EXPLORING LITERACY-BASED WORKSHOPS FOR FIRST GRADE PARENTS TO IMPROVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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EXPLORING LITERACY-BASED WORKSHOPS FOR FIRST GRADE PARENTS TO IMPROVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

A Project

by

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Abstract

EXPLORING LITERACY-BASED WORKSHOPS FOR FIRST GRADE PARENTS TO IMPROVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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Statement of Problem

Literacy research indicates that there is a need and benefit for parental involvement at home as a way to enhance a child’s academic achievement. Schools and teachers play an important role in promoting literacy, but the family is essential in preparing children for the literacy tasks they will encounter at school. Research suggests a strong correlation between a child’s home experiences and literacy achievement in school. Research also states that parents want to help their child, but lack the knowledge of how to help. As schools became aware of the academic differences between students with strong home support and those students without, schools are more likely to promote family literacy programs.

This project explores how schools can support parents in family literacy and promote the academic achievement of students. The author designed literacy-based workshops for parents of struggling first grade students. Each workshop covered a specific literacy skill that first graders are taught and assessed on.
Sources of Data

Pre- and post-survey data was collected. The survey questions for the parents were designed to inform the author on the literacy practices parents implemented at home and the frequency in which those practices were occurring. Parents responded to open-ended questions on the post-survey to provide the author with specifics on the knowledge parents acquired through workshop attendance. Responses to these questions allowed the author to discern if parents gained what they hoped by attending the workshops. In addition, a sample of students whose parents participated in the workshops was interviewed.

Conclusions Reached

After the completion of the three workshops, it was shown that participants gained knowledge about literacy skills to use at home with their child and were motivated to incorporate the learned reading strategies and literacy-based games into their nightly reading routines with their child. The information gained from the workshops and this project will be useful in the planning of future family literacy workshops.

_____________________________, Committee Chair
Kay Moore, Ed.D.

______________________________
Date
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This project is dedicated to Baby Sordahl, for choosing the perfect time to come into this world. I love you.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Dating back to 1908, research has been able to make a link between the home and school. As Huey (1968) stated, “It all begins with parents reading to children” (p. 103). No one can argue that parents play a crucial role in the educational life of their child. The role that parents play becomes even more prevalent as the child becomes of school age. It is evident by the number of family literacy programs existing in schools that parents and schools must work together to ensure successful young readers. This goes along with the thinking that parents are the child’s first and most influential teachers, and that the school’s role in the early years is to assist families in giving their children the tools needed for academic success (Winter & Rouse, 1990).

Research seems to show that there is a strong need for parental involvement in schools and developing a home and school relationship. Darling and Westberg (2004) supported the notion that when parents are involved in their child’s academics, it has an influence on their achievement in school. This relationship is especially critical for students that are struggling in literacy. In an effort to explore this relationship, this research project will explore topics addressing how and why schools can teach parents literacy skills to use at home with their children by offering literacy-based workshops at an elementary school site. This will help develop the strong home/school relationship cited in research. In addition, research has also explored the role that not only schools, but teachers as well, play in building relationships with parents. Another necessary
element to this project is the role of teachers and schools in regards to parental involvement. Drawing upon the work of Morrow, Kuhn, and Schwanenflugel (2006) where specific elements are identified amongst successful literacy workshops, those elements will be employed in the planning of the workshops for this project.

Statement of the Problem

Schools and the government have taken a keen interest in promoting the importance of family-based literacy programs. With the passing of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2004), schools and legislation looked at ways to improve student achievement. Research indicates that successful literacy programs improve student achievement scores. Schools across the country are discovering ways to incorporate parents into the goal of increasing student achievement. One of the ways to incorporate parents is through schools hosting literacy-based workshops. Many parents want to help their child with reading, but often lack the knowledge of how to reinforce literacy skills taught at school. With parents, schools and teachers working together to support family literacy through workshops, students will have additional support in practicing reading at home.

It is anticipated that if parents are given the information and taught the literacy skills their children are practicing at school, then those same literacy skills will be reinforced at home. Schools can be the main source for providing parents with the necessary training that is needed to support parents in promoting family literacy. Data collected for this project should indicate that the parents whom participated in the
literacy-based workshops became more aware on how to help their child with reading at home.

Can parents learn how to better assist their children with reading at home? If so, how can training be done for parents? In addition to these main research questions, a couple of secondary research questions are critical in developing the answer to the primary research questions. Do parents feel more empowered to assist their child with reading at home after participating in literacy-based workshops? What literacy skills should parents be taught in order to better assist their child with reading at home?

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to offer free literacy-based workshops for parents of first grade students who are struggling in reading. Parents attending the workshops will be taught the skills that are assessed in the common first grade literacy assessments. These skills include: word reading, phonics/spelling and fluency. These workshops will take place at an elementary school in Lincoln, California.

The author decided to implement this project based on a few reasons. One, there has been much research done on the role of parent involvement in children’s education and it appears that the importance of parent involvement is supported. Two, based on previous research done by the author, it seems schools should be searching for the most appropriate methods for forming quality communication with parents. Three, after gaining five years of teaching at the school site, the author saw the importance of providing extra support for struggling students by means of training parents. Therefore, it
is the intent of these workshops to improve student literacy skills at home, form high
quality communication between home and school and create a family literacy program.

Scope of the Project

The workshops for this project will take place in Lincoln, California, at an
elementary school site. Parents of struggling readers in the first grade will be invited to
attend the three workshops. The workshops will take place at the elementary school site
after the school day has ended. At each workshop, parents will be given ideas and taught
strategies that will enable them to better assist their child with reading at home. Each
workshop will cover a specific literacy skill that first graders are taught and assessed on.
Those literacy skills are word reading, phonics/spelling and fluency.

Parent surveys were used as a tool to measure the effectiveness of the literacy-
based workshops. The pre-survey will be disbursed to parents at the beginning of the first
workshop. The pre-survey will give some insight into literacy skills and practices that
take place at home. At the conclusion of the third workshop, parents will again be asked
to fill out a survey. This post-survey will include the same statements and rating scale
along with new open-ended questions. The post-survey will provide the author with
information and evidence regarding the effectiveness of the three workshops.

Limitations of the Project

Problems are surely to be encountered while completing this project. The three
workshops will be offered over a three-week period. It is possible that some parents may
not be able to attend all three workshops. It will be necessary to keep records of who
attended each workshop and contact any parents that miss a workshop. Every attempt will be made to ensure those parents receive the materials distributed at the workshop. Parents will be contacted after they receive the materials to see if they had any further questions about the literacy information in the packets.

It is nearly impossible to guarantee that parents are using the skills they were taught at the workshop at home with their child. Individual interviews will be held with several randomly selected students whose parents are participating in the workshops. These questions will provide some answers to confirm that parents are working with the students at home. In addition, parents will be asked an open-ended question as part of the post-survey that will take place at the end of the third workshop. This question will give an indication as to specific strategies, skills and/or literacy games parents are using at home.

Problems are also to be encountered due to the time constraint of completing a culminating experience project such as this. The workshops have to be implemented within a time frame that works for author, the assisting teacher and parents. Just as important is coordinating the timing of the workshops with the events taking place at the elementary school site and extra curricular activities that students participate in.

Another limitation to this project is allowing the timing for at home literacy skills to transform from being solely practice to then a habit. This relies heavily on the parents taking what they have learned from the workshops and then imparting that knowledge
into practice with their child. Once this practice takes place on a regular basis, the habit begins to form.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this research, the following definitions will be used:

Assessment: As defined in The Literacy Dictionary, “the act or process of gathering data in order to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of student learning, as by observation, testing, interviews, etc” (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 12).

Family literacy: any listening, speaking, reading and writing activities that children are involved in outside of school (Purcell-Gates, 2000).

Family literacy program: generally has three components-literacy for children (including study skills), literacy for parents (e.g., GED instruction), and instruction for adults on how to foster literacy in their children or other young relatives (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Fluency: the ability to read automatically, decoding words quickly and accurately (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003).

Matthew Effect: the phenomenon that occurs when students with a solid foundation for reading do better than students who come to school less prepared (Stanovich, 1986).

Phonemic awareness: the awareness that words are composed of somewhat distinct sounds (i.e., phonemes) (Juel, 1988).

Sight word: The Literacy Dictionary defines a sight word as “a word that is immediately recognized as a whole and does not require word analysis for identification” (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 223).
Sound out: the application of phonics skills in reproducing the sound(s) represented by a letter or letter group in a word.

Organization of the Project

Chapter 1 is an overview of the culminating experience project: an introduction, a statement of the problem, purpose of the project, scope of the project, limitations of the project, definition of terms and organization of the project.

Chapter 2 will be a review of the relevant literature and current research that was employed as a basis for this work. This includes the topics of family literacy, adult learning theory, the need for parental involvement in regards to literacy, the role of teachers and schools in promoting parent involvement and essential elements of literacy-based parent workshops.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the methodology implemented in order to create the parent training workshops. This includes a description of the literacy information packets given to parents and a description of each literacy-based parent workshop.

Chapter 4 analyzes the results of parent responses from the pre- and post- surveys and identifies trends in parent responses from the surveys. This chapter will also include recommendations and conclusions for the project.

The Appendix contains the literacy information packets that were given to parents, pre- and post- parent surveys and other resources that were used in implementing the project.
Chapter 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A child’s first “school” experience begins prior to their first day of kindergarten; it begins right there in their own home. A child’s family is their first and arguably most important teacher. While schools and teachers play an important role in promoting literacy, the family is essential in preparing children for the literacy they will encounter at school. When parents and children work together on any literacy type activity, then family literacy takes place. Morrow (1995) stated that research supports a connection between the home environment and children’s attainment of school-based literacy. Those children that receive little or no family literacy activities at home suffer when they enter school and are beginning to learn to read. Since learning to read is a complex process that involves many skills, Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002) acknowledged that some of these skills are acquired through specific experiences at home thus making family literacy a beneficial factor in promoting reading readiness for children.

Therefore, the term “family literacy” becomes increasingly important to parents and schools. For the purposes of this paper, the definition of family literacy is any listening, speaking, reading and writing activity a child partakes in outside of the school setting (Purcell-Gates, 2000). A review of research on the topic of family literacy shows that many of those at home literacy experiences are precursors to a child’s academic readiness for school. It was found by Purcell-Gates (2000), “that the research
documenting the many ways in which children experience and learn from home literacy practices suggests that these practices are facilitative of later literacy achievement in school” (p. 858).

There is a term often used in educational research that refers to the noticeable difference between students with quality family support in literacy and those students without the support. Stanovich (1986) defined the “Matthew Effect” as the phenomenon that occurs when students with a solid foundation for reading do better than students who come to school less prepared. Using the term Matthew Effect refers to the Biblical reference of the “rich get richer and the poor get poorer.” The awareness of this effect has caused many educators and schools to promote family literacy by offering literacy-based workshops to parents. Those workshops are provided with the hope that struggling readers will achieve academic success in literacy and home/school relationships will be formed.

This chapter provides a review of the research on family literacy, the need for parental involvement in regards to literacy, the role of schools and teachers in promoting parental involvement, adult learning theory and the essential elements of literacy-based parent workshops. First, the chapter will provide the research on family literacy including a historical review of family literacy and current legislation on family literacy. The chapter then discusses just how critical that need for parental involvement is in developing a child’s literacy and the role that schools and teachers play in encouraging parental involvement. The chapter concludes with a look at the essential elements of
teaching adults and how to create effective literacy workshops for parents as evidenced by research studies.

Family Literacy

Historical Review of Family Literacy

Although the relationship between home and school has previously been studied (Aurebach, 1989; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Morrow, 1995; Purcell-Gates, 2000), the actual definition and research on the relatively new term “family literacy” has only recently been researched. There are two significant researchers that had an impact on the study of family literacy. In 1968, E.B. Huey wrote the book *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* that studied that relationship between parents and children and its effect on literacy learning. Denny Taylor’s dissertation, *Family Literacy: Young Children Learning to Read and Write*, surfaced in 1983 (as cited in DeBruin-Parecki & Krol-Sinclair, 2003) and was the first published work to use the term “family literacy.”

The works of these two researchers played a considerable role in prompting other literacy field leaders to take an in-depth look at the impacts of family literacy. In 1991, the “Board of Directors of the International Reading Association formed a Family Literacy Commission to study issues and initiatives in family literacy from a broad perspective” (Morrow, 1995, p. 5). The Family Literacy Commission, comprised of university professors and educators with expertise in the field of literacy, viewed past research and programs on family literacy as well as current perspectives on family literacy as it pertains to the home environment. The commission wanted to stress that
parents were influential in promoting literacy at home and not just at schools. The Family Literacy Commission’s hope was to “increase general recognition of the significance of the family’s crucial role in the development of literacy” (Morrow, 1995, p. 5).

As other notable leaders began to recognize the family’s role in literacy, so did former First Lady Barbara Bush. Mrs. Bush had set literacy as her number one cause when her husband began his presidential term. It was then in 1989 that The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy was formed and the idea of family literacy received national attention. The Foundation consisted of a volunteer board of literacy and education experts with money being raised in the private sector. One notable aspect of the mission for the Foundation was to establish literacy as a value in every family in America by helping every family in the nation understand that the home is the child’s first school, that the parent is the child’s first teacher, and that reading is the child’s first subject (Somerfield, 1995). Within its first five years, the Foundation “funded the implementation or extension of 52 family literacy or family reading programs in 32 different U.S. states in urban (34 programs) and rural (18 programs) settings” (Somerfield, 1995, p. 185). This Foundation set a model for future family literacy programs.

Another program that is important to promoting family literacy is Reading is Fundamental (RIF), a nonprofit organization. It was founded in 1966, RIF is the oldest and largest children’s and family nonprofit literacy organization in the United States. A main goal of RIF is to provide underprivileged children with free books. The RIF
program also believes that there are three essential elements necessary to promoting a child’s literacy: reading motivation, family and community involvement, and the excitement of choosing free books to keep. This program has been able to provide free books to over 4.4 million children. As a result of RIF’s dedication to promoting family literacy, they are now contracted with the U.S. Department of Education and that has allowed federal matching funds to various sites that qualify for RIF’s free book program.

*Family Literacy Legislation*

Following this nationwide surge in promoting family literacy, came the passing of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2001, this country’s educational system gained much needed attention. Many aspects of our educational system were reviewed and acknowledged as needing improvement. The No Child Left Behind Act was designed to reform and then re-authorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which originally passed in 1965. The NCLB Act provided a new framework and linked federal dollars to specific performance goals to ensure improved results. These new funds were to help parents and schools work together to help promote student achievement. Title IV in the NCLB Act specifically targeted promoting parental options and seeking to increase parental options and influence. Another title in the act stated the inclusion of The Even Start Family Literacy Program, while continuing to fund family literacy programs throughout the nation (NCLB, 2004). This led to the awareness that parents can and should play a part in their child’s education. As the act stated, an increase in parental
involvement in their child’s education leads to greater academic achievement (NCLB, 2004).

As a result of NCLB including the Even Start Program, it is important to report on the background of this program. The Even Start Family Literacy Program began through the U.S. Department of Education in 1989 with the intent to support education reform by addressing three of the eight U.S. national education goals to be achieved by the year 2000. According to McKee and Rhett (1995), the Even Start program was a demonstration program that provided school districts with four-year discretionary grants from the federal government for family literacy projects (p. 156). This program supports family literacy for parents throughout the nation with low-incomes and low literacy skills. The Even Start Program has three goals: to help parents improve their literacy or basic educational skills; to help parents become full partners in educating their children; and to assist children in reaching their full potential as learners. As stated by McKee and Rhett, “with Even Start projects requiring joint participation by parents and children, they impress on parents that they are the key to their children’s education” (p. 161). Research from McKee and Rhett (1995) stated that the Even Start literacy program was helpful in providing parents with resources to help their children succeed in school along with improving the relationship between parents and school.

It was required that the Even Start Program undergo a national evaluation to determine its effectiveness and to improve future use of the program. As a result of the evaluation, problems with parent participation enabled the Department of Education to
provide guidance and technical assistance to improve participation (McKee & Rhett, 1995). Data and information gained allowed an eligibility requirement for family participation to be revised as a result of the evaluation. The evaluation also permitted local projects to prove their effectiveness in order to gain entry into a nationally recognized network (McKee & Rhett, 1995).

Another vital movement made by the government regarding the promotion of home/school relationships was Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 (U. S. Metric Association, 2003). This act was put into legislation by former president Bill Clinton. It was the intent of this act to promote home/school partnerships and increase parent involvement in every school by the year 2000. This act came about as a result of the government believing that these partnerships can support the academic work of children at home and that the child’s education is a shared responsibility between the school and home.

The Benefit of Parental Involvement

There seems to be strong evidence to support the notion that parental involvement is a key factor in a child’s education. Research by Henderson and Berla (1994) shows that as a result of family involvement, an increase in academic achievement, self-esteem and attitude toward learning can be seen. In research done by Morrow, Scobionko, and Shafer (1995), it was suggested that a family literacy program helps parents understand how important they are in the literacy development of their children. A parent’s involvement in their child’s education is more important than other external factors
contributing to a child’s academic success. As Clark (1984) and Morrow (1995) stated, research findings support the need for strong parental involvement in fostering literacy and educational success (as cited in Beatson, 2000).

School programs and educator practices that promote family/school relationships are beneficial to help families who would not necessarily become involved on their own (Epstein & Dauber, 1991). Often times, parents have the desire to want to help their child succeed academically and when they are comfortable expressing that need, a school should be ready to respond. In the examination of a family literacy program, Colombo (2004) observed that “parents want to help their children do well, but they sometimes don’t know how” (p. 50). In a review of The Family Fluency Program, a similar observation was made that parents need help to understand the models of learning used in schools (Morrow et al., 2006). Schools should anticipate that parents already have a desire to want to help their children academically.

Once schools and teachers recognize that parents have a desire to help their children learn then families and schools can work together on building a child’s academic success, and as a result they will see numerous benefits. As Lilly and Green (2004) asserted, parents that develop relationships with teachers learn the proper practices for home learning experiences and are at ease with participating in school-based decisions. As a result of collaborative home/school relationships, children benefit as well. These children have increased self-esteem, higher academic achievement and a more positive attitude toward school, as indicated by the work of Lilly and Green (2004). With these
home/school relationships taking place, research shows that family literacy programs can be quite effective while benefiting the parents and children. A student’s reading attitude has a significant relation to the home literacy practices established with family members (Auerbach, 1989; Clark, 1984; Morrow, 1995).

Other researchers that looked at the benefit of involving parents in a child’s learning process were Sénéchal and LeFevre. In the longitudinal study by Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002), it was stressed that children’s acquisition of specific literacy skills at home may require the guidance of a parent or older sibling. Parent involvement and its relation to a child’s development of reading skills were observed during the course of this five-year study. One objective of this study was to examine the importance of two parent and child activities, storybook reading and parents’ reports of frequency of teaching their child about specific literacy skills, and the impact they have on a child’s language and emergent literacy. While these two parent and child home activities are uncorrelated, it is important to point out that each activity promoted a different type of literacy skill and therefore is important in the development of reading. The findings of Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002) suggested clear associations from events at home, thus having an impact on literacy skills and fluent reading. The study also suggested that book exposure was a home experience that is likely to contribute to a child’s reading performance, implying that parents have an undoubtedly important role in assisting with the development of a child’s reading.
The Role of Teachers and Schools in Promoting Parental Involvement

Teachers need support in order to build positive relationships with parents. As evident in this field of research, this support can come from a variety of sources. Sources can include: local government, local businesses, district level resources, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)/Parent Teacher Club (PTC), site leaders, fellow teachers, and parents. With the recent awareness on family literacy, various sources that support teachers have come to surface. The International Reading Association, in an effort to support teachers, stated that family involvement is a potentially powerful element of effective literacy instruction. The International Reading Association (1991) went on to declare that parents, family and community members, teachers, school administrators, researchers, and policymakers must be aware of its importance and must receive information and training that allows them to effectively execute their respective roles in establishing family involvement in literacy learning.

When a partnership between home and school is established, many positive effects will occur. Not only will the students benefit from this partnership, so will the entire school. Schools that work well with families have better teacher morale, higher ratings of teachers by parents, and better reputations and availability to community resources (Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Swap, 1993).

Once a school has established that there is a need for a family literacy program, then teachers must collaborate to determine how they will work with the parents. Teachers have an integral part in developing and implementing family literacy programs.
However, teachers and schools must make sure they are implementing the most effective family literacy practices. Darling and Westberg (2004) found that “the most effective form of parent involvement, producing the best results, was training parents to use a specific reading strategy that their children were working on in school” (p. 775). The school should determine the literacy needs of their students while coordinating with the classroom reading practices and language arts curriculum thus ensuring that what is taught and practiced in the classroom can then be reinforced at home after parents attend the family literacy program.

**Adult Learning Theory**

If parents are to play a critical role in the development of their child’s reading, then teachers and schools must also take into consideration the manner in which adults learn. Teachers and schools may feel comfortable addressing the learning needs and styles of their students, but they must also realize that when teaching parents one should ensure the learning needs of “adult students” are being met.

The study by Amstutz (1999) discussed adult learning theories and included suggestions for ways to teach that reflect the numerous ways of learning that accommodate the needs of a variety of adult learners. Two influential points that Amstutz (1999) made in relation to teaching adults was to use a variety of instructional strategies and construct and maintain supportive learning environments. Instructional strategies that are helpful for adult learners include cooperative learning and giving voice to the learner. This can help schools and teachers administering family literacy programs to recognize
that parents need real life experiences, the ability to communicate about what was taught to them and empathetic understanding. Adult learners also need positive environments. Amstutz (1999) stated, that supportive learning environments are necessary to enhance successful participation. Therefore, learning environments need resources for visual and auditory learners, a quality learning space, and an awareness of how culture shapes practices. Schools and teachers that are implementing family literacy programs should make themselves aware of the needs of adult learners. In doing so, it will hopefully create an inclusive environment for parents which in turn will more effectively promote student learning at school and home.

Someone else who looked at adult learning theory was Merriam (2001). In the study of adult learning theory, Merriam examined older theories and new ways of looking at adult learning. While these foundational theories focused on andragogy, self-directed learning, and transformational learning the more recent theories discuss emotional components, embodied learning and the importance of mind and imagination. This research was summarized by old and new theories and how they applied to the way in which an adult learns. As Merriam (2001) stated, the adult learner is seen wholistically, meaning they have a mind and emotions all of which contribute to learning. Next, the adult learner’s learning process is transforming what is learned as well as the way it is learned while making sense of their life. Lastly, the context of learning examines race, class, and gender and how it shapes the learning that takes place. Schools can take into account that parents and the way in which they learn can bring many variables to the
structure of implementing an effective family literacy program. The more schools and teachers are willing to address the needs of adult learners, the further the effectiveness of the family literacy program will reach.

**Essential Elements of Literacy-Based Parent Workshops**

Each school, each grade level, and even each teacher will need different results from their literacy workshops. It is necessary for schools to get a thorough understanding of the literacy skills that need attention at their site in order to develop an effective plan for literacy workshops. There is not a-one-size-fits-all family literacy program that schools can adopt. However, there are key features that successful literacy programs share and schools can use these features to ensure adequate implementation of their family literacy programs.

Research on family literacy reviews the different types of parental involvement available for schools to use. As schools are formatting their literacy workshops, they need to establish the type of parent involvement that will be taught to the parents. Parental involvement can include listening to a child read, being trained to listen, and being trained to teach (Darling & Westberg, 2004). The needs of each school are different and therefore, the type of parent involvement addressed and the skills taught at literacy-based workshops vary. Individual schools are left to determine what elements are necessary for their workshops. As Colombo (2004) pointed out, essential elements of a family literacy night incorporate reading strategies modeled for parents, through literacy explanations and hands-on experience with common literacy practices.
Neuman, Capperelli and Kee (1998) conducted further research on effective elements of family literacy programs. In the research by Neuman et al. (1998), several literacy programs were reviewed and evaluated. All of the 52 programs reviewed had received grants from the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. The participants in these programs shared their reasoning for coming and staying in the program and the features of the program that seemed most critical to them. Neuman et al. (1998) shared “the aspects of the programs that seemed most helpful or important to families from their perspectives” (p. 247). The six most critical features of the programs include:

1. Programs involved participants in planning which engaged their interest, respect and collaboration. This gave participants a sense of control of what they were doing, as well as why they were doing it.

2. Programs involved family-based activities, which encouraged parents’ active involvement in their child’s education.

3. Programs included ongoing assessments so that subtle changes did not go unnoticed. Noticing even small improvements gave parents and children a sense of real and meaningful progress.

4. Programs created social networks outside of the program. Activities encouraged relationships in and out of the classroom and seemed to enhance the social significance for families and communities.
5. Programs involved an integration of services enabling families to participate more fully. Programs provided transportation, childcare and meals as necessary.

6. Programs provided next steps for learning so that the effects of the family programs were not short term. Programs developed linkages with job training programs, local community colleges and vocational schools for participants. These six critical features are helpful to schools wishing to establish family literacy programs. By using these features as guidelines, it will enable schools to recruit and maintain parents in becoming active in a family literacy program. These features allow parents to see that they are largely important in the learning process of their children.

Another study that examined the effective elements of family literacy programs was completed by Lilly and Green (2004). The work of Lilly and Green (2004) adapted the model of parent involvement originally done by Epstein (1995). In the original work by Epstein (1995), it mentioned three overlapping spheres that affect how students learn and grow: the family, the school, and the community. It was further mentioned that there are some practices that schools, families, and communities carry out disjointedly and some they conduct jointly in order to impact children’s learning and development (Epstein, 1995). Using Epstein’s work, Lilly and Green’s model promoted the home/school relationship through four levels that contained family literacy goals and practices. The four levels included: parenting, communication, volunteering and learning.
Each level stated the responsibilities of the teacher and parent that are essential in promoting parent involvement. Of particular interest is level four: learning at home because of its mention that teachers suggest home literacy activities that are relevant to the children and encourage playful, enjoyable and meaningful ways to engage in home literacy activities.

Following up on the research of Auerbach (1989), which examined family literacy from a social-contextual approach, Paratore (1995) implemented The Intergenerational Project in Chelsea, Massachusetts. This project focused on schools and families working together to improve ways children’s literacy learning can be supported. A few features of this project are worth noting because of the commonality it shares with other family literacy programs. Extensive anecdotal evidence has led to important understandings about families and literacy and about home and school partnerships (Paratore, 1995).

One important feature of The Intergenerational Project was that parents engaged in a wide range of literacy activities with their children. Parents were affirmed and valued in the various ways literacy is practiced at home as well as given new ideas. Another important feature was that parents seized opportunities to use literacy in practical ways. The project did not incorporate specially designed or costly products, but rather integrated useful, practical materials that parents could find and duplicate at home. At the conclusion of each session in this project, parents were led in small group discussion in which they commented on what they had learned and asked questions about literacy topics.
Fellow literacy researchers Morrow, Scoblionko and Shafer (1995) developed a program that focused on using effective elements for family literacy programs. The Family Writing and Reading Appreciation Program (WRAP) was developed at an elementary school in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with parents of first, second and third graders participating. As Morrow et al. (1995) pointed out, “the purpose of the Family WRAP Program was to help parents appreciate and understand the importance of their role in the literacy development of their children” (p. 73). Elements of the program included teacher modeling of literacy activities, providing parents with materials for at home literacy games and supplying parents with a handbook that explains that the parent role in literacy development.

Of the workshops reviewed, the organizers allowed ample time for parents to address concerns and ask clarifying questions. This question and answer time was done verbally as well as in a written format. Many studies (Colombo, 2004; Lilly & Green, 2004; McKee & Rhett, 1995; Morrow et al., 2006; Neuman et al., 1998; Paratore, 1995) included some type of survey that was distributed to parents either prior to the workshop or after the workshop. These surveys allowed the organizers to get a glimpse of the parent perspective on family literacy and the effectiveness of the workshop. Schools also provided participants with hands-on literacy activities, which could easily be duplicated at home and reproduced as a child’s literacy skills advance. It was also found effective to provide direct modeling of these specific literacy skills and allowing participants to practice during the workshop.
Summary

Family literacy is still a relatively new research topic in the field of literacy. As the research points out, families, schools, communities, and even government resources are realizing the value of family literacy programs. Schools can offer literacy-based programs that involve families and strengthen the relationship between home and school. Research shows that more study still needs to be done in the area of family literacy because there is not one concrete definition or model for a family literacy program, there are several models of programs that have proven to be effective. As the research progresses, schools should choose family literacy programs that fit the needs of their population and incorporate the resources that are available to them. Even with the need for more research on family literacy, it is clear that there are benefits to schools, students, and families in providing family literacy programs. In the following chapter, the literacy-based parent workshops that were implemented in this project will be discussed.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The relationship between school and home is undoubtedly essential to the success of a child’s educational career. Teachers want parents to be more involved and often parents just simply lack the knowledge of how to help develop literacy skills at home. Much of the educational research suggests that with parental involvement, students will succeed at a higher rate in literacy. In this project, the literacy-based workshops will be designed with the intent to provide parents of first grade students with literacy information and activities that they could use at home while helping their child with reading. The first grade parents that attend the workshops will be taught skills and strategies in three areas of literacy: word reading, spelling/phonics and fluency.

This chapter provides the reader with an overview of the components of the literacy workshops, including a detailed description of the participating population, instruments used, and a thorough explanation of procedures of the project.

Sample Population

The literacy-based workshops were designed for the first grade parents of students attending Foskett Ranch Elementary School in Lincoln, California (Placer County). Foskett Ranch Elementary School was built in 2005 in a newly developed neighborhood. The school currently serves 577 students in grades pre-kindergarten through fifth grade in the Western Placer Unified School District. The school has seen student enrollment
gradually increase as well as the number of certificated teachers. Foskett Ranch Elementary School currently employs twenty-six certificated teachers with an average of eleven years of teaching experience. The neighborhood surrounding Foskett Ranch is comprised of mainly single-family homes with the recent addition of a condominium development. Many home developers have built new subdivisions around the school.

Foskett Ranch Elementary Students

At Foskett Ranch, only 17% of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch. The student population at this elementary site is made up of primarily White/European American (80%) children. The student population also includes 12% Hispanic/Latino, 7% Asian American/Pacific Islander and 1% African American. The majority of the student population speaks English and just 5% of the students are classified as English language learners (ELL). During the 2008-2009 school year, it was reported that 68% of parents of children in the school had graduated from college and 89% had some college education beyond high school. Most of the parents consider education important and are involved in their child’s education in some way.

Parent Participation at Foskett Ranch Elementary

Parents at Foskett Ranch Elementary School have developed a reputation as being actively involved with the school. Throughout the entire school day, parents are checking in at the office to volunteer in classrooms and provide various resources to the school. There is an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), SBLT (Site Based Leadership Team), D.O.G.S. (Dad’s of Great Students) and several parent-sponsored extracurricular
clubs. The school also receives volunteers from the local Sun City retirement community. The Sun City Lincoln Hills residents volunteer their expertise on a specific topic or help with projects at school as necessary. Many of the Sun City volunteers have grandchildren attending this elementary school. Many teachers use this valuable resource to bring even more volunteers into the classroom. Over the last few years, several parents have been hired on at the school site as aides, campus monitors and as office staff. However, there have been limited opportunities to provide parents with workshops on becoming actively involved at home with their child’s educational progress. With five years of teaching experience at this elementary school, the author has seen an increase in the number of fellow teachers that verbally express a need for parent involvement. The author had recalled fellow teachers stating that it appears parents want to help their children, but just don’t know how. Thus, the author felt it necessary to provide parents of Foskett Ranch elementary students with literacy-based workshops.

Participants in the Literacy-Based Workshops

For this study, 25 parents were invited to participate in the workshops based on one criterion; their first grade child must have been classified as a struggling reader. In order for a student to be classified as a struggling reader, that student must have met certain criteria. If a student scored in the “strategic” or “intensive” range on at least two components of the most recent Reading Lions assessment, the district-mandated assessment system, then he/she was classified as a struggling reader. After reviewing the Reading Lions assessment scores of all (106) first-grade students, 25 were classified as
struggling readers. Of those 25 students, thirteen are male and twelve are female. The reason for using assessment scores was based on the work by Lilly and Green (2004), which stated programs that include a needs assessment and attempt to match the academic levels and interests of the participants have the highest rates of retention. Invitations were created by the author and sent home with the 25 students. The workshop invitation can be found in Appendix A.

**Instruments**

Many instruments were used to develop the literacy-based workshops that were a part of this study. The instruments were literacy information packets, make and take games and pre- and post- parent surveys and the Reading Lions assessment.

*Literacy Information Packets*

Prior to the workshops, the author designed literacy information packets for each workshop. The information packets were given to parents at each different workshop with the intent for the parents to keep these at home as a resource while assisting their child with reading. The literacy information packets were based upon previous research in the literacy field done by the author while coordinating the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum (scope and sequence) for first grade and the student needs as ascertained by the Reading Lions testing. Each information packet contained information that was specific to that night’s literacy component that was being discussed along with ideas for literacy activities at home and directions for the make-and-take game.
The literacy information packet for the first workshop (Appendix B) covered literacy terms, skills and activities related to word reading. The packet contained information on essentials related to reading, reading rules and skills, along with a first grade list of sight words and activities/games to be played with those sight words.

The literacy information packet for the second workshop (Appendix C) covered terms, skills and activities related to spelling/phonics. The packet included a handout with information on helpful spelling rules, basic spelling principles, as well as directions for various spelling games to be played at home.

The literacy information packet for the third workshop (Appendix D) covered terms, skills, and activities related to fluency. That packet contained information on improving fluency, reading prompts and read aloud strategies to try at home. Based on the longitudinal study by Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002), which showed that a reading activity such as book reading, can be thought of a great home experience that is likely to contribute to children’s reading performance, the author felt it necessary to promote reading books with children at home as part of this workshop.

Make-and-Take Games

Each workshop concluded with a make-and-take game that emphasized that evening’s discussed specific literacy skill. The purpose of each make-and-take game was to allow parents the chance to apply their newly developed knowledge of a literacy skill toward a game that they could then share and play with their child at home. All of the workshop participants were provided with the necessary materials to make the game.
Participants were also shown ways to expand each game and/or change the game based on their child’s current reading ability. In addition, participants were shown how each game could be directly correlated to the literacy concepts covered in their child’s weekly language arts homework packet. The idea of sending home games that could be played at home was based off of the research by Fernandez-Fain and Baker (1997), which indicated that exposure to linguistic games helped children to develop literacy skills. See Appendices B, C, and D for the make-and-take games used in these workshops.

Parent Surveys

At the start of the first workshop, parents were asked to complete the pre-survey. The author emphasized to the parents the importance of completing this survey with an honest and open mind. It was also noted that the surveys were a part of the completion of a University culminating experience in an MA program and would be anonymous. As it was stated on the survey, the author reminded the parents that data gathered from the surveys would be used to analyze the effectiveness of the workshops. Surveys employed can be found in Appendix E.

At the completion of the third and final workshop, the parents were asked to complete the post-survey. The post-survey contained the same questions as the pre-survey, but also included four open-ended questions. The open-ended questions allowed parents to express what strategies, games and information was most useful from the workshops. This survey can also be found in Appendix E. As indicated in the study by Neuman et al. (1998), a critical feature of an effective family literacy program is to
involve participants in the planning. Thus, open-ended questions allowed parents to feel included and that their opinions were valued and useful in the planning of future workshops.

**Student Interviews**

The following week after the completion of the third workshop, the author conducted informal student interviews. A copy of the student interview questions can be found in Appendix F. Eight students whose parents attended the workshops were randomly selected for the interviews. The author interviewed those students individually, during the course of the school day. Each student was asked four questions related to literacy topics their parents had been informed of through the literacy-based workshops. The purpose in doing the student interviews was to determine if literacy skills and/or games that were taught at the workshop were being reinforced at home. The four questions can be found in Appendix F.

**Reading Lions Assessment**

The Reading Lions assessment was used to measure the students’ level of competence of different literacy skills. The Reading Lions assessment is a published test that correlates with the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum. The Western Placer Unified School District has adopted Reading Lions as a mandated assessment. This assessment is acquired through the Sacramento County Office of Education. The first grade assessment has three components related to reading: spelling/phonics, word reading and fluency. There is a writing component as well, however, those scores are not used as
part of this project. At the first grade level, the assessment is administered after teaching every two themes (approximately every six to eight weeks) in the language arts curriculum. A more detailed description of the components of the assessment can be found in Appendix G.

The teachers are required to enter the Reading Lions assessment results from each student into an online database. That database is called OARS (Online Assessment Recording System). Once the data has been entered, a teacher is able to view the student’s achievement in a color-coded document. The document shows how the student scores in each area for spelling/phonics, word reading and fluency. The color code for the document is as follows: purple indicates the student is at the challenge level, green indicates the student is at the benchmark level, yellow indicates they are at the strategic level and red indicates the student is at the intensive level. This database allows teachers to quickly access student assessment scores and was used in determining qualification for the literacy-based workshops.

Procedures

Based on the results of the students’ Reading Lions’ assessments, a literacy information packet was designed by the author for each workshop based on previous literacy research and with a connection to the Houghton Mifflin Language Arts First Grade curriculum. Each literacy information packet covered specific literacy terms and skills along with literacy-based activities/games that parents could play at home with their child. After the literacy information packets were designed and agendas and goals
were set for each workshop, the author established dates for the workshops and began to recruit participants.

Each workshop was designed to focus on one of the three reading skills that are assessed in the Reading Lions assessment: word reading, spelling/phonics and fluency. At each workshop, a specific agenda of tasks was established and implemented. See Appendices B, C, and D for the agenda of each workshop. Parents were shown hands-on literacy activities that they could easily duplicate at home. At the start of each workshop, parents listened to a short overview of the workshop, which discussed the importance of that evening’s targeted reading skill and why parent support is critical to the success of a child’s reading ability. Workshop number one focused on word reading, workshop number two on spelling/phonics and workshop number three on fluency.

All three workshops were held in January 2010. The author wanted to host the literacy-based workshops after Winter Break, allowing parents and students time to settle back into their typical school routines. This would also allow parents to implement strategies for a portion of the second trimester and the entire length of the third trimester. Each workshop was held after the school day had ended. The chosen time was 4-5 pm as to allow parents ample time to get students home and then return to school. Each workshop was held in a classroom at the school to accommodate the number of participants. A first-grade teacher from the elementary site volunteered to assist with the implementation of all three workshops. The assisting teacher had over 10 years of teaching experience and held an MA in Curriculum and Instruction. Prior to the
workshops, the assisting teacher met with the author to review the specific literacy information that would be discussed at each workshop and assisted in designing the agenda for the workshops.

Recruiting Participants

Multiple flyers were sent out to the selected parents inviting them to attend these family literacy-based workshops (see Appendix A). The first flyer announced the workshop and included a section for parents to indicate if they could attend all three or only some of the workshops. The second flyer was a reminder notice to parents and was sent home with students the day of the workshop. Communication had also been established with the first grade parent volunteer coordinator. This person was encouraging and reminding parents outside of school to attend the workshops. It was important for parents to attend all three workshops because new literacy skills were covered each night and each workshop would build upon information from the previous workshop. However, if a parent could not attend one session, all information covered in the missed workshop was sent home with the student of that parent. Parents were contacted the following day either by phone or email to see if they had received the information.

First Literacy-Based Workshop

The literacy topic for the first workshop was word reading. A written agenda for this workshop can be in Appendix B. As parents arrived, they were given the literacy information packet that included all of the handouts and materials for that day’s
workshop. Introductions were made, parents were informed of the agenda for that day’s workshop and then had an opportunity to complete the pre-survey. All of the information discussed for this workshop was in relation to word reading. The assisting teacher made sure all parents had the necessary materials and helped any late arriving parents get caught up on what they had missed.

As the workshop began, it was discussed with parents how the “Matthew Effect” relates to reading. Parents viewed an overhead (See Appendix B) that explained the Matthew Effect in relation to reading and why closing the gap between a good reader and a poor reader is so critical in first grade. The next piece of information discussed was The Five Big Ideas in Reading (readingresource.net). This handout covered phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension and was given to the parents so that they could have a general sense of the most important concepts of reading in first grade. The parents were given an explanation of each of the five big ideas and how each applied to reading in first grade.

Next, parents read over a handout that covered reading rules and skills. This included definitions and examples of short vowels, long vowels, digraphs, blends, etc. Questions were answered and clarifications made as needed. A discussion also ensued over the difference between sight words and sound out words. Parents were directed to the word wall in the classroom that contained all of the sight words that had been taught thus far. This was also the time that parents reviewed a page in the packet that was a list of all the sight words their child would be assessed on in first grade.
Finally, parents went over the last page in the packet that included a list of sight word activities to be played at home. This led into the last activity, which was the “make-and-take” game. Parents were given the materials (index cards, scissors and markers) and directions for the game *Concentration*. The author and assisting teacher modeled how to play the game *Concentration*. Parents were reminded to use this week’s and the previous week’s sight words from their child’s homework packet for the game. After parents made their sight word cards, they were given an opportunity to play the game with another parent. By allowing parents to first watch the game be played and then given an opportunity to practice the game with another parent, it would help them become more comfortable playing the game at home with their child. As the workshop came to an end, parents were given a question and answer time, a preview of the next workshop and a reminder to play their make-and-take game with their child that night and future nights during homework and/or reading time. The author and assisting teacher answered questions and clarified information for parents.

*Second Literacy-Based Workshop*

The literacy topic for the second workshop was phonics/spelling. A written agenda for this workshop can be found in Appendix C. As parents arrived, they were given the literacy information packet that included all of the handouts and materials for that day’s workshop. Introductions were made, parents were informed of the agenda for that day’s workshop, and then had an opportunity to ask any questions related to the information they had learned at the previous workshop. The assisting teacher made sure
all parents had the necessary materials and handouts for this workshop. All of the information discussed for this workshop was in relation to phonics/spelling.

As the workshop began, the author reviewed the overhead from the first workshop on the Matthew Effect and then discussed that week’s spelling list that came home and how that spelling pattern was taught in class. Parents were also shown the large version of sound/spelling cards that were hanging in the classroom, and are a part of the Houghton Mifflin First Grade Curriculum, which is used daily in the first grade classrooms. The assisting teacher pointed out the locations in the classroom where sound/spelling cards could be found. Parents were then given a handout that included a complete smaller version of the sound spelling cards so they could use it at home while assisting their child with spelling. See Appendix C for a copy of the sound spelling cards.

The first page of the literacy information packet contained helpful spelling rules with examples of consonant blends, digraphs and long vowels. This page also included information on five basic spelling principles. These principles were explained to the parents with specific examples relating to common spelling in first grade.

Next, parents read over another page in the literacy information packet that covered two spelling games to play at home. Each game was explained in detail and then parents were shown how the game could be played with that week’s spelling words. The following page in the packet contained a long list of word pairs, showing words with short vowels and then how the same word changes with a long vowel. Examples included the word bit changing to bite and the word fat changing to fate. Parents were instructed
how to use the word pairs list while playing the two previously mentioned at home spelling games.

Finally, parents were given time to use materials to start working on that workshop’s make-and-take game. For this workshop, the make-and-take game was called the spelling mat. An exact replica of a spelling mat was placed at each table to allow parents to reference it as they were making their own spelling mat. This helped parents that were not auditory learners by having a visual to reference. To make the spelling mat, each parent was given a file folder, small Post-its of various colors and a marker. Step-by-step directions were given (See Appendix C) so that parents could label Post-its with consonants and vowels and then adhere those to the inside of the file folder. The assisting teacher roamed the classroom and assisted parents as necessary. After the spelling mats were made, parents were invited to participate in playing a word building game using their newly made spelling mat. The last page of the literacy information packet also contained examples of word building games that could be used at home (See Appendix C). As the workshop came to an end, parents were given a question and answer time, a preview of the next workshop and a reminder to play their make-and-take game with their child that night and during the interval before the last workshop.

Third Literacy-Based Workshop

The literacy topic for the third workshop was fluency. A written agenda for this workshop can be found in Appendix D. As parents arrived, they were given the literacy information packet that included all of the handouts and materials for that day’s
workshop. See Appendix D for information packet and handouts. The assisting teacher ensured all packets and handouts were distributed to parents. Introductions were made, parents were informed of the agenda for that day’s workshop, and then had an opportunity to ask questions regarding any information they had learned from the previous two workshops. All of the information discussed for this workshop was in relation to fluency.

The workshop began with a review of the overhead on the Matthew Effect and how that effect relates to reading. The first piece of information discussed from that workshop’s literacy information packet was regarding ideas to improve fluency. At this time, the author stated how critical fluency is to reading, how their child is assessed on fluency and what the upcoming benchmarks for fluency were. Parents were given a moment to visually look over a current Reading Lions fluency assessment passage. Several of the Reading Lions student test booklets had been placed at the tables where parents sat. This allowed parents that were visual learners to see what a fluency passage was comprised of. The first page in the packet gave a definition of fluency and covered fluency improvement ideas such as reading poetry and reading with emotion. This gave parents a better understanding of what fluency is and how they can assist their child at home with fluency.

The next page of the packet covered reading prompts. Parents were given more information on how to assist their child when they are stuck on a word while reading. The prompts given varied from the usual “sound it out” response that is often given to
children. The list of prompts not only gave different ideas, but also reinforced strategies that are often taught in the classroom. The author and assisting teacher reviewed some of those reading strategies and even modeled how they would be used when helping a child read. Through the modeling of reading prompts, it enabled parents to retain the information they had received.

Next, parents reviewed a page in the packet that dealt with reading aloud to your child. It was discussed with parents how reading aloud to their child helps to improve their fluency because they can hear what a fluent reader sounds like. This page covered the where, when, what and how of reading aloud to children. This gave parents unique ideas on where and when to read aloud to their child as well as what to read aloud and how to read aloud.

As the workshop concluded, parents were asked to fill out a post-survey. Parents were encouraged to answer the survey questions honestly and were reminded that survey results would be kept confidential. The assisting teacher distributed the post-surveys and then collected them as parents finished. After the surveys were completed, the author and assisting teacher provided a question and answer time for parents. The parents were thanked for their commitment to their child’s education and for attending the workshops. The author and assisting teacher reminded parents to contact them if they needed future assistance with anything they had learned from the workshops and then they were encouraged to practice the literacy games at home with their child.
Student Interviewing

The author conducted informal student interviews the week after the third workshop had ended. Of the parents that attended the workshops, eight of their students were randomly selected for the interview process. Students were interviewed one at a time during the school day. Depending on classroom schedules, some students were interviewed in their own classroom while other students came to the author’s classroom for the interview. All students were present on the day the interviews were conducted.

When a student arrived to be interviewed, they were greeted and told they would be asked a few questions about reading at home. As each student was being interviewed, he/she was allotted as much time as needed to answer each of the four questions. The author read each question one at a time to the student and then each answer was written down word for word. If a student’s response was unclear he/she was asked to explain their response in further detail. Furthermore, if a student did not seem to understand the question being asked, then the question was reread again or reworded, if necessary. Each student was thanked for talking about how he/she reads at home and then the student was sent back to the classroom setting.

Conclusion

As indicated, the literacy workshops gave parents an opportunity to be successful with literacy-based skills at home with their child. Based on the research included in this project, the literacy-based workshops were designed and implemented at the elementary
school site. By reviewing the different components of the Reading Lions assessment, the author was then able to determine the focus and targeted literacy skill for each workshop.

In order for the literacy-based workshops to be effective, various components were included. Parents that participated in the workshops received literacy information packets and all the materials for the make-and-take games. This allowed parents to play literacy-based activities at home with their child. The workshops also included parent surveys, which allowed data to be gathered to determine the effectiveness of the workshops and the change in parent attitudes regarding family literacy. The way adults learn was also considered as the workshops were planned and implemented.

In the following chapter, the author discusses the results of how effective the literacy-based workshops were for both parents and children. Recommendations for future research will also be suggested.
Chapter 4

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

A series of literacy-based workshops were held at Foskett Ranch Elementary School. The participants involved were parents of first grade students from the school site. The parents attended three free workshops that were designed and implemented by the author. At each workshop, participants were given a literacy information packet, directions for make and take games and terms and definitions that related to that workshop’s targeted literacy skill. A pre- and post-survey were given to participants over the course of the workshops. The results from the surveys were used to analyze the effectiveness of the workshops and analyze parent responses.

This chapter will discuss the results of the surveys, the author’s recommendation for future implementation of this project and a conclusion of the project.

Discussion of Results

Parents at the elementary school received three literacy-based workshops that provided them with strategies to help their first grade student at home with reading. Parents were given a pre-survey, which they completed at the first literacy workshop. The post-survey was administered to parents at the completion of the third literacy workshop. The parent responses from both surveys were analyzed for this chapter.
Parent Pre-Survey

The parent pre-survey was completed at the start of the first literacy workshop. The survey contained two sections with 12 various questions. The survey questions asked parents about literacy practices that they currently were implementing at home along with the frequency of at home literacy practices. The first six questions had boxes for parents to check off that corresponded to the frequency in which they did an activity. The possible choices were: daily, weekly, monthly and never. The last six questions asked participants to respond with a numerical rating that corresponded with their judgment to statements about literacy practices. The choices for possible answers were: 1=disagree, 2=somewhat disagree, 3=somewhat agree and 4=agree.

The data from the pre-survey was collected and analyzed by the author and found that 67% of participants reported that their child does daily reading at home and 22% reported weekly reading for their child. The majority of participants reported that they read to their child daily (50%) or weekly (33%). It was also interesting that 0% of the participants reported that they never read to their child. Also, 44% of the participants reported that their child asks them to read books to them on a weekly basis.

It can be said from this data that parents were already engaging in family literacy through frequent reading of books either with or to their child. This data indicates that a value had been placed on reading at home since the majority of participants were already practicing it. Also, more than three-fourths of the parents indicated from the survey
results that they read on a daily or weekly basis to their child. However, some of the
participants reported that their child never asks them to read to him/her.

When asked on the survey how often their child uses strategies to help them with
reading, 44% of participants reported their child did so on a daily basis, while 39% of
participants responded that their child used reading strategies on a weekly basis. One
participant reported that their child never used reading strategies to help them with
reading (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often does your child read at home?</td>
<td>67% (12)</td>
<td>22% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often do you read to your child?</td>
<td>50% (9)</td>
<td>33% (6)</td>
<td>17% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often does your child ask you to read books to him/her?</td>
<td>17% (3)</td>
<td>44% (8)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
<td>28% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often does your child use strategies to help them while reading? i.e.: sounding out, rereading, asking “does it make sense?”</td>
<td>44% (8)</td>
<td>39% (7)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
<td>6% (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The author can determine from this survey data that parents seem to be aware of reading strategies and the frequency in which their child uses them. Participants were given examples of reading strategies on the survey as a reference. These examples were reflective of reading strategies that the child would use or be taught at school.

Participants were also asked to report on the survey how often they go to the library with their child. The majority of participants (56%) responded that they go to the library on a monthly basis. Also, 39% of participants reported that they never go to the library and only one participant responded that they take their child on a weekly basis. Along with this, parents were asked how often they added to their child’s book collection. It was reported that 83% of participants do this on a monthly basis with three participants stating they add to their child’s book collection on a weekly basis.

It can be determined from this data that participants are trying to promote their child’s reading acquisition through library visits and adding to their child’s home book collection. There were no participants that reported that they never add to their child’s
book collection. It can be discerned that the majority of students whose parents participated in the survey have access to books either through library visits or their own home collections.

The statement “I feel comfortable helping my child with reading at home.” was on the survey and the majority of participants (61%) responded that they agree with that statement. Only two participants stated that they somewhat disagree with that statement (see Table 2). Another statement on the survey was “I use the reading strategies learned/taught at school to assist my child with reading.” Of the parents that responded, 44% marked that they somewhat agree with that statement and 33% marked that they agree with that statement. Only one participant responded that they disagreed with that statement.

Table 2

*Parent Literacy Pre-Survey Frequencies, Questions Seven through Twelve (18 total of participants)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. I feel comfortable helping my child with reading at home</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
<td>28% (5)</td>
<td>61% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I use the reading strategies learned at school to assist my child with reading.</td>
<td>22% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>44% (8)</td>
<td>34% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I play “literacy” based games at home with my child.</td>
<td>33% (6)</td>
<td>39% (7)</td>
<td>17% (3)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. I have resources at home to help me with my child when they struggle with reading.</td>
<td>33% (6)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
<td>39% (7)</td>
<td>17% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I feel comfortable communicating with my child’s teacher about reading.</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6% (1)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
<td>83% (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The school encourages parents to communicate with teachers if they need help assisting their child at home.</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>33% (6)</td>
<td>11% (2)</td>
<td>56% (10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data from these two statements can discern that parents feel comfortable helping their child with reading at home. Along with that statement, the majority of parents also indicated that they use the reading strategies from school to assist their child with reading.

The statement on the survey about playing literacy games at home indicated that 39% of parents reported somewhat disagree with the statement and 35% disagree with the statement. Only two participants stated that they agreed with the statement about literacy games at home. Parents were also asked to mark a judgment for the statement, “I have resources at home to help me with my child when they struggle with reading.” From that statement, only 17% agreed with it and 39% somewhat agreed with the statement. Five
parents indicated that they either disagreed or somewhat disagreed with the statement about resources at home.

Reviewing the data from these two statements can indicate that the majority of participants do not play literacy-based games at home with their child. The data also reports that over half of the participants stated that they had resources at home to help their child with reading.

The last two statements on the survey were in regards to the parents’ comfort with communication. Parents were asked to respond to a statement on if they feel comfortable communicating with their child’s teacher about reading. Of the participants that responded, 83% indicated that they agree with that statement. Parents were also asked to respond to how they feel about the school’s encouragement of communicating to teachers. The majority (56%) of participants stated that they agree with that statement and only three participants somewhat disagreed with the statement.

This data indicates that participants feel comfortable about communicating not only with their child’s teacher, but with the school too. Only one participant reported not feeling comfortable communicating with their child’s teacher.

**Parent Post-Survey**

The parent post-survey was distributed to parents at the conclusion of the third literacy-based workshop. The post-survey contained 12 questions as well as four open-ended questions. The first 12 questions were identical to the questions asked on the pre-survey. The four open-ended questions aimed to determine what knowledge parents had
gained from the workshops. It is worth noting that there were some changes to the parent responses from the pre-survey to the post-survey.

The first six questions had boxes for parents to check off what corresponded to the frequency in which they did a literacy-based activity. The possible choices were: daily, weekly, monthly and never. One of the notable changes from the parent responses was in response to the question asking how often their child read at home. In the pre-survey, 67% of participants responded that their child read daily. In the post-survey, this percentage increased to 83% of parents indicating that their child read daily and only one participant responded that their child never reads at home.

Another noticeable increase in the post-survey was regarding the question asking how often their child asks them to read to him/her. On the pre-survey, 28% of parents stated that their child never asks them to read to him/her. The results from the post-survey indicated that this number decreased to 17% of parents responding that their child never asks. It should also be mentioned that the responses from the question asking how often does their child use strategies to help them while reading showed a significant increase (see Figure 1). In the pre-survey, 44% of parents had indicated that their child uses strategies daily. Results from the post-survey indicated that this had increased to 61% of parents responding that their child uses strategies daily.
The remaining questions on the survey asked parents about their literacy practices at home. The choices for possible answers were: 1=disagree, 2=somewhat disagree, 3=somewhat agree and 4=agree. After analyzing data from the post-survey, some statements showed results worth mentioning.

In the pre-survey, 33% of participants responded that they agreed with the statement, “I use the reading strategies learned at school to assist my child with reading.” In the post-survey 61% of parents agreed with that statement. In the pre-survey, 11% of parents agreed with the statement, “I play literacy based games at home with my child.” In the post-survey, 56% of parents responded that they agreed with that statement.
showing a significant increase (see Figure 1). In the pre-survey 17% of participants agreed with the statement, “I have resources at home to help me with my child when they struggle with reading.” In the post-survey the number of participants agreeing with that statement increased to 55%.

A part of the post-survey included four open-ended questions for the participants to answer. The first question asked, “What did you hope to learn from these nights?” This question was asked because the author wanted to determine what knowledge parents were anticipating to gain from attending the workshops. This question also gave the author an opportunity to see if the goals of the workshops matched the hope that the parents had for the workshops.

After analyzing the answers from this question, two common trends were found: a) parents hoped to learn reading strategies to use with their child and b) parents hoped to learn ways to improve their child’s reading. A comment made by one workshop participant indicated that they hoped to learn “ways to boost my first graders reading skills and level. Another participant commented that they hoped to learn “the kind of rules to use at home that he is already learning in school.” All responses noted in Appendix H.

The second question asked, “What were the most important things you learned from these nights?” This question was a part of the survey because the author felt it necessary to understand which big concepts related to reading parents gained.
In reviewing the answers to this question, it seems parents left the workshops with the understanding that spelling has various patterns, literacy games keep reading fun and that new words can be learned through the use of literacy games/activities. One parent wrote, “That the games/suggestions were fantastic! It made it easier for me to help my daughter want to read.” Overall, the participants also answered that they were aware of various skills and strategies they could use at home to assist their child with reading. All responses are noted in Appendix H.

The third question wanted to know, “What activities will you use from these nights?” This question was asked because it enabled the author to understand which activities and/or reading skills taught were the most valuable and useful to the parents.

As indicated by the parent responses to this question, the majority of parents stated that the spelling mat game would be used at home. Several other participants commented that they would use the word games, such as concentration, at home. One parent wrote that they would “use the Oh No! Game, use the sight word flash cards for games and the different reading prompts.” Another participant indicated that they “have already started making more word cards for games and am incorporating them into our nightly routine.” All responses are noted in Appendix H.

The fourth open-ended question on the survey asked, “Do you think you might change anything at home during reading time? If so, what?” This question was incorporated into the survey to determine if a lasting impact had been made onto what parents do at home to help their child with reading.
After analyzing the answers, a few common trends were found amongst the responses. The first trend was that parents wanted to change how they assisted their child with reading at home. The second trend was that parents would make more time for reading at home. The third trend indicated that parents were happy to know the way strategies were taught in school so it could be reinforced at home. All responses are noted in Appendix H.

Overall, responses from parents were very positive and seemed to show that parents gained knowledge about literacy skills to use at home with their child. Many of the participants indicated that they were motivated to incorporate the reading strategies and literacy-based games at home.

*Student Interviews*

Student interviews were conducted the week following the completion of the final workshop. Of the parents that attended the workshop, eight of their children were randomly selected for the interviews. Each of the eight students were interviewed individually during the school day. The author felt student interviews were necessary to determine if the literacy games and/or skills taught at the workshops were being used at home.

After analyzing the data from the student interviews, a few common trends were found: students reported that they received help during homework and reading time, the students indicated that parents were providing strategies for reading and spelling and the
students were aware of “games” they play at home with their parents. All responses are available in Appendix I.

Of the eight students interviewed, 100% reported that someone was available to assist during homework and reading time. Students mostly indicated that Mom and sometimes Dad helped them with their homework. Six out of the eight students interviewed commented that they used some sort of strategy to help them read and/or spell. One student stated, “I sound it out, I see if it would fit in the sentence and then I ask my Mom.” Another comment made by a student was, “My mom says look at the sounds or look for part of the word and then put it together.” These comments seem to indicate that students are aware of the strategies, and parents are using them to assist their child.

When asked if they play any word/homework games at home, 88% of the students reported that they did play literacy games at home. Some students commented on games played such as hangman, sight word games and using the spelling mat. One comment by a student was, “I use that spelling folder (child pointed to a spelling mat) and my Mom helps me. And we use flash cards for sight words to play memory.” Another comment by a student was, “I play hangman with my spelling words. My Mom and my big sisters play with me.” These student responses indicate that literacy games are being played at home and usually with the support of a parent or older sibling.

Of the students interviewed, 88% reported that they read every day at home. Many students commented on where they read at home and at what time. As one student pointed out, “I read on all days. I can read all the time, on the couch, outside or I read
inside.” One student commented, “I read once a day. I do it after snack and then before I got to bed.” These student responses appear to correlate with data from the parent post-survey that indicated an increase in the child’s daily reading.

Recommendations

There are a few ways in which the literacy-based workshops could be improved. Although it appeared the workshops were helpful to parents through analysis of answers from the surveys, the assumption can be made that there are ways in which to improve the content of the survey. Increasing parent participation, improving the content of the parent survey and enhancing the elements of the workshops could improve this project.

Parent Participation

Although it was useful to control the selection of parents invited to the literacy-based workshops by using assessment scores as a criteria, it also hindered the results of the project because it allowed for smaller group participation. By controlling the number of parents invited to the workshop, it limited the amount of measurable results. The workshops could have been opened up to all parents of first grade students at the elementary site. That would allow for a greater data sample size and thus making the results more valid.

The workshops were also conducted over a three-week time span, therefore making it more difficult for participants to attend all sessions. It is possible that if all three workshops were held within one week, it would have allowed for greater participation. It was also suggested that future workshops be held on Saturdays to enable
more parents to attend. More contact could have been made with parents to ensure their attendance, either through more reminder notices or phone calls made home. It would have also been effective to stress the importance of attending all three workshops or require that parents attend all three workshops. These efforts can be used for future development of literacy-based workshops.

**Survey**

The survey could have been designed in a clearer format. One of the ways to do this is through making the survey readable to the parent. Instead of a numerical rating, a simple “yes or no” format could help to simplify answers and allow parents to understand the question or statement in an easier manner. The survey could have had the same type of answer key throughout, making the survey more consistent. Some questions could be removed from the survey because the responses derived from the question(s) may not have pertained to the goal of the workshops. It is possible that some questions/statements were redundant or not clear to parents, thus making the parent response invalid.

**Elements of the Workshops**

The literacy-based workshops could be improved, which would in turn improve this project. As the workshop was being designed, surveys could have been sent out to parents asking if they would attend the workshop and what day and time works best to allow their attendance. By involving parents in the scheduling, it can increase the amount of attendees for the workshops. It would have also been helpful to ask parents what they are already doing to promote literacy at home. By asking and acknowledging what
practices parents are already implementing at home, it will hopefully promote good literacy habits. This would hopefully make parents feel valued in their efforts to help their child academically and improve that relationship between home and school.

Another element of the workshop that could have been improved is the content and goals of the workshops. Since learning to read is such a complex task, teaching parents about the reading skills their child is learning can become an in-depth topic. For example, fluency was covered in one workshop as part of this project. However, fluency is a complex task, involving many reading skills, that changes throughout the year for a first grader. It can be suggested that the literacy-based workshops occur three times a year, possibly at the start of each trimester. Each series of workshops could offer a more extensive look at a particular reading skill, allowing parents more time to understand and implement the taught strategies.

Conclusions

The participants of this project attended three literacy-based workshop after the school day. The participants were given pre- and post-surveys to determine the literacy practices being used at home and the effectiveness of the workshops. The author analyzed the data from the pre- and post-surveys and found trend that were common amongst the responses. Some of the students whose parents attended the workshops were interviewed to determine if parents were implementing skills/strategies learned at the workshop at home. It was found that prior to the workshops, some parents did not feel comfortable using the reading strategies that were taught at school to help them assist their child with
reading and they lacked the resources to provide their child with support. It was also found that many parents did not play any literacy-based games at home with their children. It seemed parents lacked the knowledge of reading strategies taught at school and were lacking the appropriate resources. After attending the three literacy-based workshops, parents indicated an awareness of reading strategies taught at school. The participants also demonstrated that they were playing more literacy games at home and felt that they had better resources to support their child’s reading development.

Overall, the workshops seemed to be helpful and successful for the participants and the teacher implementing the workshops. The information gained from this project was shared with other teachers from the school site. Those teachers that heard the information were motivated to implement a similar workshop series, involving the whole team of teachers, at the start of the following school year. It is hoped that this project may also motivate teachers from other schools/districts to implement similar literacy-based parent workshops in the future.
APPENDIX A

Recruitment Flyers

Family Literacy Nights
for
1st Grade Parents

Please join us for three nights of literacy!
You will learn ways to help your child
with reading at home. New strategies will
be taught each night.

When: Wednesday, January 13, 2010
       Wednesday, January 20, 2010
       Wednesday, January 27, 2010
Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
Location: Foskett Ranch Elementary
          Room 105
Please return bottom portion to school by Friday, January 8, 2010.

×---------------------------------------------------------------------------------
Child’s Name ________________________________________________
Your Name __________________________________________________
Child’s Teacher ________________________________________________
☐ Yes, I will attend all 3 nights.
☐ I can only attend these nights:
   ☐ January 13th ☐ January 20th ☐ January 27th
☐ No, I can’t attend any night.
REMINDER!!
Family Literacy Nights
for
1st Grade Parents

Don’t forget to join us for the literacy nights!
You will learn ways to help your child
with reading at home. New strategies will
be taught each night.

When: Wednesday, January 13, 2010
       Wednesday, January 20, 2010
       Wednesday, January 27, 2010

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Location: Foskett Ranch Elementary
          Room 105

Please return bottom portion if you haven’t already done so.

☐ Yes, I will attend all 3 nights.
☐ I can only attend these nights:
   ☐ January 13th    ☐ January 20th    ☐ January 27th
☐ No, I can’t attend any night.
APPENDIX B

First Literacy Workshop

Agenda

Workshop 1

4:00-4:05  Refreshments, pre-survey completion.
4:05-4:15  Introductions, announcements, discuss purpose of workshops and literacy topic for evening (word reading) and Reading Lions Assessment.
4:15-4:30  Review literacy information handouts (5 Big Ideas in Reading, Reading Rules & Skills).
4:35-4:55  Make-and-Take game, discuss other sight word activities for home, review 1st grade list of sight words.
4:55-5:00  Question and answer time, reminder of next workshop.
The Five Big Ideas in Reading

1. PHONEMIC AWARENESS- Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the individual sounds in words. For example, taking the spoken word "dog" and separating it into three distinct sounds, /d/ /o/ /g/ requires phonemic awareness skill. Why is phonemic awareness important? Simple. Because of its strong correlation to reading fluency. The research is clear; children who develop strong phonemic awareness skills at an early age are more likely to become fluent readers and better spellers than children who do not.

2. ALPHABETIC PRINCIPLE- The understanding that letters are used to represent the speech sounds of our language. Children must demonstrate the ability to associate sounds with letters and use these sounds to form words.

3. READING FLUENCY- Reading fluency is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with appropriate expression. Fluent readers demonstrate an effortless and automatic ability to read words in connected text. They read as if they were speaking.

Ultimately, the purpose for reading is comprehension. There is no point to reading if not to gain information. While reading comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading, reading fluency is the key to achieving it! Without sufficient reading fluency, children will not have sufficient comprehension.

4. VOCABULARY- Vocabulary refers to the words we must know in order to communicate effectively. With relationship to reading, vocabulary plays an important role in two major ways.

   1. When learning to read, children have a much more difficult time learning to read words that are not already a part of their oral vocabulary.
   2. Vocabulary is very important to reading comprehension. Simply put, children cannot understand what they are reading without knowing what most of the words mean.

5. COMPREHENSION- Comprehension is the only reason for reading. Successful readers are able to extract useful knowledge from text. It is important to teach children active strategies to help them become active, purposeful readers. Keep this fact in mind though: The highest predictor of a child's reading comprehension level is his/her ability to decode text!

From readingresource.net
Reading Rules and Skills

Short Vowels: They are a, e, i, o, and u. They DON’T say their names.
  Short “a” sounds like “cat”
  Short “e” sounds like “bed”
  Short “i” sounds like “tip”
  Short “o” sounds like “pot”
  Short “u” sounds like “cut”

Long Vowels: They are a, e, i, o, and u. They DO say their names.
  Long “a” sounds like “tape”
  Long “e” sounds like “Pete”
  Long “i” sounds like “lime”
  Long “o” sounds like “note”
  Long “u” sounds like “flute”
  *The silent “e” at the end of words makes the first vowel say its name.

Digraphs: Digraphs are the “th”, “wh”, “sh” and “ch” sounds.
  As in thing, white, ship, chill.

Blends: Blends are two or three letters blended together to make one sound.
  Like in plant, stop, strap and prince.

Using “ck” in a word: If you see “ck” in a word, then the vowel before it is short. Also,
  “ck” is never used at the beginning of a word.
  Like in stack, chicken and neck.

Vowel Pairs: When two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking.
  Like in wait, beat and coach

*Remember, these rules are only guidelines. There are always exceptions to the rule!
Sight Word Activities

Sight words are words that cannot be phonetically sounded out and therefore must be memorized. Some examples of sight words include: the, of, some, friend, and said. Because they occur so often in text, children who do not automatically recognize sight words begin to have trouble with fluency, which can lead to difficulty with comprehension. The following are some activities to use with sight words.

Concentration:

Copy the words so you have a double set or two of each word. Use about 10-20 pairs of words. Mix them up and place the cards face down in rows and columns. Play Concentration (or Memory) where each person turns over two cards looking for a pair. Players read the cards aloud as they are flipped over whether there is a match or not. Matches go in the player’s “winning” pile. Unmatched cards are turned back over.

Go Fish:

Use the double sets of cards from the Concentration game. Play “Go Fish” with your child using the word cards instead of a deck of playing cards.
Word Hunts:

Let your child choose 3 to 4 sight words he/she is finding tricky. Give him/her a highlighter and a used magazine. Have your child go on a “Word Hunt” looking for his/her chosen words and highlighting them as they are found.

Wordo:

Use the double sets of cards from Concentration. Make a large tic-tac-toe 3x3 or 4x4 grid (like a Bingo card) then choose 9-16 sight word cards that your child needs to practice and place them in the squares of the grid. Use the second set of cards as the “calling” cards. Flip over a calling card, have your child read it aloud then check to see if it is on his/her board. If it is on the board they cover it with a penny (or other small object). Decide, before beginning, if he/she is playing four corners, 3 or 4 in a row or blackout to get “Wordo” (Bingo)

*Adapted from Bengle and Bengle (2009) Parent Teacher Workshop
1st Grade Sight Word List in order of introduction in Houghton Mifflin (HM)

1. on  
2. the  
3. and  
4. here  
5. not  
6. we  
7. a  
8. find  
9. have  
10. one  
11. to  
12. who  
13. four  
14. in  
15. once  
16. two  
17. what  
18. do  
19. for  
20. is  
21. my  
22. said  
23. you  
24. I  
25. are  
26. does  
27. he  
28. they  
29. where  
30. of  
31. see  
32. at*  
33. can*  
34. an*  
35. had*  
36. all  
37. called**  
38. first  
39. it*  
40. him*  
41. did*  
42. its***  
43. like  
44. many  
45. some  
46. come  
47. people  
48. your  
49. she  
50. know  
51. down  
52. would  
53. but*  
54. up*  
55. long  
56. more  
57. other  
58. these  
59. could  
60. how  
61. over  
62. so  
63. world  
64. make*  
65. give  
66. her  
67. little  
68. was  
69. time*  
70. by
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>out</td>
<td>98. that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no*</td>
<td>99. as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now</td>
<td>100. with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there</td>
<td>101. his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through</td>
<td>102. be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>been</td>
<td>103. this</td>
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<tr>
<td>way*</td>
<td>104. when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may*</td>
<td>105. which</td>
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<tr>
<td>again</td>
<td>106. if</td>
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<td>both</td>
<td>107. will</td>
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<td>or</td>
<td>108. each</td>
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<tr>
<td>want</td>
<td>109. them</td>
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<tr>
<td>most</td>
<td>110. then</td>
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<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td>111. has</td>
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<td>old</td>
<td>112. than</td>
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<tr>
<td>very</td>
<td>113. made</td>
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<tr>
<td>about</td>
<td>114. use</td>
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<tr>
<td>put</td>
<td>115. just</td>
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<tr>
<td>were</td>
<td>116. from</td>
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<td>work</td>
<td>117. into</td>
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<td>after</td>
<td>118. word</td>
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<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>119. another</td>
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<tr>
<td>only</td>
<td>120. great</td>
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<tr>
<td>together</td>
<td>121. should</td>
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<tr>
<td>enough</td>
<td>122. something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>head</td>
<td>123. often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thought****</td>
<td>124. different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>125. sometimes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Introduced as a spelling word
**“call” in HM
***“it” in HM
****“thoughts” in HM
Here is a copy of the blank grid that can be used at home while playing BINGO.

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Directions for Make-and-Take Game

Materials: marker or pen, index cards and a word list (can come from sight word list in weekly homework packet)

Directions: Copy the words onto index cards so you have a double set or two of each word. Index cards can be cut in half to make cards more manageable for children and save on paper! Use about 10-20 pairs of words depending on the comfort level of your child.

Playing the Game: Mix the word cards up and place them face down in rows and columns. Play “Concentration” or as some call it “Memory” so that each person turns over two cards at a time, hoping to make a match. On your turn, read each word aloud as you flip over a card. Decide whether there is a match or not. Matches go in your “winning” pile and unmatched cards are turned back over in their original spot.
APPENDIX C

Second Literacy Workshop

Agenda

Workshop 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00-4:05</td>
<td>Refreshments, questions about 1st workshop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:05-4:15</td>
<td>Introductions, announcements, discuss purpose of workshops and literacy topic for evening (phonics/spelling) and Reading Lions Assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15-4:30</td>
<td>Review literacy information handouts (spelling rules and principle, word pairs-short vowel to long vowel).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:35-4:55</td>
<td>Make-and-Take game, discuss other spelling activities for home, review use of make-and-take game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:55-5:00</td>
<td>Question and answer time, reminder of next workshop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Spelling Principles

1. We spell by letters and combinations.
   Ex: sheep, mad, heat, umbrella

2. We spell by the position of a sound in a word.
   Ex: badge, patch, candle, cluster

3. We spell by patterns.
   Ex: cape, bell, toy, my

4. We spell by meaning.
   Ex: citation, baked, rewind

5. Many words in English come from other languages.
   Ex: rodeo, league, plateau

Helpful Spelling Rules

Consonant Blends
Some words start with a consonant blend. This is where two or more consonants run into
one another or blend together. Here are some examples. Read them out loud:

   blanket    plastic    treat    strip    grand

Long Vowels/Magic “e”
Read the following words out loud. Notice how the magic “e” affects the way we say the
previous vowel. The way we say the “a” sound in cap is different to the way we say it in
cape. This is because of the magic e.

   cap…cape    slop…slope    mat…mate
Consonant Digraphs

Digraphs are only the “th”, “wh”, “sh” and “ch” sounds. When the two consonants come together they make a new, unique sound.

Read these out loud: thumb, whale, sheep, chick

Competent spellers are good at recognizing common spelling patterns. This enables them to predict how any sound might be spelled because they know of the different choices. For example, if they hear a long “o” sound in a word, as in hope, they will consider “oa”, “oe” or “o_e” as in boat, toe and cope.
Word Pairs – Short Vowel to Long Vowel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bit</th>
<th>bite</th>
<th>cub</th>
<th>cube</th>
<th>cut</th>
<th>cute</th>
<th>glob</th>
<th>globe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cap</td>
<td>cape</td>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>sag</td>
<td>sage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cod</td>
<td>code</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>mane</td>
<td>Sid</td>
<td>side</td>
<td>dot</td>
<td>dote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>con</td>
<td>cone</td>
<td>mad</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>sit</td>
<td>site</td>
<td>pop</td>
<td>pope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan</td>
<td>Dane</td>
<td>mat</td>
<td>mate</td>
<td>tam</td>
<td>tame</td>
<td>bad</td>
<td>bade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dim</td>
<td>dime</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>note</td>
<td>tap</td>
<td>tape</td>
<td>glob</td>
<td>globe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fad</td>
<td>fade</td>
<td>pal</td>
<td>pale</td>
<td>Tim</td>
<td>time</td>
<td>grad</td>
<td>grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fat</td>
<td>fate</td>
<td>pan</td>
<td>pane</td>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>tome</td>
<td>gag</td>
<td>gage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fin</td>
<td>fine</td>
<td>pin</td>
<td>pine</td>
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<td>rat</td>
<td>rate</td>
<td>van</td>
<td>vane</td>
<td>wag</td>
<td>wage</td>
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<td>hate</td>
<td>rid</td>
<td>ride</td>
<td>win</td>
<td>wine</td>
<td>quit</td>
<td>quite</td>
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<tr>
<td>hid</td>
<td>hide</td>
<td>rip</td>
<td>ripe</td>
<td>hug</td>
<td>huge</td>
<td>slid</td>
<td>slide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hop</td>
<td>hope</td>
<td>rob</td>
<td>robe</td>
<td>plan</td>
<td>plane</td>
<td>grim</td>
<td>grime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kit</td>
<td>kite</td>
<td>rod</td>
<td>rode</td>
<td>pet</td>
<td>Pete</td>
<td>slim</td>
<td>slime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spelling Games to Play at Home

Hangman Variation

It is similar to Hangman except that the letters have to be guessed in sequence.

Sometimes it helps to have the alphabet written out in front of your child. Start by writing the first letter of a word. Then put down dashes to represent the other letters. Allow ten guesses for the next letter. If there is no correct guess, put the letter in and go on to the next. Continue until the whole word is completed. See the example below

```
q-------
qu------
que-----
ques----
quest---
questi--
questio-
question
```

As players become more competent they are able to succeed with far fewer guesses. The game provides an ideal basis for parents to discuss the possible choices at any particular stage.

Oh No! Game

On index cards, write some common decodable (or that week’s spelling words) and non-decodable words. About 10-15 cards with words will work. Fold these in half and place in a container along with 5-7 index cards that say, “Oh No!” on them. Have your child read each card as they pull them out. If they read the card correctly they get to keep it. If the card is read incorrectly they have to put it back in the container. When an “Oh No!”
card is pulled out the child must put all of their cards back in the container. The “Oh No!” card is NOT put back in the container. You or an older brother/sister can play against your child. The player with the most cards at the end of the game is the winner.
This example of a “word ladder” can be used with the spelling mat. Start by making the target word on the spelling mat. Then follow the directions in the middle column to change the letters around to make a new word. It may be helpful for your child to hear the clues from the last column. Assist your child as necessary, prompt them before providing the answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team to Work</th>
<th>Target Word</th>
<th>Letter Changes Required</th>
<th>Clue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Meat</td>
<td>Rearrange letters</td>
<td>Food that comes from animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tame</td>
<td>Rearrange letters</td>
<td>Not wild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take</td>
<td>Chg 1</td>
<td>To get possession of something. To grab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tale</td>
<td>Chg 1</td>
<td>A story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>Chg 1</td>
<td>Not short.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toll</td>
<td>Chg 1</td>
<td>A fee paid for a service or privilege. We had to pay a one dollar toll to cross the bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ton</td>
<td>-2, + 1</td>
<td>A weight, 2,000 pounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Torn</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
<td>To have divided or separated something by pulling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worn</td>
<td>Chg 1</td>
<td>To have caused something to deteriorate or go bad by using it or wearing it out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Chg 1</td>
<td>What teams must do together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Houghton Mifflin Sound Spelling Cards used in the classroom.
This shows the reverse side of the Houghton Mifflin Sound Spelling Cards used in class.
Directions for Make-and-Take Game

Materials: 1 letter size file folder, Post-its (1 ½” x 2” size) in yellow, pink, blue and purple, ruler, black pen

Assembly Directions: Open the file folder and label tab “consonants.” Draw a line across the right hand side about 3” from top. Label that section “vowels.” Put 5 yellow Post-its in a horizontal row below the labeled “vowels” section. Label each Post-it with a lower case vowel. On the left side of folder, put 2 rows of pink Post-its and 2 rows of blue Post-its (4 Post-its in each horizontal row) and 1 row of 5 purple Post-its at the bottom. Label pink Post-its with b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k and then the blue Post-its with l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t. Label purple row with v, w, x, y, z. Then lift up each Post-it and write the corresponding letter on the file folder underneath the Post-it.

Note: If building longer words, you may need multiples of a letter. Simply stack additional Post-its on top of each other.

Playing the Game: Have your child practice making the words from the current week’s spelling list in their weekly homework folder. Dictate a word for your child, such as “pat.” The child should lift up the Post-it with “p” on it and then place in the work area. Then they add the “a” from the vowel area and finally the “t” from the consonant section. Then have your child blend the word, then spell the word aloud. Have your child return the Post-its to their original spot and then they are ready to build another word.

Note: The word ladders and the word pairs (short vowels to long vowels) handouts can be used for the spelling mat as well.
APPENDIX D

Third Literacy Workshop

Agenda

Workshop 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00-4:05</td>
<td>Refreshments, questions about previous workshops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:05-4:15</td>
<td>Introductions, announcements, discuss purpose of workshops and literacy topic for evening (fluency) and Reading Lions Assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15-4:45</td>
<td>Review literacy information handouts (improving fluency, reading prompts, reading aloud).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45-4:55</td>
<td>Discuss using these fluency strategies at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:55-5:00</td>
<td>Question and answer time, reminder of next workshop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading Aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge skills they will eventually require for learning to read.”

-Marilyn Jager Adams

Ideas to Improve Fluency

What is fluency?

Fluency is your child’s ability to read text with speed, accuracy and expression. Speed and accuracy in reading depend on well-developed word recognition skills. (From University of Texas at Austin)

Non-fluent readers are forced to expend great effort decoding text, resulting in frequent pauses and disconnected reading. Decoding places greater demands on cognitive abilities, so the reader has less capacity for comprehension. (From University of Texas at Austin)

Ways Parents Can Improve Reading Fluency with Paired Reading

Each night, the parent reads a brief poem or passage to their child. This is followed by the parent and child reading the passage together several times. Then the child reads the text to the parent. A great book for this type of paired reading is You Read to Me, I’ll Read to You: Very Short Stories to Read Together by Mary Ann Hoberman.

Reading with Emotion

Help students realize that reading with various emotions can change the meaning of a text. Have students practice reading in a “sad” voice, a “happy” voice, etc.
Poetry

Poetry is one of the best sources of text for building fluency. Its length, rhyme, rhythm, and repetitiveness lend itself well to reading with expression. Because it is fun, children are motivated to read more, which in turn helps them become more fluent.
Reading Prompts

Phonics is an important part of reading; however, reading to understand is the most important goal of reading. Good readers monitor and correct as they read. When a child is stuck on a word he/she is often told to “sound it out.” Sometimes this works, sometimes it doesn’t. Students need a variety of strategies to help them read. The following list provides some strategies besides just “sound it out.”

- Give the child a five to ten second time frame to see what they attempt.
- Ask, “Does that word make sense?”
- Say, “Look at the picture(s).”
- Say, “Put in a word that makes sense here.”
- Ask, “What word would make sense here?”
- Say, “Go back to the beginning and try again.”
- Ask, “Do we say it that way?”
- Ask, “What letter/sound does it start/end with?”
- Say, Skip over the word and read to the end of the sentence. Now what do you think the word might be?”
- Tell the child the word.

*Adapted from Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) (n.d.)
Reading Aloud to Your Child

Where

In addition to the usual places (couch, chair, child’s bed) consider the less traditional ones:

- Outside under a shady tree, in a hammock or under a tree.
- Keep a book in the car. Road trips are a great time to read.
- Spread a blanket on the floor for an indoor reading picnic.

When

- Start right from the cradle. Reading aloud can help calm a fussy baby!
- Continue reading aloud even after your child has learned to read.
- Set aside a special time every day to read aloud to your child. Before school, naptime, or at bedtime.
- Be aware of your child’s reactions. If they are restless, they may be trying to tell you they are at their limit of their attention span time. Stop reading and try another activity.

What

- Read whatever is at hand. Books, magazines and newspapers all work. So are road signs, menus, cereal boxes, billboards, etc.
- Vary your selections, returning to old favorites and introducing your child to new authors.
• Poetry makes a great read aloud selection for all ages. Rhythm and rhyme help keep a reader’s interest.

• Be flexible. If a child doesn’t like the book you are reading, drop it and try another.

• Occasionally, try reading stories that are slightly beyond your child’s reach.

How

• It helps to look over a book before you read it aloud.

• Read slowly and with expression!

• Make sure your child sits where they can see the book clearly.

• Expect lots of questions, especially from young children.

• It takes time to learn how to take pleasure in reading aloud. Children need time to learn how to listen. 😊

*Adapted from the Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) Parent Guide Brochure
APPENDIX E

Parent Surveys

Parent Pre-Survey

As part of my thesis and the family literacy workshop, I am interested in knowing more about literacy at home. The data I gather will be used to help me analyze the effectiveness of these workshops. Your survey will only be seen by me and will be kept confidential. You may footnote any item and explain your response if necessary.

Please check the box that best corresponds with your answer to each question:

1. How often does your child read at home?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

2. How often do you read to your child?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

3. How often does your child ask you to read books to him/her?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

4. How often does your child use strategies to help them while reading?
   i.e.: sounding out, rereading, asking “does it make sense?”
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

5. How often do you go to the library with your child?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

6. How often do you add to your child’s book collection?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

Please circle the numerical rating that corresponds with your judgment as follows:
   1 = disagree  2 = somewhat disagree  3 = somewhat agree  4 = agree

7. I feel comfortable helping my child with reading at home.
   1  2  3  4

8. I use the reading strategies learned at school to assist my child with reading.
   1  2  3  4
9. I play “literacy” based games at home with my child.
   
10. I have resources at home to help me with my child when they struggle with reading.

11. I feel comfortable communicating with my child’s teacher about reading.

12. The school encourages parents to communicate with teachers if they need help assisting their child at home.
Parent Post-Survey

As part of my thesis and the family literacy workshop, I am interested in knowing more about literacy at home. The data I gather will be used to help me analyze the effectiveness of the workshops. Your survey will only be seen by me and will be kept confidential. You may footnote any item and explain your response if necessary.

Please check the box that best corresponds with your answer to each question:

1. How often does your child read at home?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

2. How often do you read to your child?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

3. How often does your child ask you to read books to him/her?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

4. How often does your child use strategies to help them while reading?
   i.e.: sounding out, rereading, asking “does it make sense?”
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

5. How often do you go to the library with your child?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

6. How often do you add to your child’s book collection?
   - daily
   - weekly
   - monthly
   - never

Please circle the numerical rating that corresponds with your judgment as follows:

1 = disagree 2 = somewhat disagree 3 = somewhat agree 4 = agree

7. I feel comfortable helping my child with reading at home.
   1 2 3 4

8. I use the reading strategies learned at school to assist my child with reading.
   1 2 3 4

9. I play “literacy” based games at home with my child.
   1 2 3 4
10. I have resources at home to help me with my child when they struggle with reading.
   1  2  3  4

11. I feel comfortable communicating with my child’s teacher about reading.
   1  2  3  4

12. The school encourages parents to communicate with teachers if they need help assisting their child at home.
   1  2  3  4
Please answer the following questions as truthfully as possible. Your answers will be confidential and will help to ensure the effectiveness of these workshops.

1. What did you hope to learn from these nights?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. What were the most important things you learned from these nights?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

3. What activities will you use from these nights?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. Do you think you might change anything at home during reading time? If so, what?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX F

Student Interview Questions

1. How much reading do you do at home? What time do you read at home?

2. Does somebody help you with homework? Who?

3. Do you play any word/homework games at home? Does anyone play the word games with you? Which word games do you play at home?

4. What do you do when you can’t read or spell a word?

Record student answers here.

1. __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
APPENDIX G

Reading Lions Assessment Information

The following information was obtained from the Reading Lions website.

Accompanying each comprehension assessment is a grade-level specific, one-minute Oral Reading Fluency Assessment. Second through sixth grade fluency passages have an end-of-year readability. First grade passages progressively increase in reading difficulty over the year, beginning with early first grade readability and concluding with end-of-year.

Two passages are included for each assessment period. Frequently, one passage is nonfiction while the other is fiction. This provides teachers with information on how well their students are able to read both types of text. After both passages are read and scored, an average fluency score is determined. The percentile score designations of words correct per minute (WCPM) are based on Oral Reading Fluency Norms (2005) established by Jan Hasbrouck and Gerald Tindal.

Spelling Subtest:

The Spelling section monitors students’ progress in their use of the English sound/spelling system. The words chosen in this section of the Skills Assessments are obtained from the "Word Work," "Spelling," "Spiral Review," and "Reading-Writing Workshop" (Spelling Connections) sections of the Houghton Mifflin curriculum.
Vocabulary Subtest:

This section of the Skills Assessments monitors students' vocabulary development. Words used in the Vocabulary section are taken from "Reading" in the program: "Key Vocabulary," "Curriculum Links," and the underlined anthology words in the teacher's editions.
APPENDIX H

Parent Post-Survey Responses

To Open-Ended Questions

1. What did you hope to learn from these nights?

   Parent a) “Ideas to help improve my child’s reading.”

   Parent b) “Ways to help my children become better readers.”

   Parent c) “How to help my boys learn to read.”

   Parent d) “How to be more patient with my child. What kind of rules to use at home that he is already learning in school.”

   Parent e) “I wanted to obtain some ways to help my child be more interested in reading/learning.”

   Parent f) “Ways to boost my 1st graders reading skills and level. He was behind from a fairly non-productive Kinder year.”

   Parent g) “New ways to help my daughter learn new words. Tips on how to help her improve her reading.”

   Parent h) “I wanted to learn what to use at home to help my son read better.”

   Parent i) “How to encourage my child to read more.”

   Parent j) “Different ways to increase my child’s reading level.”

   Parent k) “I hoped to learn what was going on in school so I could do the same at home.”
Parent l) “Some ideas on improving reading time and homework.”

Parent m) “Ways to help my child read better.”

Parent n) “How to help my child’s confidence in reading and help them become a better reader.”

Parent o) “Some new things to help her reading get better.”

Parent p) “I hope to get ideas on what to do at home when we read.”

Parent q) “I was hoping to learn some things to get my child reading at the right level.”

Parent r) “New ideas and ways to get his reading up to grade level.”

2. What were the most important things you learned from these nights?

Parent a) “Ways to help improve my child’s reading.”

Parent b) “Showing or explanations of sounds. Loved the various games we were shown.”

Parent c) “Different ways to help them learn to read.”

Parent d) “The games have been very helpful. Great ideas. Learning that it’s okay to let them spell wrong and to focus more on the sounds.”

Parent e) “The ideas/suggestions were fantastic! Made it easier for me to help her want to read.”

Parent f) “Memorization of a book is useful to them and reminding myself to keep it fun.”
Parent g) “Tools and games that will help me and my daughter learn new words which will help her in reading.”

Parent h) “The different games we could play at home to improve reading.”

Parent i) “I have used all of the handouts from each night to help my child.”

Parent j) “The games that we made were fun and we played it that night.”

Parent k) “The different strategies for reading have helped me.”

Parent l) “Having things explained, like what they are learning at school.”

Parent m) “It was helpful to know what my child is expected to know in first grade. The list of sight words and the tests that they have to take.”

Parent n) “Knowing how to explain reading things the way the teacher does.”

Parent o) “Games and different ways to help sound out words.”

Parent p) “How to improve reading and helping at home.”

Parent q) “I liked learning how to help my child when they’re stuck on a word.”

Parent r) “Now I know how to help him spell words.”

3. What activities will you use from these nights?

Parent a) “Working on their fluency.”
Parent b) “Spelling mat and word games.”

Parent c) “The spelling word game.”

Parent d) “I have already started making cards for the games and am incorporating them into our nightly routine.”

Parent e) “The “folder” game was the best, as she loves games.”

Parent f) “Bingo, hangman, remembering to read more than we have.”

Parent g) “We use the Oh No! game, use the sight word flash cards for games and the different reading prompts.”

Parent h) “I will use the reading prompts.”

Parent i) “The spelling mat game was a great idea.”

Parent j) “We will use all of the games.”

Parent k) “The spelling game and memory with the sight words.”

Parent l) “We’ll use the games and use them as a reward to get homework done faster.”

Parent m) “The spelling cards with pictures and sounds on them. We will use those at night when we do homework.”

Parent n) “The list of different ways to help sound out words and the spelling folder game.”

Parent o) “Reading out loud every night, memory and hangman.”

Parent p) “We have used the spelling mat already, it was great!”

Parent q) “The games for sight words were good.”
Parent r) “We will use the spelling folder and sight word games.”

4. Do you think you might change anything at home during reading time? If so, what?

Parent a) “Remember to read slower to my kids.”

Parent b) “Absolutely, help them figure out what word on their own vs. me just telling them. We will use the reading prompts.”

Parent c) “Have them try and read more on their own.”

Parent d) “Reading more. Using some of the rules that are used in class.”

Parent e) “Read more. Allow her to work out the words instead of just giving her the answers.”

Parent f) “We moved reading to daytime instead of bed, so Mom’s not so tired and it gets skipped.”

Parent g) “Yes, I will utilize the sound spelling cards as they help me understand how she is being taught in the classroom so I can use the same method.”

Parent h) “We will read more each night and play reading games.”

Parent i) “Helping my child with reading words and reading more.”

Parent j) “Implementing games, being encouraging and make the time!”

Parent k) “Help them sound out rather than just giving the word to them.”

Parent l) “It is easy to skip reading since we are so busy, but we must make the time.”
Parent m) “Definitely, we will read and I will be more helpful during that time.”

Parent n) “Using what is taught in class to help them sound out words.”

Parent o) “More practice, nightly, with sight words.”

Parent p) “I know we will play the games and I can use the ideas from these nights to work with my child.”

Parent q) “We have to read more even after homework. I know I can be more patient and try to keep homework time fun.”

Parent r) “I will help him more with sounding out words and in spelling. We’ll use the games to help with this.”
APPENDIX I

Student Interview Responses

1. How much reading do you do at home? What time do you read at home?

   Student a) “I read on all days. I can read all the time, on the couch, outside
   or I read inside.”

   Student b) “I read everyday of the week, after dinner and before bed.”

   Student c) “I read so much. Everyday after dinner or in the afternoon.”

   Student d) “I read my homework and my books everyday when my mom
tells me. I read when I come home from school and at bed.”

   Student e) “I read once a day. I do it after snack and then before I go to
   bed.”

   Student f) “I practice reading everyday, a lot. I read my books in my room.
   I read after I play.”

   Student g) “I read a lot, everyday after homework. I like to read outside
   and at night.”

   Student h) “I don’t read all the nights but my best reading time is after
   homework.”

2. Does somebody help you with homework? Who?

   Student a) “My Mom helps me and sometimes my big sisters.”

   Student b) “My Mom and Dad help.”

   Student c) “My Mom helps me, she does.”
Student d) “I do my homework with my Mom.”

Student e) “I ask my Mom if she will help me and she helps me.”

Student f) “My Dad helps me sometimes, but my Mom always helps.”

Student g) “My Mom and my Dad help me with homework.”

Student h) “Sometimes my Mom and Dad, but not really my big sister.”

3. Do you play any word/homework games at home? Does anyone play the games with you? Which word games do you play?

   Student a) “I play hangman with my spelling words. My Mom and my big sisters play with me.”

   Student b) “Yes, I use my sight words for games. It’s usually with my Mom.”

   Student c) “I use that spelling folder and my Mom helps me. And we use flash cards for sight words to play memory.”

   Student d) “Me and my Mom play with the spelling mat. We play teacher and then play hangman.”

   Student e) “Yes, with my Mom and I use the spelling folder game.”

   Student f) “No, not really.”

   Student g) “We play all those games together. The memory game and the cards with sight words. It’s just with my Mom.”

   Student h) “I play my sight word game. We use the flash cards. My Mom plays with me.”
4. What do you do when you can’t read or spell a word?

   Student a) “My Mom says look at the sounds or look for part of the word and then put it together.”

   Student b) “I sound it out, I see if it would fit in the sentence and then I ask my Mom.”

   Student c) “She helps me with part of a word and then I just read it.”

   Student d) “I sound it out if I don’t know the word and my Mom will help me.”

   Student e) “I just get it all by myself.”

   Student f) “My Mom helps me with sounds so I can spell good.”

   Student g) “She (Mom) tells me to sound it out. My Mom helps me choose the letters.”

   Student h) “I usually can do it just by myself.”
REFERENCES


