited to students enrolled in Cambridge Elementary School in the remedial reading program in the 2011-2012 school year;
- Due to time constraints it was a six-week intervention;
- The SRI was completed with their classroom teacher at a time that met the student and teacher's needs;
- Running Records were completed on different days due to time constraints;
- One student did not receive beginning of the year assessments, because he was not yet in the district;
- Data collection was planned for late Spring 2012 to allow the opportunity to see change between scores with and without interventions.



## Methodology

In this study nine, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from a school in rural South-Central Wisconsin, were given pre- and posttests from Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (2008) and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (2006). These test scores did not correlate. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System determined that the students involved in the study were proficient at their respective grade levels, but the Scholastic Reading Inventory indicated that the students were at only the basic reading level, for their grade level.

A six-week intervention was created to determine if intensive, explicit teaching could positively impact student's independent reading skills. The intervention included the study of context clues, figurative language, topic sentences, prefix, suffix, and root words. The students were progress monitored by using Cloze assessments and 3 Minute Reading Assessments (Rasinski, Padak, 2005).

CHAPTER TWO  
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Testing is a priority in the world of teaching. The results are used to compare students, measure the proficiency of the teacher, and determine the progress of the school. Schools also use testing as a universal screener to determine whether or not students need specific interventions. Response to Intervention (RTI) models use universal screening methods to determine which students need interventions and which intervention strategies are most valuable (Ritchey, Silverman, Montanaro, Speece, Schatschneider, 2012). Interventions need to be effective and appropriate so that students can improve as readers and test takers. Preparing students to take a test is also an important intervention.

In the following literature review, several studies will be discussed determining best practice for intervention strategies. The Scholastic Reading Inventory and Fountas and Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment System will also be reviewed so that they are clearly described.

### **Intervention Strategies**

Upper elementary students tend to benefit from intervention strategies that include vocabulary and comprehension instruction particularly in relation to teaching expository text which is more difficult than fictional material. Determining what type of comprehension strategies best suit the student's needs is difficult because there are many factors that can hinder comprehension. These factors include: decoding, fluency, motivation, background knowledge and the inability to monitor reading. Students, who struggle in reading at this level, may benefit from multiple intervention strategies. When creating intervention methods for students it should be filled with examples that include polysyllabic words and vocabulary instruction. To determine whether or not the intervention was successful the amount of growth over time is measured. (Ritchey, Silverman, Montanaro, Speece, Schatschneider, 2012)

According to the study completed by Ritchey, Silverman, Montanaro, Speece, and Schatschneider (2012), when giving interventions to upper elementary students who are struggling readers, the students in the intervention group scored higher on application of comprehension strategies and on science knowledge. Word level skills, fluency, and broader measures of comprehension showed no significant difference in the intervention. In conclusion, short-term multicomponent reading interventions were effective in some areas for upper elementary students.

In another study Casey, Robertson, Williamson, Serio, and Elswick (2011) determined that interventions should be completed early in a student's academic career and they should be comparable with the student's needs. The assessments should be given before an intervention begins, as well as, during the intervention to monitor progress and to determine if the intervention is working. If the intervention is not successful another intervention needs to be completed to meet the needs of the students. This information was then used to create an intervention for a student who was struggling with reading, which included repeated readings and listening passage preview (LPP). Repeated readings give the student the opportunity to read the text multiple times to gain a better understanding. LPP involves the student listening to the text being read aloud multiple times while following along with their finger. The student in the study improved her reading skills. Thus indicating that using a short-term intervention can lead to a successful outcome (Casey, Robertson, Williamson, Serio, Elswick, 2011).

Hale, Hawkins, Sheeley, Reynolds, Jenkins, Schmitt, and Martin (2011) also completed a study using interventions. They compared whether or not reading silently or reading aloud affected comprehension. In this study they used several measures to progress monitor reading

comprehension. Their first assessment was a Maze reading passage that they completed aloud and silently. In a Maze reading passage the introductory sentence is provided and the sentences that follow have every seventh word removed. The student then chooses between three words to determine the correct word. The students were also assessed on how many words they could correctly read in one minute. A third assessment was completed as a norm-referenced test that measures basic achievement. After completing the assessments the studies showed that it made no impact on reading comprehension when the students read the texts aloud or silently (Hale, Hawkins, Sheeley, Reynolds, Jenkins, Schmitt, Martin, 2010).

A fourth study used a program created called Reading Success Level A. This program is used to teach and review comprehension concepts. Each concept is taught explicitly and systematically. The teachers modeled these strategies and performed scaffolded practice so that the students could become successful with these ideas. The students then independently apply the strategies to review proficiency of the strategy. The lessons taught in the program were: anaphora and classification, main idea, inference and literal, fact and opinion, author's purpose, paraphrase, word meanings, figurative language, and bonus terminology. Students were tested before and after the intervention using the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and the number of words they could read correctly per minute (WCPM). During the study the students were given quizzes within the Reading Success Level A program. These quizzes were multiple choice and short answer. They measured the student's skill level after completing 20 lessons. The students made significant gains in their reading improvement by being taught these explicit reading skills (Reed, Marchand-Martella, Martella, Kolts, 2007).

## Measurement Instruments

Multiple instruments are used to measure reading scores. Each instrument provides different information. Described below are two such instruments that are used in many school districts in the United States.

### Scholastic Reading Inventory

The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). (Scholastic 2006) is, “a research-based, computer adaptive reading comprehension assessment.” This test measures students according to their Lexile level. Lexiles measure text difficulty and a student’s ability to read and understand the material. That score is then matched to appropriate texts and used to follow students reading skills over time. The results are then printed in easy to read reports. When determining a student’s Lexile score reading comprehension is measured in an interval scale. The student’s score is then measured to the level they can read with ‘moderate success’ or a 75% comprehension score. Lexiles do not compare themselves to grade levels. A “Lexile Map” is provided as a guide for texts that are distinctive of a specific grade level. The map below shows how student’s test scores relate to the text they should be reading. The reader measures determine the average level for students in that grade level. The text measures the average level of text students are reading at that specific grade level.

Table 1		
<i>Lexile Map</i>		
Grade	Reader Measures (Interquartile Range, Mid-Year)	Text Measures (from the Lexile Map)
1	Up to 300 L	200L to 400L
2	140L to 500L	300L to 500L
3	330L to 700L	500L to 700L
4	445L to 810L	650L to 850L
5	565L to 910L	750L to 950L
6	665L to 1000L	850L to 1050L
7	735L to 1065L	950L to 1075L
8	805L to 1100L	1000L to 1100L
9	855L to 1165L	1050L to 1150L
10	905L to 1195L	1100L to 1200L
11-12	940L to 1210L	1100L to 1300L
(Scholastic, 2006)		

A student's Lexile level is not completely accurate; it only serves as a medial point. The actual score could vary between 50 Lexiles above and 100 Lexiles below. When choosing appropriate texts for students multiple factors should be included: Student interest, age appropriateness, quality of text, text support (illustrations, captions, sidebars, etc.). Each attribute needs to be calculated to determine the correct book for the student (Scholastic, 2006).

### **Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System**

In addition to a universal screener most school districts also use an additional assessment tool. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System is an example of such a tool. It is a one-on-one assessment that determines independent reading levels as well as instructional reading levels. The kit includes 28 leveled texts that were written for the sole purpose of the assessment. Each text has a recording form to aid in the monitoring process for each assessment. The recording form guides the assessor in determining the reader's accuracy, self-corrections, comprehension, and fluency levels. The student and assessor also complete a

Comprehension Conversation. This assessment helps the assessor determine if the reader understands the material within the text, beyond the text, and about the text. If the assessor chooses, other assessments can be found in the Benchmark Assessment Guide. These assessments can assist in identifying the student's needs. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment also includes several charts that correlate the reading scores to their appropriate grade levels (Fountas and Pinnell, 2009).

Below you will see a grade level correlation chart:

Table 2					
<i>Instructional Level Expectations for Reading</i>					
Grade	Beginning of the Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Assessment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Assessment	End of Year	Key
K	Below A	A+	B+	C+	Exceeds Expectations
		A	B	C	Meets Expectations
		Below A	Below A	A	Approaches Expectations-Needs Short Term Intervention
				Below A	Does Not Meet Expectations-Needs Intensive Intervention
1	D+	F+	H+	J+	
	C	E	G	I	
	B	D	F	H	
	Below B	Below D	Below F	Below H	
2	J+	K+	M+	N+	
	I	J	L	M	
	H	I	K	L	
	Below H	Below I	Below K	Below L	
3	N+	O+	P+	Q+	
	M	N	O	P	
	L	M	N	O	
	Below O	Below M	Below N	Below O	
4	Q+	R+	S+	T+	
	P	Q	R	S	
	O	P	Q	R	
	Below O	Below P	Below Q	Below R	
5	T+	U+	V+	W+	
	S	T	U	V	
	R	S	T	U	
	Below R	Below S	Below T	Below U	

(Fountas and Pinnell, 2009)



### **Summary**

In conclusion by researching these studies it would seem that using multiple intervention strategies can be an effective way to reach the needs of the students. The students also benefit from explicit instruction to specific strategies that will aid in their reading comprehension growth. These studies also proved that it would most helpful if a pretest and posttest were given to measure progress. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System and Scholastic Reading Inventory are two assessments that can accurately measure this information. The students were also progress monitored with assessments that measured if the intervention was successful. This is an important part of the assessment process to determine if the intervention is effectively measuring the student's growth in reading skills (Fountas and Pinnell, 2009).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

## **The Study**

Nine students in fourth and fifth grade, whom were in a remedial reading program, were included in this study. The students included six, fourth grade students (2 boys and 4 girls) and three fifth grade students (1 boy and 2 girls). The students all attended the Cambridge Elementary School in Cambridge, Wisconsin. The students who participated in the study had significant score discrepancies between their Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Fountas and Pinnell Running Records scores. All of the students who participated had lower SRI scores than Fountas and Pinnell Running Record scores. The students were to complete a six week intervention. The intervention may assist in the growth of SRI scores. The intervention would include the study of context clues, figurative language, vocabulary building, and main idea.

## **Lesson Overview**

### **Week One**

The first week began with pretesting the students involved in the study. Each of the 11 students were given an SRI and a Running Record assessment. These scores were then recorded so that they can later be compared to the posttest results.

### **Week Two**

The second week began with a Cloze assessment. A cloze assessment is a reading assessment that begins with an introductory sentence, but then every fifth word is deleted. The students then have to fill in the blanks with the words they determined were the best fit. The first cloze assessment was completed together. The students were asked to answer these questions

before beginning the assessment: “How can we find out what the missing words are? What can we do if the word doesn’t make sense?”

The assessment was completed as a group. This gave the students the opportunity to understand what was going to be tested and to learn how to use context clues to find the meaning of words within a text.

During week two the students were also exposed to three new vocabulary words. The words were written on the whiteboard and the students were to complete the following chart to define the new vocabulary word (Gallagher, 2004).

Predicted Meaning		
Sentence	What I Think it Means	What it Really Means
I went to the annual meeting.	New	Yearly-once a year
May has to concentrate very hard when everyone is talking.	Try	Think/Focus
I hear the frogs at dusk.	Night	Sunset, almost night

The third step was to review prefixes and suffixes. For this activity the Prefixes and Suffixes-30-15-10 List from- *Deeper Reading* by Kelly Gallagher was used to build new vocabulary. The students created note cards with each prefix/root word/suffix meaning and example. These notecards will be used to aid the students in memorizing the new vocabulary words.

### **Week 3**

Week three continued on much like week two. Students continued building vocabulary by completing the sentence chart and practicing prefix/root word/suffix meanings. In addition

the students also completed a 3 Minute Reading Assessment from the book *3 Minute Reading Assessments* by Timothy Rasinski and Nancy Padak (2005). This assessment helped to measure comprehension. The students had to read a passage and retell the main idea of the passage.

This week's lessons also included explicit teaching of context clues. The concept was introduced, modeled, defined, examples were given, and the students were given independent practice to learn about context clues.

#### **Week 4**

Week four began with another cloze assessment, vocabulary building activities, and learning about figurative language. Once again the concept was introduced, modeled, the different elements were defined, and then the students were given independent practice to master the skill.

#### **Week 5**

Week five began with another 3 Minute Reading Assessment (2005), vocabulary building activities, learning about topic sentences and finding the main idea. The students were asked to compare the subject of an article to the main idea of an article. The text for this intervention came from *Reading Comprehension: Success in 20 Minutes a Day* (2009). The students also reviewed context clues.

#### **Week 6**

Week six began with another Cloze Assessment, followed by vocabulary building activities. The lessons from the previous week were then reviewed to determine if the students understood the lessons.

## Week 7

Week seven was the final week of the intervention. This week was reserved for posttest assessments.

### Assessments

#### Reliability & Validity

The Scholastic Reading Inventory and Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems are both measured and tested for their reliability and validity and have both been proven successful.

#### Fountas and Pinnell vs. SRI

Fountas and Pinnell and the SRI are two very different assessments, as you have read in the information above. In the chart below you will see how different the two assessments are:

Scholastic Reading Inventory	Fountas and Pinnell Running Record
Time: varies depending on students answers; 15-45 minutes	Time: approximately 15 minutes per student
Choice of 15 different Reading Topics	Two text choices.
No pretest required.	Pretests are administered to determine the correct reading level for each student.
Doesn't activate prior knowledge or give a purpose for reading.	Before reading the teacher reads a short statement about what they are reading and what they are reading to find out.
Independently completed on the computer.	Completed one-on-one with a teacher.
Computer format	Book format
Gives information about reading comprehension.	Gives information about reading comprehension, decoding, using context clues, fluency, and self-monitoring.
Universal Screener	
Lexile Level	Guided Reading Level
Provides a list of books at their ability level, but does not meet their interests.	Provides a level, but teachers have to find books at that level and for their interest.

Scholastic has compiled a correlation chart to compare the two assessments and their corresponding grade level measurements:

Table 1		
<i>Reading Level Correlations</i>		
Grade Level	Guided Reading Level	Lexiles
Kindergarten	A - C	
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	D - J	200 - 400
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	J - N	300 - 600
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	L - Q	500 - 800
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	O - T	600 - 900
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	R - W	700 - 1000

### Summary

In summary this intervention may support the improvement of SRI scores. The SRI and Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System are different types of assessments, but both measure the same information and are reliable and valid.

CHAPTER FOUR  
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA



### **Pretest Results**

After completing the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System it was determined that two students were approaching their grade level expectations, one student met grade level expectations, and the remaining six students exceeded grade level expectations. After completing the SRI seven students were at the basic level for their grade level and two students were at the proficient level for their grade level.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Progress monitoring began with a cloze assessment. The first cloze assessment had an average score of 17 with a possible score of 46 points or 37%. The second cloze assessment had an average score of 11.5 with a possible score of 23 or 50%. This assessment showed improvement for most students. The second progress monitoring tool used was a short text with a comprehension assessment. The students were scored by having limited comprehension, satisfactory comprehension, or excellent comprehension. The first assessment revealed that eight of the nine students assessed had satisfactory comprehension while one student out of nine, had limited comprehension. The second comprehension assessment revealed that six out of the nine students, had satisfactory comprehension, two out of the nine students had excellent comprehension, and one student was not tested due to absenteeism.

### **Posttest Results**

After completing the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System it determined that two students were approaching grade level expectations, one student met grade level expectations, and six students exceeded grade level expectations. Two out of nine students changed their Fountas and Pinnell scores significantly. The first student improved from meeting

grade level expectations (Level Q) to approaching grade level expectations (Level R) and the second student made a gain from not meeting grade level expectations (Level N) to approaching grade level expectations (Level R). Both students made gains, the first, however, did not grow at the average reading rate. The second student gained five reading levels in the short-term intervention, this was an exceptional gain. The remaining seven students grew at a normal reading rate for Fountas and Pinnell expectations and all grew at a minimum of one Fountas and Pinnell Level.

The SRI results showed that seven students were at the basic level for their grade and two students were proficient for their grade level. One student regressed in their reading progress on the SRI, going from a Lexile of 684 to 627 a loss of 57 Lexiles and one student gaining 149 Lexiles going from a Lexile of 288 to 437. When omitting these outliers the average growth of Lexile points was 47. An average student grows from 50 to 100 Lexiles per year; this showed a positive result for student growth after completing the six week intervention.

### **Research Questions**

Research Question #1: Will an intensive six week intervention increase student's independent reading skills?

The students' reading skills increased. As noted above both their Fountas and Pinnell Running Record Score and their SRI scores increased. Every student made improvements in this area. The students read more accurately and were able to give additional information when answering the comprehension question. Many of the students made connections beyond the text that aided in their comprehension score. This will aide in their independent reading skills because it shows that they can more easily comprehend and understand the material they are

reading. They are making connections beyond the text and are reading at a much higher independent reading level.

Research Question #2: Will the intensive six week intervention increase standardized test taking skills for the SRI?

The six week intensive intervention was successful for most of the students who took the SRI. One student regressed, but eight students found the intervention to be successful and they made gains. This would indicate that the students are better equipped to read and understand text within a standardized assessment.

Research Question #3: Why do student's scores for the Fountas and Pinnell and SRI scores vary significantly and what factors can affect these scores?

The tests are dramatically different. They are administered differently and are given on different mediums; the first in a book format and the second is on the computer. The Fountas and Pinnell Running Record is an assessment that takes approximately 15 minutes, while the SRI takes longer depending on the student's ability and effort. Before beginning the Fountas and Pinnell Running Record the teacher reads a short statement about their reading, while the SRI does not activate any prior knowledge or give a purpose for reading. These two things could greatly affect the way a student performs on the assessments.

CHAPTER FIVE  
SUMMARY

## **Summary**

While researching this topic it became evident that students needed to be taught specific reading strategies in small groups to help them succeed as readers. Small group interventions were ideal to ensuring that each student understood the new material. Guided practice gave the students the opportunity to preview the strategies, before mastery. Short-term multi-component reading interventions were administered to the students. These interventions were taught clearly and thoroughly. This type of intervention aided in the student's ability to learn multiple new strategies in a short amount of time. In turn, it led to higher Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) scores.

In order to reach these higher scores the students were explicitly taught context clues, figurative language, vocabulary building, and main idea strategies. These strategies were to aid in their ability to read higher level text. The lessons were taught to students who were struggling with SRI, but had significantly different scores on the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. The scores showed that the intervention was successful and the majority of the students made significant gains in six weeks.

## **Recommendations**

When completing this study it was found that there were some areas that could use improvement. These areas were noticed after completing the study and deciding what would increase the validity.

## **Limitations**

- One student did not have complete fidelity in the study due to other school expectations.

- Some students had difficulty staying on task, due to the school year ending.
- Teachers administered the SRI at different times on different days.

### **Changes**

If this study were to be re-created selecting a time frame at the beginning or mid-year would be ideal due to the constraints at the end of the school year. Ensuring that each student would be available for interventions would also aid in the validity of the study. The students gained more knowledge from learning how to use context clues than studying prefixes, root words, and suffixes. Reassessing the students at a later date would prove beneficial to determine if the intervention was truly successful.

### **Research Questions**

Research Question #1: Will an intensive six-week intervention increase student's independent reading skills?

Yes, the students Fountas and Pinnell Running Record scores increased, which is used to determine independent reading levels (Fountas and Pinnell, 2009). All of the students made progress in this area. The students read at a higher reading level and answered more comprehension questions at that higher reading level. The intervention was successful for these students.

Research Question #2: Will the intensive six week intervention increase standardize test taking skills for the SRI?

Yes, only one student did not make significant gains after completing the SRI. This could be attributed to many factors. The student may have been ill, may have had a situation outside of school attributing to test taking ability, or may not have put the expected amount of effort into taking the assessment, among other things. The majority of the students involved in

the intervention made significant gains. Each student throughout the school who made significant gains of 100 lexile points or more was honored at an end of the year assembly. Out of the nine students eight of the students received this certificate. This intervention aided in their success level.

Research Question #3: Why do student's scores for the Fountas and Pinnell and SRI scores vary significantly and what factors can affect these scores?

Student's scores vary due to the differences in the tests. The Fountas and Pinnell is a test that is administered in a one-on-one setting while using a text, the text has some pictures to aid in the comprehension process, and the students are read a short statement by the teacher about what they are about to read. The SRI is much different it is administered to a group of students, where they take the assessment on a computer. They have no picture clues and are not given a statement about the information they are about to read. These things will always affect the results of the assessments, but should not show such an extreme difference. The intervention proved that some students need to be taught specific test taking and reading strategies to aid in their reading growth.

### **Conclusion**

This study was successful. The students who were involved in the study had not only higher scores, but also had much more confidence in their reading ability. This intervention worked well and it is something that can be implemented easily and quickly to aid students when preparing for other standardized testing situations.

CHAPTER SIX

REFERENCES



## REFERENCES

- Casey, L., Robertson, J., Williamson, R., Serio, C., & Elswick, S. (2011). Spending instructional time wisely: Using brief intervention probes to determine the most effective reading fluency strategy. *Canadian Journal of Education, 34*(3), 33-46.
- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (2008). *Assessment Guide*. Heinemann. Portsmouth, N.H.
- Gallagher, Kelly. (2004). *Deeper Reading*. Portland, ME. Stenhouse Publishers.
- Hale, A. D., Hawkins, R. O., Sheeley, W., Reynolds, J. R., Jenkins, S., Schmitt, A. J., Martin, D. A., (2011). An investigation of silent versus aloud reading comprehension of elementary students using maze assessment procedures. *Psychology in the Schools, 48*(1), 4-13.
- Rasinski, T., & Padak, N. (2005). *3 Minute Reading Assessments: Word Recognition, Fluency, and Comprehension*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Reading Comprehension: Success in 20 Minutes a Day. (2009). New York, NY: Learning Express, LLC. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)
- Reed, J. M., Marchand-Martella, N. E., Martella, R., Kolts, R. L. (2007). Assessing the Effects of the Reading Success Level A Program with Fourth-grade Students at a Title I Elementary School. *Education and Treatment of Children, 30* (1), 45-68.
- Ritchey, K. D., Silverman, R. D., Montanaro, E. A., Speece, D. L., & Schatschneider, C. (2012). Effects of a tier 2 supplemental reading intervention for at-risk fourth-grade students. *Exceptional Children, 78*(3), 318-334.

Scholastic. (2006). *Lexiles: A System for Measuring Reader Ability and Text Difficulty. A Guide for Educators. Scholastic Inc.*

Scholastic. (2007). *Scholastic Reading Inventory: Technical Guide. Scholastic Inc.*

Scholastic. (2009). *Scholastic Reading Inventory: Program Overview. Scholastic Inc.*