EFFECT OF PARENT TRAINING IN READING STRATEGIES ON THE ATTITUDES OF THIRD GRADE STUDENTS TOWARD READING AT HOME

A RESEARCH PROJECT

submitted to the Department of Teacher Education, University of Dayton, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Science in Education

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January 29, 1997
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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Carmen Giebelhaus for her expertise, guidance and support throughout the process of this project.

Special thanks to my family, Patrick, Krista, and Alyson for their unending patience, understanding, and love during the past year.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

As schools struggle to effectively educate children, the research points toward a need for a stronger partnership between parents and schools. In recent years the focus has shifted away from parent participation. The schools have taken on more and more responsibility for educating children. Parents and teachers alike hold responsibility for allowing parent involvement to wane. Our schools need to research and implement ways to reach parents while encouraging positive parent involvement.

Offering parents the tools to help their children is one way of reaching out to parents. Parent involvement can have a positive influence on the academic achievement of children. Specifically, the research reveals the power of parents to help their children become good readers (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson, 1985). Will children benefit if teachers involve parents in the reading process
by teaching them reading strategies for use at home?

Background

Reading Development

A 1985 publication, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson), concluded that parents play a vital role in teaching their children to read. Even before a child enters formal education he has had experiences and opportunities to learn about the world around him. These experiences can be guided and enhanced by an involved parent. If schools can find ways to advise parents on how to help their children be good readers, the child's level of interest and enjoyment in reading, as well as his or her ability to read, will improve (Rasinski and Fredericks, 1989). The more children read the better they will become at the task (McMakin, 1993).

Gillum (1977) looked closely at reading and math scores of students in three Michigan school districts. Students whose parents received parent involvement training reflected the highest reading achievement.

Rasinski (1994) developed a pilot reading program for children
receiving corrective reading instruction. Fast Start Program set out to increase reading achievement through long term parent use of the program with their children. The parents were instructed in reading strategies focusing on fluency, word recognition, and comprehension. The program also hoped to improve parents' perceptions of teachers and schools. The Fast Start Program accomplished both goals. Parent involvement had a significant positive impact, in addition to increasing reading levels, on the participants of the program.

Reading aloud to a child is a simple way to help children begin to understand the world of print and the comprehension of words. Silvern (1985) reminds us that although parents view reading as an enjoyable activity they are not knowledgeable about the reading process and how it effects their child's development.

*Teacher perspectives*

Teachers and parents are criticized for the lack of achievement in schools today. Stevenson and Stigler (1992) say as teachers face increasing responsibilities they are not given additional preparation time. Epstein and Becker (1982) also cite teacher's time constraints as a barrier to implementing programs for parents to
use in their survey of over 3000 teachers. Teachers report this factor also impacts parents ability to follow through with their children. Teachers in the study also highlighted several benefits of parental involvement including increased skills and a positive parental self image. Topping (1987) points out that teachers want parents to be involved, yet they are uncertain if the parents will have a positive influence on the child's progress. The parent may be more likely to react to mistakes and be more critical (Hannon, Jackson, Weinberger, 1986). Rasinski (1989) argues, some teachers feel parents may have “a negative impact on school reading instruction” (p. 226).

*Parent perspectives*

Historically, parents have been an integral part of a child’s training (Berger, 1991). However, in recent years, Stevenson and Stigler (1992) report parents have been accused of being uninterested, unsupportive, and consumed by their own problems. Stevenson and Stigler suggest parents feel estranged from their children’s schools. They feel they do not know how to help with the onset of new techniques in teaching. Rasinski and Fredericks (1989)
conducted a parent opinion poll which concluded that parents are aware of their responsibility to encourage the reading development of their children.

*Parental Involvement Training*

Parents as a whole want to be involved with their children. Teachers are aware of the benefits of involved parents. How can parents be better prepared to fill this need?

It is evident from the research that how parents help their children varies. *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson, 1985) discusses the following differences in the approach parents use and the results. Reading relies on a person’s knowledge of the world through language. In the early years a parent can make a child’s world of language rich and full by asking thought-provoking questions, or they can ask questions which only require a statement of what is experienced leaving the child’s language undeveloped. In this same light, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* reports reading aloud as the most important activity for building knowledge required for success in reading. The report explains when reading aloud to children parents should engage the
child in the story through discussion, word meaning, and identification of words and letters in order to give children the greatest benefit.

Parental involvement is needed in the educational process of our children if we are to foster their greatest potential. A team approach between school and parents will encourage both parties to better meet the needs of children, parents and teachers. From this, parents will feel a link to their children’s school and may respond more positively toward teachers. With a greater sense of accomplishment and worthiness, parents will see their role in the educational process as significant and positive while their children reap the benefits of becoming lifelong readers.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate a method which is intended to increase parental involvement and its effectiveness while improving children’s attitudes toward reading at home with their parents. A reading workshop, designed to give parents the training they need to help their children become better readers, will be investigated.
This study was conducted with the children of one suburban third grade classroom. The population was small and can not be generalized to other settings, parents, or children. The study was conducted over a seven week period.

**Limitations and assumptions**

It was assumed that the parents of the third graders would want to be involved at home with their children. In addition, the assumption was made that parents were willing to attend and participate in the workshop and were available on the given dates. Honest feedback from the participating parents was relied on when responding to the survey and observation log. The children in the study were also relied upon for an accurate account on the survey.

**Research questions**

Will parents who participate in the reading workshop training increase their involvement in their child’s reading more than the parents who did not attend the workshop? Will children whose parents participated in the reading workshop training have a more positive attitude toward reading at home with their parents than the children whose parents did not attend?
Procedure

Sample

This study was carried out in a suburban elementary school of approximately 450 students, kindergarten through fifth grade. The school is located in Southwest, Ohio. The socioeconomic level is diverse. Fifty percent of the parents are college graduates who are in the middle to upper socioeconomic level. Approximately seven percent of the families are receiving some type of government assistance.

A convenient sample of twenty-one third grade students was used in the study. The experimental group (Group I) involved ten children and their parents. All ten Group I students came from two parent households. The control group (Group II) was made up of eleven children from the same class. Ten parents, one from each household, participated in the treatment. Seven mothers and three fathers were present. The children of these parents ranged from a 2.5 to a 4.5 grade level in reading ability based on critical skills testing (May, 1996) and teacher observation.
Design

The study was a quasi-experimental design with two groups. At Open House, two weeks prior to the reading workshop, parents received a brief verbal explanation and a letter. The letter explained the purpose of the workshop, the importance of their participation and a response slip. A confirmation notice was then sent home one week before the workshop.

The workshop consisted of an oral and visual presentation of background information and reading strategies children use when reading. An explanation of the strategies was given to help parents guide their children. The strategies were outlined for home use and presented in packet form for parents to follow and highlight. All information was designed to be easy to follow. An overhead projector was used to enhance the visual aspect of the presentation. In order to measure the outcome of the study, a pre- and post-survey was given to the children of the experimental group before and after the seven week study. At the end of the study, data was collected on Survey I and II in both the experimental and control groups. The data was then analyzed. A comparison was made
between Survey I and Survey II, before and after the reading workshop, in both Group I and II. It was then determined if there was an increase in time children spent reading at home with their parents. In addition, the surveys were examined for an increase in positive attitudes toward reading at home with a parent.

Summary

Parents and teachers need to do their part to increase positive, effective parental involvement. Rasinski and Fredericks (1989) support the need this way:

Perhaps the main thing to remember is that over the long run involving parents is worth the effort. If, as teachers and administrators, we are truly committed to student growth in reading and other academic areas, then parental involvement can no longer be considered an option. It is a must (p. 85).

If teachers are willing to create an environment whereby parents can learn strategies for helping their children become better readers, parents may then feel more positive about the role they
play, increase their effectiveness as "teachers", and spend more quality time with their children. This study examines those questions of time and attitude.

The results of this study may break down some of the barriers which exist between parents and teachers leading to an increase in communication. The study may lead to other workshops of its kind in different academic areas such as mathematics. It may encourage parents to maintain involvement with their children and support of the teacher throughout the child's school career. It may give children the strong role models they need to become lifelong readers.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Parent involvement is a vital part of a child’s education. A partnership between school and home can be established. When parents, teachers, students and others view one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and begins its work (Epstein, 1995). In this review of the literature the following areas will be addressed: (1) the effects of parent involvement on reading development; (2) teacher perspectives toward parent involvement; (3) parent perspectives toward parent involvement; and (4) parent involvement models.

The effects of parent involvement on reading development

Becoming a Nation of Reader’s (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and
Wilkinson, 1985) reports “the single most important activity for building knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children” (p. 23). When parents are involved in their children’s reading it leads to improvement in the student’s ability to read (Rasinski and Fredericks, 1989).

Epstein (1984) investigated the effects of teacher practices concerning parental involvement on student achievement test scores in math and reading. Epstein analyzed 293 Baltimore, Maryland students in grades three to five, who had been given the California Achievement Test in the fall and spring of the 1980-1981 school year. The fourteen teachers of these students ranged from leaders in the area of using parental involvement at home to infrequent users to teachers who did not use parental involvement. These two elements, teacher leadership and parent involvement, factor into the results of Epstein’s longitudinal study. The data showed significant reading achievement gains of children whose parents were involved at home.

Ryan (1964) did a comparative study of the reading achievement of 116 second grade students. The experimental group was given
reading activities for use at home by parent and child, while the control group had no parent involvement. The Stanford Achievement Test for word meaning and a Second Grade Readiness Test were given in October, 1963 and March, 1964 in Evansville, Indiana. The parents in the experimental group read three or more books a week to their children and took them to the library two to three times a month. The results indicated significantly higher scores among the experimental group over the control group on the Stanford Achievement Test at the .01 level.

Bloom (1980) investigated the environmental process variables at home. His findings, through interviews and observations, pointed to the development of language, encouragement of the child to learn, provision of help in learning, and an organized time and space in which to learn. These factors resulted in high achievement in reading vocabulary and problem solving.

Hewison and Tizard (1980) conducted two studies of separate groups of seven and eight year old children. The first study showed children whose mothers read to them scored higher on the Southgate Reading Test I than children whose mothers did not listen to them
read. The second study showed children whose mothers listened to them read scored higher on the reading test than children whose mothers read to them. This indicates that listening to children read is an important part of reading development. The more children read the better they will become at the task (McMakin, 1993).

Later, Tizard, Schofield and Hewison (1982) completed a two year study assessing the effects of parental involvement in the teaching of reading. Two random primary classes in each of six multiracial inner-city schools in Haringey, London were selected. One class in each school read to their parents two to four times a week using books sent home by the teacher. The other classes did not read to their parents at home. In addition, two classes at two other primary schools were given extra reading instruction in small groups at school one to two times a week, but were given no parental help at home. All three of the study groups were tested before the study began, at the end of two years, and again one year later. Test data on the Southgate Group Reading Test, Carver Word Recognition Test, and Spooner's Group Assessment for word recognition, reading comprehension and phonics indicate the reading
achievement of the children who had received help at home was substantially higher. Tizard points out "the greater practical significance is that teachers and parents working in collaboration did improve the academic performance of the children" (Tizard, Schofield, and Hewison, 1982, p.13).

Silvern (1985) reviewed thirty studies which identified parent practices related to reading achievement. Silvern wrote: "The development of parent involvement programs does produce significant increases in children' reading achievement" (p. 49).

Gillum (1977) investigated three Michigan school districts and their use of parent involvement performance contracts. The three areas of study included: (1) determining if participating students had higher reading achievement than the other students, (2) determining if there was a significant difference in reading achievement among the three school districts and, (3) comparing the three contracts to discover if the parent involvement component resulted in the differences in reading achievement. Two thousand disadvantaged students in twelve schools, grades two to six, were pre- and post- tested at the beginning and end of the school year.
The Stanford and Metropolitan Achievement Tests were used. The post-test were compared to the national norm to see if the achievement was greater than what would have been expected from the pre-test scores. District A held four community information programs throughout the school year with parents. District D held an open house at the beginning of the year at which they presented demonstrations of the program given at a PTA meeting. District C designed and implemented an inservice training program for administrators, parents and teachers. Forty parent leaders received training and in turn instructed other parents on their child's educational program, cooperation at school and reinforcing the child at home. Educational materials and stipends were dispensed. The results showed the children in all three districts reached higher than expected reading levels. District C, which featured parent involvement, scored significantly higher than districts A or B.

Simple reading techniques used at home by parents can increase children's reading achievement (Rich, 1976). In order to test this concept, the Home and School Institute of Catholic University studied 218 first graders. A random selection of students from
Washington, D.C. Archdiocese School was used. The McGraw-Hill Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills was administered in a pre-test and post-test. A control group was also tested. Eight simply designed activities were given to parents to be used at home with children to reinforce reading and math. The experimental group scored significantly higher in reading achievement.

A study conducted in Boulder Valley School District (1975) looked at developmentally delayed children from the beginning of kindergarten to the start of first grade. Three areas were investigated over a three year period. They were: (1) diagnostic observation and testing; (2) staff training for individualized instruction; and (3) parent involvement. The third component also had a control group. The parents of the experimental group met with teachers every two weeks and were given workshops and suggestions on developmentally appropriate activities. Parents devoted ten minutes a day to the educational activities. The results indicated scores in the normal range for both groups. However, those children receiving parental involvement demonstrated a higher level of maintaining their reading gains.
Brieling (1976) cites a survey conducted with the parents of a Title I program in Montgomery County, Maryland. The parents of the children in grades kindergarten through fifth grade in fifteen elementary schools were asked what type of program they would most like to attend. The majority of the parents requested training in ways to help their child with reading skills. The meetings were broken into five parts every other week. Topics included specific materials to help the child at home, actual books to use at home, sequence and vocabulary instruction, reading games, and ways to show positive reinforcement. The Botel Word recognition Test was given before and after the eight week study. An entire grade level of growth was shown in a few cases, while some showed no gains. Overall, students demonstrated greater gains than would be expected in a normal two month interval with no parental involvement.

Bartlett, Hall and Neale (1984) cite their six week program with nineteen remedial and dyslexic students as successful. Parents met to learn important techniques which may impact a child’s progress at home. The program outlined the importance of (1) not using criticism to help a failing reader, (2) allowing children to take risks
to become better readers, (3) having children hear the text prior to reading it aloud, 4) not using discouraging remarks, gritting teeth, or sighing, and 5) giving the child a word he does not know to increase success. The results indicated an increase in reading achievement from two months to one year on the Salford Reading Test after the six week project.

Granfield and Smith (1995) investigated a method to involve parents in a reading workshop to learn strategies used in their child's classroom. The study was designed to evaluate the extent to which a training workshop improved parental attitudes toward helping their children learn to read. The focus of their study was parent frustration, amount of time spent reading, strategies used by parents before and after the workshop, and the parent's perceptions of their child's attitude toward reading. A one-tailed t-test indicated a drop in parent frustration after the reading strategies had been taught.

Teacher perspectives toward parental involvement

Epstein and Becker (1981) surveyed 3,700 teachers in 600 schools in Maryland, to learn their opinions on parent involvement in
the home. The responses varied. Teachers cited lack of teacher training, parent's educational level, degree of support from administration, overworked parents, apathy in parents, and academic stresses at home as some of the factors influencing the parental involvement. Planning parent involvement programs requires time. The time needed for planning and implementing is voluntary and does not always reap the expected benefits, according to the teachers surveyed. Teachers reported the need for extra training in the area of parent involvement. Teachers see more families becoming single parent homes and having less time and energy. Some teachers viewed parents as apathetic to their children's needs while dealing with an assortment of their own problems. It was suggested that the educational level of parents may affect parent's ability to help their children at home. A lack of support from some administrators was seen by some to be a factor in maintaining a parent involvement program. Families may not see homework as an important part of a child's education. If homework is not an accepted practice it may be viewed as an intrusion on the family (Epstein and Becker, 1981). Some teachers felt too many academic requirements at home can
stress to the child and parent. Some teachers in the study believed home related skills and responsibilities should be emphasized at home.

Teachers who felt more positively about parent involvement noted that they could not do their job well without the help of parents. Parents could be effective given short activities to do at home with their children. Parents may be more willing to participate if reinforcing activities are kept brief. The benefits of having involved parents at home included improved basic skills, retention of skills over the summer, better behavior in class, enrichment through the home, and a sense of home-school cooperation. An overall feeling of pride and enjoyment by parents and children could be achieved through parent involvement. The opinions of the teachers in the Epstein and Becker (1981) study reflect three main viewpoints:

1) Parents care but cannot do much to help the school or children in actual learning.

2) Parents care but should not help with the learning.
3) Parents care and can be of great help if they are shown how to help (p.111).

Most teachers and administrators want to help, but may not know how to go about it and are therefore afraid to try (Epstein, 1995).

The results of Epstein and Becker's (1982) multiple regression procedure used to study the effects of the possible influences on teacher behavior and attitudes toward parent involvement. They concluded the grade level the teacher teaches, student discipline, racial background of the students, parent characteristics, and teacher characteristics all play a role in teachers' attitude toward parent involvement. The study cited primary teachers as more likely to initiate a plan. If discipline problems are high teachers feel parent involvement is less likely to succeed. Teachers of black children were more likely to help parents at home, while parents of white children were more likely to help in the classroom. Teachers of parents at all educational levels are equal in their use of parent involvement. The teacher's amount of continuing education has a high correlation to their use of parental involvement according to this study. However, teaching experience had no effect on its use.
Hannon (1995) in his book *Literacy: Home and School*, discusses teachers in the past and present who try to maintain a professional identity. They feel by involving parents it may allow parents to see the possible shortcomings of the teacher or teaching. Hannon also points out that involving parents today, when teachers are already overworked in large class settings, is viewed as “one more thing to do” (p.19). Hannon remarks on the complexity of teaching literacy, especially reading. If one set way was used to teach reading, teachers might be more apt to share that with parents. Teachers need specific training to help them better involve parents in the educational process of their children. It is still quite possible for a teacher to qualify professionally without ever having met a parent in an educational context (Hannon and Welch, 1993).

Stevenson and Stigler (1992) name time constraints as a major problem facing American teachers. In their research of Japanese, Chinese, and American schools they discovered how much more time American teachers spend in the classroom with children. Stevenson and Stigler believe if teachers were offered more time to develop professionally (i.e. teacher inservice, workshops, or continuing
education) they may create more ways to reach parents.

Teachers’ perceptions of parent involvement have been investigated (Topping, 1987). Some feel misguided parents may actually cause harm to the child’s development. Others realize its merit and strength. Some teachers see parents as part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Topping found teachers “are exploring ways in which to use their professional expertise to guide parents into suitable methods of helping accelerate their children’s educational process” (p. 608). Epstein (1988) found “teachers practices, not the educational, marital status or work place of parents make the difference in whether parents are productive partners with schools in their children’s education” (p. 58).

*Parent perspectives toward parental involvement*

Berger (1991) researched parent involvement from a historical perspective. Parents have always been part of their children’s educational upbringing. The home and family were the first educators of children as far back as prehistoric times. Formal education evolved in a variety of ways using different approaches.
Child rearing and parent education also progressed. Berger states, "In the seventeenth century the recognition of the importance of children's interaction with their parents and caregivers emerged" (p. 210). During the 1800's came the introduction of Froebel's Kindergartens. Parents were considered an essential part of this early education. Federal programs designed to benefit children were later established. Head Start included parent participation in its plan (Epstein, 1984). As federally supported programs grew, three models for parent involvement emerged (Gordon, 1978). The family impact model, the school impact model, and the community impact model came to the forefront. The school impact model defines parents and teachers as learning from each other. Flaxman and Inger (1992), in the article Parents and Schooling, have this to say about involving parents in the learning process:

...we can no longer easily maintain the traditional division of responsibility between the home as developer of educational attitudes and behaviors and the school as purveyor of skills and tools (p. 5).
Granowsky, Middleton, and Mumford (1979) investigated parents’ attitudes toward sharing the responsibility of teaching children to read. A survey was completed by parents in 136 elementary schools in Dallas, Texas. A high percentage of the schools were in the upper socioeconomic level where parent-teacher conferences were well attended. The results indicated ninety percent of the parents felt they should be involved in their child’s education. In addition, ninety-one percent wanted information on monitoring reading at home.

A comprehensive six year study of parents’ attitudes regarding their involvement in their children’s reading achievement was conducted by the Parent Involvement in Education Project (Chaukin and Williams, 1985). Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas were among the sites examined. Over 1200 parents, fifty-nine percent white and forty-one percent minority, were surveyed. The findings highlighted four parental perspectives: (1) parents wanted to spend time helping their child get the best education; (2) parents wanted to cooperate with the child’s teacher; (3) parents felt they were responsible for making sure their child
does his/her homework; and (4) parents wanted teachers to give
them ideas on helping their child with reading at home.

McMakin (1993) cites parent’s poor understanding of the reading
process as a reason for their lack of participation in the process.
Parents feel they may not be following the correct sequence of
skills. They are fearful of doing the wrong thing and confusing their
children.

Stevenson and Stigler (1992) found that parents are often faulted
for their children’s lack of achievement in school. However,
“parents say they feel estranged from their children’s schools”
(p. 25). Parents are not sure what to do to help. Stevenson and
Stigler state that parents are most often involved in the early years,
then slowly pull away from their responsibility after first grade.
The opposite, is true of Japanese and Chinese families. The parents
of American children find they are on the outside, unfamiliar with
what and how academics are being taught. Stevenson an Stigler
report, “parents often feel they have nothing to contribute to their
child’s education because they do not understand ‘new math’, ‘new
science’, or ‘reading for meaning’ programs” (p. 216). They feel they
can show support, encouragement and enthusiasm.

Hannon (1995) cites the positive response parents gave to the Haringey Reading Project. The level of interest and cooperation of fifty-two families over two years was nearly one hundred percent. Hannon found similar dedication of parents in the Bellfield Project (Hannon, 1985). When asked to hear their children read up to five times a week, seventy families averaged four times a week for three years with some dropping to three times a week near the end of the three year period.

Epstein (1988) ascertained in his research that single parent families are less likely to have interaction with their children’s school. However, they are just as likely to spend time helping their children at home.

Rasinski and Fredericks (1989) conducted a public opinion poll of a general population of parents. They asked parents what they thought about the reading instruction their children receive in school, how schools could improve reading instruction, and if parents felt responsible for teaching their children to read. Lastly, they were asked to indicate a percentage of time parents should
teach reading verses school. The data collected showed that parents hold some responsibility for teaching their children to read. Thirty-six percent of parents felt the job should be shared equally between school and home. Fifty-seven percent saw the responsibility of teaching reading primarily the school's job. Thirteen percent of those polled felt parents should have most of the responsibility, while twelve other parents thought the split should be 75% schools/25% parents. From this survey it was concluded that parents realize they have a major responsibility in promoting the reading development of their children. The Rasinski and Fredericks (1989) opinion poll verifies that "parents sense the school simply cannot do it all themselves" (p. 263). The parents expressed they were eager to help if parents support them.

Models of parent involvement training

Research in the United Kingdom, conducted by Hewison and Tizard (1980) found that parents listening to children read at home had a significant impact on their children's reading development. At that time, parents were not instructed with specific reading techniques. Based on this research, Topping (1987) supports the Paired Reading
Technique for use by parents at home. This method involves the following procedures. Children may choose their own reading materials at any level. Topping maintains that children become skilled at choosing their own books. Parent and child read aloud together in synchrony during difficult parts of the text. When the child mispronounces a word the parent repeats the word for the child to reread correctly. As they come to easier text the child may then signal to the parent to stop reading along. If an error is made, parent and child go back to reading together. Paired Reading was designed to be easy to use, emphasize praise for correct reading, promote self correction and signaling to read alone. The intention is to "maximize reading perfection regardless of the child's existing method of attack on words through the use of generally applicable learning principles" (Topping, 1987, p. 609). Topping believes the experience created by Paired Reading should be direct enough to allow parents and children to be worry free and enjoy.

Leach and Siddall (1990) set out to conduct a study comparing the effectiveness of Paired Reading and the Pause, Prompt, Praise tutoring method, with the Hearing Reading strategy when used by
parents at home. They then introduced another method known as Direct Instruction. They hypothesized that Direct Instruction, which they considered the most comprehensive instructional method of the four investigated in the study, would increase early reading skills more significantly than Paired Reading, or Pause, Prompt, Praise. Leach and Sidall (1990) then went further to say that Direct Instruction, Paired Reading and Pause, Prompt, Praise would each be more effective than the Hearing Reading strategy.

Forty parents and children from two first grade classrooms, ages 5.3 to 6.4, were randomly selected to practice one of the four reading models. Parent training was conducted separately by two psychologists, with the Hearing Reading group receiving only written guidelines. Parents were instructed to use their assigned method for ten to fifteen minutes per weekday for ten weeks after the last training session. Paired Reading and Pause, Prompt, Praise each had one and a half hours of formal training while the Direct Instruction group met three times for one and a half hours each. Phonic knowledge and reading readiness (verbal reasoning, word fluency, visual and auditory discrimination, and word meaning) were
pre-tested and post-tested. The Neale Analysis of Reading Ability was used to test reading accuracy and comprehension. The results indicated no significant change using a one-way analysis of variance. However, analysis of the covariance on the post-test scores, with pre-test scores as the covariate, showed a statistical significance between groups in accuracy and comprehension. This suggests an increase in reading progress can be achieved if parents are given more specific strategies to use with their children.

McMakin (1993) explains that publishers do not agree on the hierarchical sequence of reading skills. In her article, *The Parents Role in Literacy Development*, McMakin contrasts five traditional doctrines of reading instruction to more current views of reading as a process.
Figure 1

**Traditional**
Sequence of reading skills

Sound out, decode and break words into smaller words

Do not rely on pictures for cues.

Pointing to words may lead to poor reading habits.

Reading and writing are separate subject areas.

**Current**
Use of strategies and cueing systems

Read for meaning; Higher interest is found in “whole” language rather than small pieces

Using picture cues is a viable strategy for young readers.

Pointing to words is a young reader’s strategy: print represents the spoken word.

The two processes are reciprocal. Practice in one strengthens the other.

McMakin (1993) encourages the use of current reading strategies in balance with one another. The child uses prior knowledge to strengthen comprehension at the same time he or she uses (1) visual cues, (2) semantic cues, and (3) syntax cues. Teachers and parents can in turn ask appropriate questions to encourage the use of these
cues. Activities can be suggested which reinforce the cueing system.

There is a broad vision of parent involvement approaches ranging from the simple read aloud to the more specific instruction. Each technique appears to have its merit.

Summary

The literature review reveals the significant importance of parent involvement. It shows a link between reading development and parents who are involved in reading with children at home. It defines the teacher's role in guiding parents to become more active, effective participants in the reading process at home. It explores the parent's position on the process of home involvement. Finally, it highlights the vital need for a partnership between home and school to help children succeed in reading.
CHAPTER III
PROCEDURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate a method which is intended to increase parental involvement and its effectiveness while improving children's attitudes toward reading at home with their parents. This chapter will discuss the sample and setting of the study. It will also give a description of the design, and the instrumentation used to analyze the data.

Sample

Subjects

The sample used in this study consisted of twenty-one third grade children. The experimental group (Group I) involved ten students and their parents. The control group (Group II) was made up of twelve students from the same class. The parents of group two
responded to the original survey, but did not participate in the
treatment.

**Setting**

**School**

The study took place in a Southwest, Ohio, suburban elementary
school of 450 elementary school children kindergarten through fifth
grade. The socioeconomic level is diverse, including most in the
middle class with a smaller percentage from lower and upper class.

Ten children were involved in the convenience sample. All ten
children in the group came from a two-parent household. One parent
from each household was represented in the treatment. Six mothers
and three fathers were present. The children involved in the study
ranged from a 2.5 grade level to a 4.5 grade level in reading ability
based on critical skills testing (May, 1996) and teacher observation.

**Community**

The Southwest Ohio suburban school district lies in a community
of approximately 60,000 residents. The median household income is
roughly $34,500. There are a variety of cultural opportunities
offered within the community and in a neighboring mid-size
metropolitan area. The district is known for its quality education and this school is no exception. The school has won several awards including its most recent accomplishment of a $10,000 award for its “Excellence in Education”, including its high rate of parent participation and volunteers.

**Design**

A quasi-experimental design with two groups was used in this study. The experimental and control groups were administered a pre-survey (Survey I, Appendix A). A parent training workshop was then presented to the parents of the experimental group only, before giving a post-survey (Survey II, Appendix B) to the children of both groups. In this way the effect of the parent training on the experimental population could be analyzed.

The pre-survey consisted of a survey designed for both children and parents. The post-survey was rephrased at the close of the study and readministered to all twenty-one children. The survey questions were developed through the research, compiled in a simple format, and tested for reliability and face validity. Twelve pre-service teacher education, undergraduate, first semester seniors at
a comprehensive liberal arts university were asked to review the survey questions and make judgements and notations regarding the clarity of the questions. The content of the survey, which was noted in the literature, was not changed. Revisions were made based on comments with regard to clarity alone. Parents of the experimental group were given Survey I twelve days prior to the reading workshop training. Survey II, using the restated questions, was given to the children in both groups after the seven week study was completed.

**Instrumentation**

The instrument used in this study was based on the research of reading development and reading strategy models. Survey instruments were developed in order to measure and collect data. The surveys were designed to be simple and concise. The Likert Scale allowed the respondent to answer always, sometimes, or never. The children in both groups and the parents in the experimental group were given Survey I (Appendix A) before the parent training workshop. Parents were asked to fill out and return Survey I. In addition, parents were given an explanation of an upcoming reading workshop and were asked to mark their first and
second choice for a convenient evening and return that portion with the survey.

The information requested on the survey focused on reading behaviors such as, how often does reading take place between parent and child, how enjoyable is the experience of reading aloud to a parent, is the reading understood, and are there other family members involved with reading with the child at home. A few questions related to any strategies already being used by the child and/or encouraged by the parent.

Parents received a letter explaining the purpose of the parent training reading workshop at the time of Survey I, twelve days prior to the workshop. Parents were strongly encouraged to participate in the training and were asked to sign and return a response form. A confirmation notice was sent home a week before the parent training workshop. A small number of the parents who had given a positive response to the training workshop were later unable to attend due to schedule conflicts.

The workshop training was held at the school in the classroom. Babysitting was provided to allow as many parents as possible to
attend and to cut down on any possible distractions during the workshop. Parents were offered refreshments as they arrived for the workshop. As parents arrived they were given a packet of information including reading strategies outlined for home use. The packet also contained an agenda, background information, support for current views in reading development, and motivational information. An overhead projector and transparencies were used during the presentation to allow parents to follow along with the information in their packet, as well as look at any additional material being shared.

The goals and objectives of the workshop were explained at the opening. At the start, an example of the benefits of twenty minutes of reading a night (Appendix C, p. 85) was given. The research findings in the area of parental involvement, reading development, and reading strategies, were cited. A brief explanation as stated by McMakin (1993) of the current verses traditional views (Appendix C, p. 86) of how children develop as readers was cited. Due to the fact that the training workshop was being held in the beginning of the school year, parents were not yet familiar with the teacher's
philosophy of reading development and the approach being used in the classroom. The information presented by McMakin (1993) gave a comparison of two views of reading instruction with the emphasis on the current views which are also the teacher's beliefs. This lead to a discussion of different reading strategies and ultimately to the strategies for use at home. A graphic organizer (Appendix C, p. 87) depicting the three reading cue systems, semantic, syntactic and graphophonic, was presented and discussed in comprehensible terms. Specific examples (Appendix C, p. 88) of what parents can say to their children during the reading process to encourage the use of reading strategies were given. The parents were urged to ask questions at several different points during the workshop. A poem, *Independent Reading* by Jill Marie Warner (Appendix C, p. 89), was used as a summary of the simple reading strategies parents can use. Near the end of the workshop, parents reviewed a log sheet (Appendix C, p. 6) from the packet. Parents were asked to write down how often they read with their child, and any strategies they may have observed their child using when they read aloud. At the
end of the packet, a reading guide for parents was included (Appendix C, p. 91). It acted as a review and a reminder to enjoy reading time. Parents felt free to stay after the workshop to express their opinions and ask specific questions about their child. The teacher offered support during the study as needed.

At the end of the seven weeks, the log sheets were collected and Survey II was administered to the children of the experimental and control groups.

**Summary**

The purpose of this study is to investigate a method which is intended to increase parental involvement and its effectiveness while improving children’s attitudes toward reading at home with their parents. Through the design and implementation of a parent training workshop, specific reading strategies were presented to assist parents when reading to their children at home. The sample used in this study is small and the findings should not be generalized to other populations.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate a method which is intended to increase parental involvement and its effectiveness while improving children's attitudes toward reading at home with their parents.

This chapter graphically organizes the information obtained from the pre- and post survey results from Group I (experimental) and Group II (control). The bar graphs visually depict the impact of the treatment on Group I, changes in Group II after the seven week study, mean difference between Group I and Group II post-survey results, and the difference between Group I and Group II pre- and post-survey. In doing this, the following research questions will be addressed:
Will parents increase the amount of time they spend reading with their child at home once they are trained in ways to help them?

Will children’s attitudes toward reading at home with a parent become more positive as a result of the training the parents receive?

The fifteen survey questions (Appendix A) were designed to gather information from children regarding their involvement in reading related activities, their attitudes toward reading, and the strategies they may already be using with their parents at home. The survey questions were examined by pre-service teacher education students in their senior year and checked for clarity. Recommendations were made for clarification. The researcher used a descriptive statistical analysis to investigate the impact of training a group of parents (Group I) in reading strategies for use at home. The results of the study are presented in four ways. The categories include pre-survey and post-survey of Group I, the pre-survey and post-survey of Group II, the mean difference of the pre-
and post-survey scores for Group I and II and the pre- and post-survey difference scores of Group I and II. Responses on the survey were quantified with a rank score of six=Always, three=Sometimes and zero=Never. The highest possible value for each completed survey was 60 and the lowest possible value was 0.

Figure 1 shows in this class of twenty-one third grade students, the control group of eleven students, seven boys and four girls, responded with ranked scores on the fifteen survey questions from 0 to 60.
The first column in each of the fifteen questions indicates the results of the pre-test survey. The second column shows the results of the post-test survey. Always (A) responses scored a possible six points, Sometimes (S) responses scored a possible three points, and Never (N) was assigned a zero rating. Consequently, a total score of ninety was possible in all fifteen questions. Some answers to questions with a lesser score (Never) such as: "My mom or dad get upset with me when I do not know a word", result in a positive outcome.

The graph indicates a rise in post-survey scores on survey questions 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, and 14. Each of the outcomes indicates a positive increase with the exception of question 10, which presents a negative outcome with its increased score. Survey question 2 showed no change in value. These results indicate nine out of fifteen survey questions, or 59%, in Group I went up or remained the same after the study.

Figure 3 is comprised of the survey question results from the eleven third grade students in Group I (experimental). The graph indicates a rise in possible scores for questions 2, 7, and
12, each indicating a positive outcome. Survey questions 9 and 14 show no change in value. These results indicate five out of fifteen, or 33%, of the survey question responses in Group II went up or remained the same after the study.

Figure 4 indicates the mean of each of the fifteen survey questions answered by the ten children in Group I (experimental) and the eleven children in Group II (control). Group I scored higher on survey questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 15. Question 10 and 11 indicate a lower score for Group I, which actually results in a positive outcome.
These total results indicate eleven out of fifteen, or 73%, of the survey questions answered by Group I resulted in a higher score.

To determine whether there was a difference between groups from pre-survey to post-survey score, difference scores were calculated. Figure 5 reveals those difference scores on each of the fifteen survey items.
#1 My mom or dad reads to me more than three times a week.

The post-survey responses from Group I (experimental) and Group II (control) show a mean difference of 2.05 on the post-survey results. This is a significant difference indicating more students from Group I read at home more than three times a week after the parent training workshop and the seven week time period. Group I post-survey score (Figure 2) indicates an increase of 12 points for Group I while a drop of 6 points is shown for Group II (Figure 3). The pre- and post-survey difference for Group I (Fig. 5) indicates an increase of 1.2 and a decrease of .55 for Group II.
#2 My parents take turns reading to me.

The mean difference is .9 higher for Group I (experimental) on the post-survey results. Group I response showed no difference between pre- and post-survey. Group II (control) rose 5 points in the post-survey to a value of 33, or an increased difference of .55 (Fig. 5). Therefore, although the values for Group II increased, the values were still not as high as Group I in either the pre- or post surveys.

#3 My brother, sister, or other family member reads to me.

The mean difference was .63 higher on Group II on the post-survey results. The children in Group II scored a higher number of points on both the pre- and post-survey. Both groups had a decrease in points after the seven week study. The difference scores show a decrease of .6 for Group I and .54 for Group II between the pre- and post-survey.

#4 I like to read in school.

A mean difference of 1.34 was found between Group I and II on the post-survey results. Group I scored higher on the post-survey, while the scores in Group II decreased. The difference scores indicates no change for Group I and a drop of .56 for Group II.
#5 I like to read at home.

The mean difference of .7 indicates the children in Group I (experimental) found reading at home more enjoyable than Group II (control) on the post-survey results. A significant difference of 2.36 between Group I and Group II pre- and post-survey is shown on Figure 5.

#6 I take books out of the public library.

Group I scored higher with a mean difference of .14 on the post-survey. The difference scores between pre- and post-survey indicate an increase of .9 for Group I and a decrease of .28 for Group II. All the children are encouraged by the classroom teacher to use the public library.

#7 I ask my teacher or the librarian for titles of good books to read.

The narrow mean difference of .1 indicates only a slight difference between Group I and Group II on the post-survey. The pre- and post-survey difference score of .08 is slightly higher for Group II.
#8 I like to sit down and listen to mom or dad read a story to me.

The mean difference on the post-survey is 1.34 higher for Group I. The difference score indicates a positive increase of .6 for Group I and .01 for Group II.

#9 I like to read to my mom or dad.

The actual mean difference of .4 on the post-survey indicates Group I enjoys reading to a parent at home more than Group II. In Figure 2, Group I scored 3 points lower on the post-survey. Group II showed no change. The difference score between the pre- and post-survey indicates Group I liked reading to a parent .3 less after the treatment.

#10 I get upset when I do not know a word.

A mean average difference of .44 on the post-survey results indicates the children in Group II get upset more often when they do not know a word. In Figure 5 the difference score is .3 higher for Group I after the treatment indicating a negative change. Group II showed a higher difference of 1.09.
#11 My mom, or dad, get upset with me when I cannot read some of the words.

The mean difference on the post-survey shows the children in Group II felt their parents were more easily upset with them when the they could not read a word. Group I indicated a decrease in those feelings with a difference score of .3.

#12 When I do not know a word my mom, or dad, tell me to sound it out.

The mean difference of 1.0 on the post-survey indicates the parents of the children in Group II are more apt to suggest that their child sound words out. The difference scores indicate Group I did less sounding out by a score of .6, while Group II went up by a difference of 1.1.

#13 When I do not know a word my mom, or dad, tell me the word.

The mean difference of 0 on the post-survey results suggests the parents of the children in both groups tell their children words they do not know. The results of Figure 5 indicate the parents used this
as a technique 1.2 more often in Group I and 1.1 more often in Group II.

**#14 I understand what I read.**

The mean difference of 1.04 on the post-survey indicates the children in Group I have a better understanding of what they read. There was no change between the pre- and post-survey for Group II. Group I showed an increase of .3.

**#15 I feel good when I read at home with my parents.**

The mean difference of .49 on the post-survey indicates more of the children in Group I feel good when reading at home with a parent. The Group I post-test scores actually reflect a decline in value after the treatment according to Figure 2. The difference scores indicate Group I declined by .9 and Group II by .28.

**Summary**

The results shown in this chapter illustrate the impact of the treatment used in this study. Figure 1 and 3, where 59% and 73% of the survey answers went up or remained the same, depict the changes that took place after the parents of the experimental group are trained in reading strategies. Figure 2, where 33% of the survey
questions went up or remained the same, represents any changes that took place when the control group received no additional training over the seven week period. Figure 4 depicts the mean of the post-survey results for both groups. Figure 5 represents the difference between the pre- and post-survey results for both groups.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study analyzed the effect of training parents in reading strategies on the attitudes of the children toward reading at home. Would parents who were trained spend more time at home reading with their child? Would the children in turn feel more positive toward reading at home?

Conclusion

Will parents who participated in the reading workshop training increase their involvement with their children's reading at home?

Children love to be read to especially by their parents. It is a time when parent and child can spend quality time in a comfortable, quiet setting. Research shows that reading aloud to children is
extremely beneficial for later success in reading. When parents are more aware of the impact they can have on their children's reading they may be more apt to take the time necessary to insure success.

Figure 2 shows that nine out of fifteen survey question responses made positive gains or remained the same in the pre-test/post-survey results of Group I (experimental). More than fifty-percent of the children's responses showed a positive increase after the parents attended the workshop. The reason for the increase may be a result of the treatment Group I parents received. According to the survey results and parent feedback, parents who participated in the treatment appeared to be more conscience of their child's reading habits including frequency of weekly reading, than those parents who did not participate in the treatment. Brought to the forefront of this study was an awareness of the importance of reading at home on a regular basis.

Figure 3 shows the correlation between the pre-survey and post-survey results of the control group (Group II). Five out of fifteen, or 33%, showed an increase in positive responses leaving 67% showing a decrease in positive responses after seven weeks. The reason for
a decline in positive responses is speculative. The first survey was taken close to the start of a new school year. After another seven weeks passed families may have been into a much busier schedule with school and extra curricular activities. Reading at home is encouraged by the teacher, however no additional information, reinforcement, or motivation to read at home was given to parents. Third grade students are required to do more homework than in first or second grade. Perhaps as the nightly homework load increased, quiet time spent reading with a parent decreased. This may have resulted in a less positive attitude toward the experience.

Figure 4 indicates the children in Group I (experimental) scored more positively in eleven out of fifteen, or 73%, of the survey questions. Each of the ten students in Group I had one parent participant in the reading training workshop. Each parent was given the packet of information to help them at home and a record sheet to keep track of the home reading and the strategies they observed being used by their child. Each parent had his or her own reason for attending the workshop. Some were in search of clues and answers to their child’s reading difficulty while others were looking for new
information to better their child's reading skills. Still others went to the workshop because they may have felt it was expected of them.

When asked to turn in any record sheets only a few families returned one. Several parents wrote notes explaining that they did not keep the record sheet, but they had been more aware of the strategies being used and the amount of time spent reading at home during the seven week period. Two parents wrote positive notes about how the parent training helped them and that they would use the information to help a younger sibling as well. One of the two parents wrote a detailed narrative about the new awareness the reading strategy information created. The letter was written by the father of a boy whose mother had attended the training workshop. This meant that the mother had shared the information with the boy's father. He wrote how he had observed the child using a variety of strategies to read which were previously unknown to him. He felt more knowledgeable in his effort to assist his son.
Some of the survey questions will be examined.

#1 My mom or dad reads to me more than three times a week.

The findings convey to the researcher that after the parent training the parents made a strong effort to read to their children on a regular basis. This may have been a result of the extra encouragement and supportive information they received at the workshop.

#4 I like to read in school.

It is possible the children in Group I, whose parents attended the workshop, find reading more enjoyable in any setting because their parents are conscientious about encouraging and modeling good reading habits. It could be the emphasis placed at home carried over to school. For example, more trips to the library could result in a greater choice of books to read which are then brought to school for sustained silent reading.

#5 I like to read at home.

More effort by the parents of Group I to spend time with their
child, encourage them, and enhance their reading experience may result in this difference.

#8 I like to sit down and listen to mom or dad read a story to me.

There may be a correlation between question 8 and 1. If a child’s parents do not sit down and read to him or her regularly would he or she see this as something worthwhile? The experience occurs more regularly (as shown in question 1) and the children ranked this more positively after the parent training workshop.

#9 I like to read to my mom or dad.

The possibility exists that with greater emphasis placed on reading strategies some of the enjoyment of just reading for fun may have been set aside. It was not the intent of this study to take away from reading for pleasure. Rather, the awareness of the reading process and its many strategies should assist the parent and child over the long term. The limited seven week study may have created undue pressure to “work” on reading and therefore the children may have felt less pleasure.
#11 My mom, or dad, get upset with me when I cannot read some of the words.

The children in Group II felt their parents were more easily upset with them when the child could not read a word. Parents who received the training may have felt more prepared to assist their children in the reading process and were less likely to react in a negative way. The parents of the children in Group II may not feel as equipped to help and may respond out of frustration.

#12 When I do not know a word my mom, or dad, tell me to sound it out.

This conveys to the researcher that the parents who attended the workshop were trained in a variety of reading strategies, not exclusively the most common “sound it out”. These Group I parents felt more comfortable suggesting to their child to use a different strategy. The Group II parents may suggest (perhaps unknowingly) the more traditional strategies which they recall from their childhood school experiences.


#13 When I do not know a word my mom, or dad, tell me the word.

The results of indicate the parents used this as a technique more often after the parent training. This was discussed at the workshop as an acceptable strategy used to promote fluency. It was also presented by Topping (1987) as a Paired Reading technique.

#14 I understand what I read.

Parents helping their child read for meaning guide their child to use many strategies just as adults do. This reflects a positive increase due in part to the parent training workshop.

#15 I feel good when I read at home with my parents

The researcher was surprised to find a decline in how the children felt when reading at home after finding the increase in related questions 5 and 8. However, it is possible as stated in question in question 9, that the children in the experimental group (Group I) felt a change in their reading focus at home. It was not the intention of the study to change the simple, cozy reading time into a regimented work time. This is stressed in part of the packet parents received at the workshop (Appendix C, p. 8).
Individual differences

Throughout this study research questions have been examined, a method has been investigated, a treatment has been given, results have been graphed and discussed, and conclusions have been made. However, the individual child in the study must not be overlooked. We cannot assume that the children in this study learn the same way. They each come from different families, home lives, and upbringings. Each child is different based on his or her appearance, abilities, disposition, interests and attitudes (Woolfolk, 1990). These differences are brought on by the role of the environment. An important factor which influences a child’s ability to learn is the socioeconomic level. Backman (1972) describes an index of socioeconomic status (SES). This SES includes father and mother’s education, father’s occupation, family income, home value, and material goods such as televisions and more recently computers. Other factors include cultural differences such as how students interact with others; child-rearing practices such as authoritarian verses permissive discipline; impact of divorce such as changes, disruptions and single parent stress; and abuse including verbal,
physical and neglect. Each of these factors effect the way a child learns. Intellectually every child learns differently as well. According to Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligence there are at least seven different types of intelligence. These include linguistic, musical, spatial, logical-mathematical, bodily, knowledge of self, and understanding of others. How one child learns may vary greatly from how another child learns. This includes learning in school from a teacher and at home from a parent. These factors must all be taken into consideration when a school is help within the school or at home, they must plan carefully around the needs of the individual child.

**Recommendations**

The link between school and home is strong and should be explored in any way possible by administrators, schools and teachers. This will take time and effort to make it successful. Once the lines between home and school become more seamless the benefits and possibilities begin to evolve.

There is not one set way in which to plan and implement such a parent involvement program in every school. It will take special
considerations to create a tailor made program which focuses on the characteristics of a particular school, keeping in mind demographics, socioeconomics, and individual needs of children and their parents.

We know there is a need for parent involvement in the education of our children. We must assume there are enough eager, willing and supportive parents to warrant the time and effort it takes to fill this valuable need. By giving parents training in areas they feel inadequate at helping with at home, we take the guess work out how they can help. They should be offered the tools they need to assist their children at home.

A school should first assess the realm of its needs. Reading is the most valuable starting point in most any setting. A workshop such as the one in this study should be implemented into the primary grades. The potential for success may be even greater if parents are given a parent training workshop in reading strategies as their child is entering first grade. It can be adopted as a yearly function for the parents of incoming first graders and new second or third grade children. Refresher workshops should be offered at the start of each
new school year for parents wanting to participate.

The parent training workshop must be convenient to the families. The more it infringes on a family’s schedule, the less likely it is to be accepted openly. Therefore, it is recommended that the training take place during a normal school day as part of a primary orientation package and again in the evening for the parents unable to rearrange work schedules. It may be feasible to have a portion of the first graders attend school in the morning for half of a day while their parents attend the workshop. The remainder of the parents could come in the afternoon while their children are in school.

If the orientation program were to be offered in the evening it could be called a “Back to School” night. The parent training workshop could be one facet of the evening.

Primary teachers are an invaluable resource and the key to delivering this training to parents. Parent volunteers from the school may be interested in helping to put the program together. This would give parents some ownership along with the teachers and school, in a common goal.

A reading workshop is an excellent starting point and may be all
A reading workshop is an excellent starting point and may be all a school is able to deliver. However, depending on the needs of the different grade levels, there is great potential for other subject areas to offer similar training. Many schools already have a "Math Night". They can offer assistance to parents in a similar way, explaining strategies used in the classroom.

It may take time for parent training to take hold. Each time the training is presented it will continue to improve, expand, and evolve. It may not reach all parents, but if we can reach a few more parents each year the school will have done its part in reaching out to parents.

Due to the size and convenience of this sample, simple descriptive statistics were used in the study to compare the difference scores of Group I and Group II. Inferential statistics, controlling for pre-treatment group differences, were not used. If a follow-up study is performed it is suggested that an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), which controls for pre-treatment group differences, be conducted.
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Appendix A
Name_________________________ Date_________________

Please circle the best choice for each statement:

A= Always     S= Sometimes     N= Never

1. My mom or dad reads to me more than three times a week.  A S N

2. My parents take turns reading to me.  A S N

3. My brother, sister or other family member reads to me.  A S N

4. I like to read in school.  A S N

5. I like to read at home.  A S N

6. I take books out of the public library.  A S N

7. I ask my teacher or the librarian for titles of good books to read.  A S N

8. I like to sit down and listen to mom or dad read a story to me.  A S N

9. I like to read to my mom or dad.  A S N

10. I get upset when I do not know a word.  A S N

11. My mom, or dad, get upset with me when I can not read some of the words.  A S N
12. When I do not know a word my mom, or dad, tells me to sound it out.

13. When I do not know a word my mom, or dad, tell me the word.


15. I feel good when I read at home with my parents.
Appendix B
Child Survey II

Name________________________ Date________________

Please circle the best choice for each statement:

A= Always    S= Sometimes    N= Never

1. When I am at home I like to read.  A  S  N

2. When I read at home with my parents it makes me feel good.  A  S  N

3. My parents sit down and read to me more than three times a week.  A  S  N

4. My mom or dad take turns reading to me.  A  S  N

5. Other family members, like my brother or sister, read to me.  A  S  N

6. When mom or dad read a story aloud, I like to sit and listen.  A  S  N

7. I like to read to my mom or dad.  A  S  N

8. When I can not read some of the words, my mom or dad get upset with me.  A  S  N

9. I get upset when I do not know a word.  A  S  N

10. My mom, or dad, tell me the word when I do not know it.  A  S  N
11. Sounding it out is one way my parents tell me to read a word I do not know. A S N

12. I enjoy reading in school. A S N

13. When I read I understand what the story is about. A S N

14. I go to the library and take books out. A S N

15. When I am looking for a good book to read, I can go ask the teacher or librarian. A S N
Appendix C
Something to think about...

An example of what 20 minutes of reading time a night may mean to your child:

Johnny reads only what he has to.

Mary reads 10 pages more per day than Johnny in grades 1-6. (An average page = 200 words. Ten pages per day = 2000 words per day more than Johnny. Two hundred days per year = 400,000 words per year.)

During six years Mary reads 2,400,000 more words than Johnny.

Ninety percent of all language is made up of 3,000 high frequency words.

Mary will have had approximately 700 additional exposures per day to those 3,000 words.

We know that reading is a basis for all core learning. Please set aside a quiet time and place for your third grader to become the “best reader” he/she possibly can be! Your child’s future in part, depends on skills learned in these early grades.

I appreciate the time and effort you spend helping your child at home.

Mrs. Jean Boltz

Five traditional principles of reading instruction (T) vs. current views (C) of the reading process.

T Reading skills are taught in a strict sequential order before learning to read.

C The teaching of isolated skills and the fractioning of written language divert the reader's attention away from the major objective of every reading program: to derive meaning from the passage.

T Learning to read is easier when the reader is given words that are easy to sound out. Focusing on strategies and cueing systems is more effective for the parent.

C If we break language into "bite size pieces" we often lose the meaning of the message.

T Children should not rely on the pictures cues in a story.

C Using picture cues is an effective strategy for young readers. Gradually, the pictures in your head replace the pictures on the page.

T Poor reading habits will form if a child points to the words as they read.

C Pointing to the words as they read is an early strategy to help a child understand printed words represent spoken language. It should diminish with confidence.

T Reading and writing are two separate subjects. Reading usually precedes writing.

C When reading, the reader builds a message from the author. When writing, the author builds a message for the reader. Practice in one strengthens the other.
The Three Reading Cue Systems

- **Story sense**
  - Prior knowledge
  - Text
  - Illustrations
  - Sounds and symbols

- **Natural language**
  - Knowledge of English
  - Grammatical patterns and language structures

- **Meaning**
  - (Semantic Cue System)
  - Does it make sense?

- **Structure**
  - (Syntactic Cue System)
  - Does it sound right?

- **Visual**
  - (Graphophonic Cue System)
  - Does it look right?

(With credit to The Wright Group)
Children can be encouraged to use reading cues by asking the following questions:

VISUAL CUES:

1) Does this word look like...? (say the word the child read)
2) How do you know this is the word...and not the word...?
3) What sound would expect to hear at the beginning(or end) of this word? (point to a word)
4) Do you think this will be a long word or a short word?

SEMANTIC CUES

1) Does this sentence make sense?
2) What other word could we use to mean the same thing?

SYNTAX CUES

1) Does this sentence sound right to you?
2) If you were talking to friend, would you talk this way?

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

1) What would you say in this situation?
2) Does this picture help you think of anything familiar?
Independent Reading

When I get stuck on a word in a book,
There are lots of things I can do.
I can do them all, please, by myself;
I don't need help from you.

I can look at the picture to get a hint,
Or think what the story's about.
I can "get my mouth ready" to say the first letter,
A kind of "sounding out".
I can chop the word into smaller parts,
Like on and ing and ly,
Or find smaller words in compound words,
Like raincoat and bumblebee.
I can think of a word that makes sense in that place,
Guess or say "blank" and read on,
Until the sentence has reached its end,
Then go back and try these on:
"Does it make sense?"
"Can we say it that way?"
"Does it look right to me?"
Chances are the right word will pop out like the sun
In my own mind, can't you see?

If I've thought of and tried out most of these things
And I still do not know what to do,
Then I may look at you and ask
For some help to get me through.

Jill Marie Warner

As cited in Granfield, Michele & Smith, Christy L. (1995)
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Reading with your child

Be there to guide, support and encourage, but let your child do as much on his/her own as possible. Rather than answering questions immediately try responding "What do you think?"

Reading to your child:

1. Allow your child to choose books that interest him/her.
2. Be as comfortable and cozy as possible.
3. Be sure the child can see the book.
4. Read enthusiastically and expressively.
5. Talk about the book while you read.
6. When finished, have your child retell the story or tell a favorite part.

Listening to your child:

1. Be patient and supportive no matter how labored the reading.
2. When the child comes to an unknown word, encourage him/her to try using reading strategies:

   * make a guess (using meaning from the story: "What makes sense?"
   * use picture clues if there are illustrations
   * reread the sentence and get your mouth ready to say the first letter
   * look for smaller words you may know
   * skip the word, read to the end of the sentence and go back to "self-correct"

As you become more comfortable helping your child with reading strategies, ask if he/she can explain to you how they figure out new words.

If the child is unable to use a strategy to read the word and you feel he/she has tried, it is acceptable to say the word for them. The objective is to help them learn to self-correct. Do not push this on them all at once. It will be a process. We do not want the child to become frustrated. It should always be enjoyable! If in doubt, pull back in order to stay positive! Praise the child’s reading and efforts!