Parental Involvement and Children's Literacy Success

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Document Type
Thesis

Degree Name
MS in Literacy Education

Department
Education

First Supervisor
Gloria E. Jacobs

Subject Categories
Education

This thesis is available at Fisher Digital Publications: http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/education_ETD_masters/10
Parental Involvement and Children’s Literacy Success

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
M.S. Literacy Education

Supervised by

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April 2010
Abstract

This study was completed to determine the relationship of children’s literacy success and the parental involvement and support they receive in their primary discourse. The research was conducted through questionnaires, observations, and the documentation of time spent reading and doing homework each night for a period of two weeks. The data shows that the more involved a parent is in their child’s academics, the more successful the child will be. Children will be more prepared for school and transition smoothly through the home and school discourse. Through the review of the literature and the findings in the study, four themes emerged: consistency, the amount of time-spent reading per day, outside activities, and the dedication of parents and children.
Introduction

Children whose parents are involved in their academics tend to be more successful in school. They acquire the skills to transition between academic and home discourses because literacy is a social practice of the interactions between people (Larson & Marsh, 2005; Gee, 1989). This topic is important because when parents are involved in their child’s academics the child is likely to have more success in school and transition between their discourses fluently. It is important because many students do not receive the support they need at home. There are times when parents do not know how to help their child. Some parents try to help but do not know how they can be involved when their child is not receptive to support. Parents may also need advice as to how to support a child that is unmotivated. Children that need support at home do not benefit when there is no one to support their acquisition of literacy skills or if they are not exposed to a variety of literacy experiences (Kucer, 2009).

Parental involvement and the effects of their child’s literacy success need to be addressed to ensure parents are providing authentic literacy experiences for their children. Parents should be engaging their children in reading and writing activities during the summer as well as throughout the school year. Parents should use different strategies to support their children academically by including games, different genres for reading and writing.

Theoretical Framework:

Parental involvement begins in infancy in the home, because all children have different initial exposures to what they come to school knowing, hence, the
sociocultural theory begins to shape the importance of parental involvement in their child’s academics (Saldana, 2009). Gee (2008) states that, “literacy is control of secondary discourses, where discourses are socially accepted associations among ways of using language, of thinking, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or “social network”” (p. 18). Similarly, Moll and Gonzalez (1994) discuss the “funds of knowledge” in that knowledge and skills that children bring to school is learning in their households. Teachers need to incorporate the sociocultural differences children bring from home to expand how literacy is transferred between discourses and not merely focus on the ability to read and to write, but to have meaningful interactions beyond these interactions (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994). A parent’s role this early in the child’s academic career is to provide opportunities for authentic literacy experiences. This includes meaningful conversations and interactions. Parents should be modeling authentic reading and writing situations such as reading and writing for a purpose. By creating these literacy experiences early in their child’s academic career, they are building relationships, trust, and showing their support and interest in the child’s academics. This will be beneficial in future situations when the child needs support or motivation from a parent to be successful in their academics.

According to the sociocultural theory, literacy acquisition begins with the impact of the culture of the child and their understanding of oral and written language (Larson & Marsh, 2005). According to Freebody and Luke (1990), one must acquire the skill of spoken language to be a successful reader, but first, one must recognize the relationship of the spoken sound and the symbols in which they
represent. This initial exposure comes from within the household in their primary discourse and the understanding of the interactions that they are exposed to that prove reading, writing, communications serves a purpose (Gee, 1989). According to Otto (2008), “children who have had frequent storybook interactions with a wide variety of types of texts (genres) will develop an awareness of how language is used in each type of discourse” (p.13). This idea relates to Heath (2009) that different storytelling interactions prove to have different impacts of their understanding of how to respond to stories as well as telling their own stories. These different interactions happen in all cultures and settings, therefore, socialization occurs in all communities and children are able to negotiate relationships with people by communicating, this is done to accomplish social purpose (Meier, 2003). Halliday’s functions of language represent the communicative and social nature of language in which oral language has a function or purpose that changes as the situations change (Kucer, 2009). Based on the sociocultural theory, children will acquire the skills to be able to code switch based on the situation they are in, in order to meet the social needs whether it is at home or school, this is not an effect of explicit teaching rather authentic real life situations that they participate in (Larson & Marsh, 2005).

According to Yosso (2005), the critical race theory takes the shift away from what is not happening in the classroom and indulges in why there is a deficit view when it comes to different races and cultures. This theory takes the perceptions of outsiders and discusses how different races and cultures display their understanding, skills, and abilities. They may not be the norm, but there is a reason to each family, child, and their response to education as is discussed by many
researchers. Based on what all of the researchers are saying, it is imperative that parents are involved from infancy to begin shaping their academic career. Parents need to continue to be involved in their child’s academics and therefore need strategies to support their children in all aspects of school.

Research Question

My research question is to determine the effects of parental involvement and their child’s literacy success. I also want to look at what strategies parents can use to support their child academically at home, this includes motivating and working with children that do not want parental support. Based on the understanding that literacy acquisition is social and begins with early interactions and experiences that children participate in while in their primary setting which is the home-life. I will be looking at different types of involvements and how early experiences shape a child’s readiness for school and willingness to participate in literacy activities.

Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to look at the affects of parental involvement in children’s literacy success. Literacy acquisition begins in the home at birth through witnessing members of their primary discourse participate in literacy skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening (Kucer, 2005). These skills will be critical in the child’s ability to participate and to acquire literacy skills necessary to be successful in their second academic discourse, school. Therefore, through research, it has been found that children with parents who are actively involved in their academics have more literacy success, especially in the primary levels. There are four themes that have been distinctive in the research of parental
involvement. The first theme is based on the different limitations that can affect children in literacy including homelessness, ADHD, and deafness. The second theme is based on a child’s willingness to read, also known as voluntary reading. The third theme is based on specific family activities such as use of photography and literature bags, or ways to involve families. The last theme that was found discussed how building on cultural diversities affects literacy success. All of these themes discuss how different parental involvement affects the child’s ability to acquire literacy skills through rich and authentic experiences. Through this literature review, it will become obvious that culture, socioeconomic status and the home make up affect the academic achievement a child will have based on their exposure to rich authentic literacy practices.

Limitations: Homelessness, ADHD, and Hearing Impairment

The first recurring theme that was found is based on limitations that affect a family and the ability to be involved when there are outlier factors contributing the literacy success of children. Researchers looked at the success of a child in school when they are homeless, in poverty, or have health issues. According to Walker-Dalhouse, Risko (2008), children with health issues, living in poverty, or that are homeless tend to have less success in school and their primary discourse may be impeding their ability to learn. According to Walker-Dalhouse and Risko (2008), children that are homeless or living in poverty tend to have less parental involvement when it comes to academics. This limits their literacy experiences and readiness for primary grades. They also determined that high rates of absenteeism and mobility, result in limited teacher-parent interactions. This affects the student’s
ability to participate in literacy experiences as well as solidify their understanding and knowledge (2008). By promoting parental involvement and creating a community that involves families, children will ultimately benefit. This can be achieved through connections that the child brings from their home life and incorporating it into the academics. This helps students to see what they have to offer is valuable, as well as something that they can relate to.

Walker-Dalhouse and Risko (2008) and Ready (2010) discuss the challenges that children face that are homeless and living in poverty. These include emotional, physical, social, health, and behavioral problems that affect a child from learning especially if they are expected to move frequently with their families. Though children in these living conditions have been successful, the trend is that these students are not getting the academic attention at home to help them be successful, therefore, teachers need to provide extra time and attention to their physical and emotional states when they are not producing work that may be at their full potential. These children are not experiencing the literacy at home that promotes success such as a parent reading therefore their ability to succeed decreases (Walker-Dalhouse, 2008). In situations as given above, promoting parental involvement can include learning contracts, workshops for parents, field trips, and parent-teacher conferences (Walker-Dalhouse, 2008). Similarly, Ready (2011) discusses how children from socioeconomic disadvantaged families lack the literacy experiences that prepare them for primary school. This can also be due to the lack of participation in school or frequent moving (Walker-Dalhouse, 2008; Ready, 2011). Ready (2011), states that low income children come to school less
prepared as compared to their counterparts, which can be a result of health issues or residential situations.

In addition to the above discussed limitations that are related to family circumstances, other limitations include ADHD and hearing impairments. Aram, Bazelet, and Goldman (2010) as well as Aram, Most, and Simon (2011) discuss how children having ADHD or a hearing impairment are at academic risks. Children who have health issues are at a disadvantage when it comes to acquisition of literacy skills, including phonological awareness, alphabet skills, fluency and comprehension (Aram, Most, Simon, 2011). Given supportive literacy environments, such as their primary discourse, children with ADHD or hearing impairments tend to have less exposure to rich literacy experiences, which affects their readiness for school (Aram, Most, Simon, 2011). According to Aram, Most, Simon, (2011), as well as Aram, Bazelet, and Goldman (2010) children with ADHD or hearing impairments lack the literacy interactions that shape their reading abilities. According to Aram, Most, and Simon (2011) and Aram, Bazelet and Goldman (2010), children lack the reading abilities that children without hearing impairments or ADHD possess. This can be a result of fewer parent and child interactions that are literacy related. Children with ADHD and hearing impairments have symptoms, such as a limited attention span that affect their ability to focus or pay attention to detail (Aram, Most, Simon, 2011; Aram, Bazelet and Goldman, 2010). According to Aram, Bazelet and Goldman (2010), children with hearing impairments lack the cognitive development needed to support literacy skills such as decoding, fluency, comprehension, and alphabet skills. Children with ADHD lack the ability to make connections to literacy skills and
when working with their parents, become increasingly stressed, leading to an
unsuccessful experience (Aram, Most & Simon, 2011). Parental mediation is also a
key factor to their success. Children are exposed by parents through a variety of
reading and writing experiences that help children acquire skills, make connections
to be successful in school, and to relate to their peers (Aram, Most, Simon, 2011).

Based on this research, it is apparent that there is more than simply having
the cognitive ability to acquire literacy skills, especially when factors affect a
family’s ability to provide experiences due to poverty, homelessness, and frequent
moves which result in absenteeism for students. Children with health issues are
also at a disadvantage when it comes to literacy acquisition in the home as they may
not have the ability to understand the same literacy experiences as a child who is
not faces with health issues. Based on all these limitations, many children have
fewer literacy interactions, which lead children to be less prepared for school.

**Voluntary Reading, Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), Summer Reading**

Though not all students share the same enthusiasm for reading, the second
theme is based on children’s willingness to read, sustained silent reading, and
summer reading. McKool (2007) discusses the importance of the amount of reading
a student does outside of school and its relation to the reading a child will
participate in while in school as well as their success. McKool (2007) discusses that
the more a child reads in out of school situations, they have less risk of losing their
academic ground; they also increase their vocabulary, fluency, comprehension as
well as general intellectual development. These children will be more interested in
reading a wide variety of genres including magazines, comics among others
(McKool, 2007). Siah and Kwok (2010) share similar thoughts as McKool in that children who spend more time reading at home tend to have more success and participate in sustained silent reading with less reluctance than students that do not spend time reading outside of school. Siah and Kwok (2010) and McKool (2007) discuss that children that have parents, teachers, and peers recommending books and encouraging each other to read, read more frequently wider genres of books. There is also a positive outlook when children have parents that value education and have had the reading experiences with parents, such as real-alouds and witnessing parents read (McKool, 2007).

Siah and Kwok (2010) state that parents advocate for sustained silent reading (SSR) in schools because they recognize among others that there is a need to increase reading proficiency. They also recognize that students who share reading with their parents, in a paired reading method, increase their accuracy and rates of reading, vocabulary, memory, phonological awareness, and attainment. Another significant association that occurs when children read with their parents is that children will place a higher value on reading. Therefore, SSR has shown to be more enjoyable and beneficial for students that have a positive outlook in reading and have shared reading experiences with their parents whereas children that did not have these interactions were less likely to gain benefits from SSR, which is consistent with the findings stated by previous researchers such as McKool, and Siah and Kwok (2010). Hansen (1969), “reported that the out of school reading habits that students establish by the fifth and sixth grade remain with them throughout their lifetimes”(as cited in McKool, 2007, n.p.).
Research also states that there is correlation between time spent reading out of school and the achievement they will have in school. This includes student’s attitudes toward reading in and out of school, motivation, and the amount of time children spend reading as compared to other activities such as television watching and extracurricular activities (McKool, 2007; Walker-Dalhouse & Risko, 2008). Research conducted by McKool (2007) states that students are broken into four categories based on the interviews conducted to determine how avid and reluctant readers compare. The groups were middle/high income avid readers, low-income avid readers, middle/high income reluctant readers, and low-income reluctant readers. Differences between reluctant and avid readers include the differences in time spent out of school reading frequency of reading out of school. Low income reluctant readers placed more time and interest in reading than middle/high income readers. These students reported television became their company and entertainment, which is consistent with other research that states children that do not observe parents or caregivers reading are more likely to put less value in reading than those students that see their parents and caregivers reading (McKool, 2007).

Voluntary reading is also consistent with the values placed on reading that has been found in the homes of avid readers. If they value reading, it is typically seen that they will spend more time engaging in reading out of school than those of their counterparts (McKool, 2007). McKool also investigates the differences in income of reluctant and avid readers. Her research states that avid readers were read to more frequently by their parents than reluctant readers. Avid readers
typically reported that reading and learning to read were easy for them, whereas reluctant readers struggled to read and find it difficult. Based on income, more middle/high income children were read aloud to than low-income children, Allington and Cunningham as cited in McKool refers to this as “blue collar” values (2007). Low-income families were less likely to read with their children because they expect the schools to educate their children. These parents want to come home from work to relax and spend time with their families; therefore, less emphasis is placed on education and literacy skills (McKool, 2007; Heath, 1982). This study also suggests that middle/high income children have more access to resources than children of low-income families that did not have home libraries or access to libraries and bookstores (McKool). McKool’s findings are consistent with the previous researchers, Siah and Kwok (2010), Walker-Dalhouse and Risko (2008), in that avid readers will read when given opportunities in and out of school. Reluctant readers may find reading more difficult and do not put as great of an emphasis on literacy and education if they are learning at home that school is where they are to be educated. Reluctant readers are unlike the avid readers who find motivation in themselves, teachers, peers, and family. They may be picking up these attitudes and beliefs from home, therefore following those beliefs and attitudes and continuing to be a reluctant reader.

White and Kim (2008) support the research as stated by McKool (2007) in that the willingness of a child to read enhances their reading achievement. This is especially true for minority and low-income children. White and Kim (2008) discuss the importance of encouraging reading during the summer; this helps
reduce summer loss. Though voluntary reading is encouraged, it is imperative that teachers are providing parents with the appropriate level for their children; this will increase comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary (White and Kim, 2008, McKool, 2007). In an effort to increase voluntary reading, not only should children read at their level, there should be time set aside daily to read. This will increase their willingness to read in and out of school (McKool, 2007; Siah and Kwok, 2010; White and Kim, 2008; White, 2009). Based on this understanding, it is critical that children read. Voluntary reading has many benefits including increased fluency, comprehension and vocabulary development (McKool, 2007; Siah and Kwok, 2010; Walker-Dalhouse & Risko, 2008). Out of school reading benefits the literacy skills children use at school and through close parent-teacher relationships and communication. Parents can easily encourage reading during the summer to benefit students academically. By modeling voluntary reading, children will also be more willing to read in and out of school (McKool, 2007; White and Kim, 2008).

**Ways to Involve Families**

Baskwill and Harkins (2009) discussed the importance of utilizing creative and effective ways to engage families in literacy activities, specifically writing. They state that parents who participate in writing activities with their children are providing a learning environment and support their children's interests and enthusiasm (Baskwill and Harkins, 2009). When children and parents interact through literacy skills such as reading and writing activities, children see the benefit of such activities and have the opportunity to create and expand their knowledge with support of a parent (Baskwill and Harkins, 2009). One way to engage children
and parents is to use old pictures that have meaning to the family and to share the experience of creating their own storybook together that can be read time and time again (Baskwill and Harkins, 2009). By constructing oral stories, children learn to communicate messages and also derive meaning from experiences (Baskwill and Harkins, 2009; Lever and Senechal, 2010).

Berthelsen and Walker (2008) share believes similar to Baskwill and Harkins (2009), in that parental involvement in children’s early years increases children’s learning competence, learning outcomes, and their success in school. Parents that communicate with schools tend to be more involved in their children’s academics. Schools that invite parents into the classroom convey an open relationship with parents and create an environment that is safe for parents concerns and suggestions (Berthelsen, Walker 2008). Greater and long-lasting benefits occur when parents are involved in children’s academics and receive support from the school to be involved and welcomed into the building and classrooms (Berthelsen, Walker 2008).

Similarly to Baskwill and Harkins (2009), Zeece and Wallace (2009), Saracho and Spodek (2009), Dever and Burts (2002), Neumann and Neumann (2009) and Lee (2010) share the emphasis on the importance of using literature books and reading aloud to children to prepare them for school. Teachers can support literacy learning and building school to home connections through activities such as “Books and Good Stuff” which comes from the article by Zeece and Wallace (2009). This strategy allows children to bring home a brightly decorated bag filled with “books and good stuff” for children to share with their parents at home. This creates a
connection with school and home literacies by providing exposure to print (books), letters to parents describing the activities, and a journal for the child to share what they learned. This will be passed on to the next student; it could also include a game or connecting activity (Zeece and Wallace, 2009). Dever and Burts (2009), and Lever and Senechal (2010) support this activity in that they agree book reading in the home is one of the most beneficial literacy activities that parents and children can engage in together. Through use of literature bags, which is comparable to “Books and Good Stuff” in that there are a variety of texts that can be shared at home, thus continuing to build the school to home connection (Zeece and Wallace, 2009; Dever and Burts, 2009). Reading books aloud with children not only benefits children’s literacy skills, but also provides opportunities for parents and children to development a relationship and time to share rich dialogue about the book (Zeece and Wallace, 2009; Dever and Burts, 2009; Saracho and Spodek, 2009).

Another tool that may be incorporated into literature bags, but also a separate tool from the combination of literature bags, is the solo use of poems (Wiseman, 2009). According to Wiseman (2009), a poetry program creates a connection with families, communities, students, and teachers. Poetry writing can be an outlet for students, a way to communicate feelings, relate to another writer, a means for practicing fluency and expression, and an activity that can be shared among teachers, students, and families. Wiseman (2009) encourages the use of students in designing programs to connect their families to their school. By having students create their own poetry, they are working on literacy skills, and connect their home life when they write about a topic that is meaningful to the family, or the
student (Wiseman, 2009). Teachers can incorporate student poems into literature bags (Zeece and Wallace, 2009; Dever and Burts, 2009), not only would children be reading authentic writing pieces, but this would provide students with a sense of purpose and to connect the school life to the home (Wiseman, 2009). By creating a poetry program, families can be involved in their student’s academics and the school community (Berthelsen and Walker, 2008). Parental support in academics provides interactions between parents and children, which lead to increased student achievement, motivation, self-esteem, positive behavior and also an increase in attendance (Wiseman, 2009).

Parents who read daily to their children may not be fully aware of all of the benefits that read alouds have to offer their children, but they greatly impact their literacy development and provide teachable moments and time to bond (Lee, 2010; Neumann and Neumann, 2009). The home is where the first literacy experiences occur. Children are learning based on what they observe, hear, and experience (Lee, 2010; Neumann and Neumann, 2009; McTavish, 2007). Children quickly learn that writing, reading, and speaking serve a purpose and can also be fun by creating engaging activities such as activities during car rides, crosswords, word searches, letter writing, lists, conversations, playing rhyming games, labeling items in the house and especially reading storybooks together (McTavish, 2007; Imperto, 2009). Imperto (2009), lists that when parents read with children, they can enhance the reading by engaging the child in phonemic awareness activities, rhymes, understanding word to word correspondence by pointing to each word as it is read, as well as rereading, all of these activities benefit the early emergent learner in the
acquisition of literacy skills. Imperto (2009) uses a parent and poem strategy to engage parents and children while bridging the school to home connection and reinforcing literacy skills in 10 minutes a night. Overall, these researchers have stressed the importance and the benefit of storytelling and engaging in literacy activities with children daily. Activities should be engaging, creative, and have a purpose. Parents should model voluntary reading and literacy skills such as writing and include children in these skills together. Researchers also look at the affects of socioeconomic statuses and diversity on the acquisition of literacy skills based on different experiences that these families provide for their children.

Building on Cultural Diversity

Researchers also look at the affects of socioeconomic statuses and diversity on the acquisition of literacy skills based on different experiences that these families provide for their children. Saldana (2009) discusses the effects of incorporating parents into a book club. She recommends that parents read to children from infancy, create and provide a print-rich environment, and to surround children with opportunities to see parents and family members reading. All of these experiences must be included in the home life to maintain grade level statuses. In these acts, they must be consistent to be effective (2009). The number of books available to children is also an indicator of the success a child will have academically (Saldana, 2009). Saldana also supports and defends the parents that are not present in schools for fundraisers, parent conference among others, not always because they do not care, but because of language barriers. This is especially true with Latino cultures (2007). Parents that ask their children questions about the work they are
doing in school rather than just asking if a child has done their homework will find that their child has more success in their academics. By adding words to a discussion with a child and becoming an active parent rather than passive parent, parents can help their children become life-long learners and academically successful (Saldana, 2009; Saracho and Spodek, 2009). Saracho and Spodek, (2009) support joint book reading as a literacy experience that benefits the development of children’s literacy skills. This not only creates interest in literacy skills, it increases academic achievement and children’s abilities to respond to books through talk, drama, art and writing (Saracho and Spodek, 2009).

Saldana Jr. (2009) and White (2009) look at the effects of including parents in the classroom and the struggle parents have to overcome with their children reading at home. White (2009) discussed how a teacher brings parents into the classroom to teach techniques to use at home and how to bring the unique interests of all her learners into the classroom, specifically a child that wanted to read non-fiction rather than fiction books. White (2009) discussed how a mother struggles to do what is right for her son based on the school saying he is struggling reader because he wanted real stories that he could relate to that reflects his background as a farmer. According to Standing (1999) as stated in White (2007), parents should be available both in the home as well as the classroom. This statement confirms the need for children to have the support of parents in school as well as out of school to have academic success and positive attitudes toward reading, which was discussed by Siah and Kwok (2010), McKool (2007), and Zullig and Ubbes (2010). Gee (2004) states in White (2007), “When people learn something as a cultural process their
bodies are involved because cultural learning always involves having specific experiences that facilitate learning, not just memorizing words” (p. 39). This reflects the need that what children are learning needs to be real. The boy in this article could not relate to fairies and fantasies, he kept going back to his primary discourse where he learned real life situations related to the farm. Because his mother was involved in school and at home, she was able to help direct the teacher to provide meaningful experiences for the boy as well as his classroom. This would be an ideal situation for parent involvement both at home and in the school. Teachers as well as parents need to advocate for the involvement of parents, which benefits students in and out of school.

Morgan, Nutbrown, and Hannon (2009) and Saracho (2010) discuss the value of having fathers involved in children’s literacy development. Both state that it is important for children’s academic success to have parental involvement to support their learning (Morgan, Nutbrown, Hannon 2009; Saracho 2010). It is also stated that family literacy programs which focus on literacy strengthen family bonding and engage students into academic relevant experiences that prepare students for school (Morgan, Nutbrown, Hannon 2009; Saracho 2010). Though mothers are typically in the position of “parent” when referring to the guardian that supports academic learning, there is evidence that children benefit from higher academic achievement and social/ emotional well being when fathers are involved (Morgan, Nutbrown, & Hannon, 2009). The study by Saracho (2010) found that fathers want to be involved and when given the opportunity to support children’s literacy skills, such as reading and writing, were supportive and placed high value of
these skills. When fathers were taught strategies to support children, they were willing to promote their knowledge and culture into literacy development activities (Saracho, 2010). Both studies promoted fathers participating in literacy activities with their children based on a reading program that was taught to fathers, which provided strategies and ideas to engage children. Saracho (2010) focused on Hispanic fathers and the importance of incorporating their culture with their children, while Morgan, Nutbrown, and Hannon (2009) focused on a reading program, “Raising Early Achievement in Literacy” (REAL), and how fathers took that knowledge and used it to engage with their children. The end result was that fathers would engage with their students and use strategies, which benefit their children in multiple ways including academically, socially, and emotionally (Moran, Nutbrown, & Hannon, 2009; Saracho, 2010). Hammer, Rodriguez, Lawrence, and Miccio (2007) discuss the importance of family involvement and the literacy results based on the development from their homes. They also discuss the differences between school and family culture models and these differences may be the difference between success and struggle in academics, therefore, it is beneficial to bridge the family to home life connection (Hammer, Rodriguez, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2007; Koskinen, Shockley, 1994).

Koskinen and Shockley (1994) stress the importance of building a school to home connection, especially from culturally diverse and low socioeconomic status families. They feel a connection with families that parallels the school and home life is valuable for children and families because the interchange provides opportunities for cultural differences to be explored in both settings and for families and teachers
to work together to best meet the needs of the children (Koskinen, Shockley, 1994). Many parents that are of a different culture than the mainstream believe that the teacher is responsible for their children’s education, therefore, there is limited parental involvement in these homes, leaving the children to be disadvantaged. This is also a common theme in low socioeconomic status families (Hammer, Rodriguez, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2007). Though the mothers from the study value social skills for their children, they do not provide the authentic, engaging literacy experiences for their children to prepare them for school. With programs like Head Start, literacy practices were brought into the home, and children were developing the skills necessary to be successful in school (Hammer, Rodriguez, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2007).

Through all the research, it is apparent that it is critical for parents to be involved in their children’s academics. By providing rich, authentic, and engaging experiences children will develop the skills necessary to be successful in school, especially in the primary grades when they are first exposed to the structure of the school setting. Schools can promote parental involvement by providing opportunities for parents to come into the schools, and teachers can provide parents with strategies to use with their children at home. It is not only the responsibility of the mother to educate children, fathers can also provide rich literacy experiences for their children and also place a great emphasis on education as well as social skills which lead to increased literacy skills. Cultural differences and low socioeconomic status families tend to be less involved but by inviting families into schools and creating meaningful activities that they can relate to, there is no doubt all children
can be successful in literacy activities in school. Overall, though parental involvement looks different based on culture, socioeconomic status, and home makeup, it is evident that the more exposure to authentic literacy practices, the greater academic achievement a child will have. Teachers and parents must work together to bridge the school and home connections in an effort to engage students and families in best practices of literacy skills.

Methods

Context

Research for this study was conducted at the Literacy Center at a small liberal arts college. This college is located in western New York. The Literacy Center is a program that provides extra support for students who struggle in the areas of reading, writing, and word study. Students come and work with graduate students once a week for an hour and forty-five minutes each session. Students must be recommended to the program. Research was also conducted in each participant’s home for a span of two weeks. Participants live in western New York within 30 minutes of the Literacy Center at the college.

Participants

The participants for this research study were three 5th grade students and one parent for each of the 5th grade students. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment were used to determine the reading level. Myself as well as other tutors administered the assessment during sessions at the literacy center. Aarti, a 10-year-old African American child, is at an instructional reading level of L. Her mother will be the parental participant in this research study. Michael is a 10-year-old
white child. He reads instructionally at a level W. His father and mother will be participating in the study. Mannan is a 10-year-old black child whose mother will also be participating in the study. He reads at a level U instructionally.

**Researcher Stance**

As a researcher, I am working one on one with one of the students as indicated above. I am working on completing my Master’s Degree in Literacy. I currently have my bachelor’s degree in Childhood Education Grades 1-6 and Special Education Grades 1-6. I am certified in these areas and am in the process of obtaining my initial certification in Grades B-2 in General Education and Special Education. I will be conducting the questionnaires during the literacy center sessions. Other tutors will also be administering the questionnaires with the students that they primarily work with. We have been working with the students for three weeks and have administered surveys and questionnaires to get to know more about our students. I will be asking for permission of the parents to collect an artifact from home, this will be the time spend doing homework and reading over a two week period which will be recorded as a log for the two-week period.

**Methods**

During this study, I observed parent and child interaction from when students are dropped off at the Literacy Program, and when parents picked up students after the session has ended. This was observed one time when students are dropped off, and once as students were picked up. Observations were done by recording behaviors noted, as well as any other observations that are telling toward
parent child interaction. The observations lasted about 10 minutes before the session, and 10 minutes after the session.

I also used a questionnaire for each student, and each parent. The questionnaires gave me more information about their feelings toward reading as well as reading habits. Parents and students were asked to fill out one questionnaire; the questionnaire has about 10 questions (this will be included in the appendix). The student questionnaires were filled out during a tutoring session, and lasted about 10 minutes.

The last research tool I used is a log or time spent doing homework and reading each night. Parents and students recorded the times spent on homework and reading for two weeks. Some of the students had spring break during these weeks. Because students are 5th graders, I thought it would still be beneficial to log the time spent on homework and reading to show voluntary reading habits.

Quality and Credibility of Research

When conducting research, it is critical to ensure the quality and credibility of the study. Mills (2007) defines credibility as the researcher’s ability to take into account the complexities that present themselves in a study and to deal with patterns that are not easily explained. To ensure credibility I used my critical colleagues to analyze the data I collected, this helped me to explain the results of my study and to determine if my theory is accurate based on what I found. (Mills, 2007). I incorporated an approach to collect data that used different methods; this included observations, questionnaires, and the use of a log that tracks the amount of time that the child spent on homework and reading each night for two weeks. I collected the
logs to use as my artifacts as well as the questionnaires and the notes taken from the observations.

I also ensured that the data I collected meets the requirements of transferability. According to Mills (2007), transferability refers to qualitative researcher’s beliefs that everything in the study is context bound and that the goal of the work is not to develop “truth” statements that can be generalized to larger groups of people. I as the researcher had to be sure to collect detailed descriptive data and to develop descriptions of the context (Mills, 2007). I carefully collected my data and recalled each detail that happened in the situation. This was critical in the observation aspect of data collection because I tried to paint the picture for recipients to “see” the setting (Mills, 2007). Another aspect that I had to be cautious of is the dependability. Mills (2007) defines dependability as the stability of the data. To ensure dependability I used triangulation of my methods. This ties into the confirmability, which is the neutrality or objectivity of the data, this is achieved through triangulation and reflexivity on what I will find (Mills, 2007). By practicing reflexivity I revealed underlying assumptions or biases that caused questions to occur, then I looked for answers to the questions in the specific way including observations, questionnaires and artifacts. I also utilized my critical colleague to help ensure I would be meeting the requirements as stated by Mills (2007) in credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

**Informed Consent and Protecting the Rights of the Participants**

Before I could begin the research, I had to obtain permission from the children, the parents, and the parental permission to use the children in the
research because the children are minors. I began with having each child and parent sign a consent form. Their signature acted as the permission to use the information obtained from the observations, questionnaires as well as the log indicating the time spent on homework and reading each night. All of the names included are pseudo names. All of the information collected has the identifying marks removed from the artifacts.

**Data Collection**

As previously stated, I used an observation log to document the interaction between the parent and child as they are dropped off and picked up from the Literacy Center. I also used a parent and child questionnaire to gather more information about the reading habits of parents and children. The last data I collected was a log of the time child and parent spend each night doing homework and reading.

**Data Analysis**

To collect data I used an observation based on when parents dropped students off and picked students up from the literacy center. I also had each parent and each child fill out a questionnaire that is reflective of their reading habits and their attitude toward reading. I also had students fill out the time they spent reading and doing homework over a 2-week period. To analyze the data I looked for similarities and differences in the data that I collected. I looked for information that was consistent with both what the parents and students said. By looking for similarities and differences I was able to come up with four different codes that became the categories in which I discussed. I was able to come up with my codes
when I looked at the responses from the questionnaires, homework/reading log as well as the observations I took of the parent/student interaction when students were dropped off at the Literacy Center.

**Findings and Discussion**

Based on the results of the data collected there are many instances where my data is consistent with the findings as reported in the literature review. I found 4 major themes that were reflective throughout the data. The first theme is based on the consistency found in reading logs and questionnaires filled out by both student and parent. The second theme is based on the time-spent reading. This includes independent reading as well as shared reading between the student and parent. The third theme is about the outside activities related to literacy that both student and parents engage in whether it is an activity that is done independently or as a family. The last theme is based on the interest and dedication that parents have for their student’s learning. I was able to come up with these 4 themes based on the triangulation I used in conducting my research and analyzing my data because I had multiple data sources. After finding 4 themes I also found outliers which is discussed as the resistance I found to the data and my review of literature and interpretations as to how this data will be used in my future classroom, advice for parents, and providing students with the strategies, skills, and authentic experiences to make them successful literacy students.

**Consistency**

According to the questionnaires that were completed by the students and the parents, both the students and parents have similar feelings toward reading. All of
the participants in the study reported enjoying reading and spend a considerable amount of time reading each week. All of the students are required to read daily according to the reading log and questionnaires they filled out. This is considered part of their homework and is a standard 20 minutes. Reading to complete homework is not included in the 20 minutes. Students and parents also reported reading together 2-3 times a week. This was also reported on the reading and homework log when parents and students read together. Parents and students can read to the each other or take turns reading to be considered reading together. Students and parents reported enjoying reading fiction books, magazines, comics, poetry, emails, and newspapers. Students and parents also reported in the questionnaires and reading/homework log that they receive and ask for help for their homework including readings assignments. Parents reported being the primary source of help when their children needed assistance. Mannan indicated that his parents were not his primary source of help but rather his aunt helps him. All of the parents appeared to be invested in their student’s academics and that was evident in the time they spend with their children and dedication to their academics. They indicated being available and willing to help students with their homework, students indicate asking for help when they need it on homework or reading assignments.

**Time Spent Reading**

All of the students and parents reported spending time reading. Students all read a minimum of 20 minutes a day. Parents reported reading at least 2-3 hours a week while they also reported taking time to read with their students. Students and
parents indicated more interest in reading when they have choices and get to read what they enjoy. This leads in an increase in time spend reading. The amount of time spent on homework varies between each student, therefore the time the parents spend helping with homework varies. All of the students read each night, even on the weekends, and sometimes they reported independent reading or reading with a parent. Table below shows the average time the students and parents spend reading per day. Students read a minimum of 20 minutes per day as assigned by teachers. Parents reported reading between 2-3 hours per week. I took the minutes and divided by 14 days to find an average of only 8.5-12.8 minutes per day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Time Child Spends Reading</th>
<th>Average Time Parent Spends Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aarti</td>
<td>Aarti’s Mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 minutes/day</td>
<td>8.5-12.8 minutes/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannan</td>
<td>Mannan’s Mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 minutes/day</td>
<td>8.5-12.8 minutes/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Michael’s Mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 minutes/ day</td>
<td>8.5-12.8 minutes/day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Average Time Child Spends Doing Homework and Total Time Spent Reading and Doing Homework by Child Each Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Average Time Spends Doing Homework</th>
<th>Total Time Spent Reading and Doing Homework by Child Each Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aarti</td>
<td>43 minutes/ day</td>
<td>20+43= 63 minutes/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannan</td>
<td>.71 seconds/ day</td>
<td>20+.71=20.71 minutes/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>60 minutes/ day</td>
<td>25+ 60= 85 minutes/day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Child’s Reading Level

- Aarti: Level L (second grade equivalent)
- Mannan: Level U (fifth grade equivalent)
- Michael: Level W (sixth grade equivalent)

### Outside Activities

All of the students and parents indicated that they participate either individually or as a family in activities that promote literacy skills besides readings. All of the parents and students indicate including other siblings into the shared reading as well as other activities. One specific activity that is shared between all participants is visiting the library. All participants state that they visit the library at least once a month. Other activities that all participants had in common were playing games, specifically board games and cards. Most participants indicated visiting zoos, museums and visits parks. Participants also engage in sports activities, this can be either actively playing a sport, or being the observer. Participants indicated attending sporting events and watching sporting events on the television. Student participants also said they spend time playing computer games, video games and occasionally complete word searches or crossword puzzles. Participants also said they spent time as a family sharing meals and also watching
television or going to the movies together. Another significant activity that most participants engage in includes writing, this includes lists such as a grocery list. All of this relates back to consistency and dedication to the child and their educational experiences that relate to literacy skills.

**Dedication**

It is clear through all of the observations, questionnaires, and time logs that the parents and students are dedicated to reading. All of the parents report spending time reading and doing homework with their student each night or as often as the student needed it. Parents and students also expressed spending time with each other and engaged in activities outside of reading and homework as a family to promote literacy skills. All of the participants were dedicated to the study because they all completed the permission forms, questionnaires, and reading/homework logs. The parents also displayed dedication by bringing students to and from the literacy center each week. They all engaged in conversation with the tutors and were invested in what the students were working on and when work was assigned to be completed at home all of the parents were on board and ensured the tutors that the work would be completed. Parents and students also show dedication through their willingness to participate in the study and their enthusiasm and interest they have in the investment of their students learning.

**Resistance and Interpretations**

The only resistance, or disconfirming data I encountered was the fact that Manna only did 2 minutes of homework during one week of school, I found out from his interviewing tutor that he spends that time working on math problems. I also
found that one question from the questionnaire that addressed how often a
parent/guardian helps him with his homework he said “never”. According to the
parent survey they indicated she helps Mannan every night. I talked with his tutor
and he indicated that his parents do not help him because they are not able to but
the mom said that Mannan receives help nightly on his homework but did not
indicate that it was his aunt who helps him complete his homework. Mannan’s tutor
told me that Mannan disclosed this information as he was filling out the
questionnaire. He said that his parents are not able to help simply because they do
not understand. This could be a language barrier and a lack of understanding in the
new ways students are being taught to use different strategies to read, write, and
complete math problems. Had I not been able to discuss some of the responses with
his interviewer I would not be aware of why this data was not consistent or be able
to decipher what data was accurate.

Implications

Based on the understanding of this data, it is critical that parents are
providing their children with literacy experiences that will enhance their skills
including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students that engage in these
activities unknowingly through activities that are authentic such a writing grocery
lists, reading signs, and labels. These students tend to be more successful than those
students that are not exposed to authentic, real-life experiences that enhance
literacy learning through practical situations. This is linked to the sociocultural
theory in that literacy learning is a social process and begins in the primary
discourse with authentic activities as stated above.
I think it is critical to note that the more time spent reading and doing homework each night lead to reading above grade level for one student. The other two students were reading at or below grade level and time spent does not seem to be an indicator of success, rather the lack of parental ability to help children with their homework or spend less time reading with their child has a negative affect on the child’s reading level. Though all parents displayed dedication and interest in their child’s learning the inability to fully support a child in their literacy acquisition limits their ability to be on grade level, and when children are working at a level below grade level it proves more difficult to work back to grade level even if a significant amount of time is spend doing homework and reading each night with little support at home. It is obvious that through this study students need the support of their parents to close literacy gaps that have developed. Once a gap has occurred it is difficult even with much dedication and time allocated for reading and homework for children to close the gap. Children also need rich literacy activities to enhance and engage their learning through authentic activities. Overall, the more time a parent and child share in rich literacy skills including reading activities, writing activities, homework support, and engaging activities that students are interested in, this reduces resistance and creates a more meaningful experience for parents and students.

As a teacher it is critical that I create a school to home, and a home to school network where there is support provided in both settings in order to provide all students with the support and attention they need to be the successful literacy learners. As a future teacher I have to provide my students with the strategies they
need to be successful in their reading and homework so that they can complete these assignments with little support because they may not have the supports needed at home. I also need to provide parents with the support and understanding that they need to feel confident and comfortable in the school and in helping their child be successful regardless of their academic abilities.

My data is backed up by the research I conducted and is consistent with my finding from the literature review in that the more a parent is involved the more successful a student will be in their academics (McKool, 2007; Siah & Kwok, 2010; White & Kim, 2008; Baskwill & Harkins, 2009; Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Zeece & Wallace, 2009; Saracho & Spodek, 2009; Dever & Burts, 2002; Neumann & Neumann, 2009; Lee, 2010; Imperto, 2009; Saldana, 2009). McKool (2007) discusses that the more a child reads in out of school situations, they have less risk of losing their academic ground; they also increase their vocabulary, fluency, comprehension as well as general intellectual development. Siah and Kwok (2010) share similar thoughts as McKool in that children who spend more time reading at home tend to have more success and participate in sustained silent reading with less reluctance than students that do not spend time reading outside of school. Michael spends the most time reading while Amany spends the least time reading and the results indicate that the more time a child spends reading, the higher their reading level are. White and Kim (2008) support the research as stated by McKool (2007) in that the willingness of a child to read enhances their reading achievement. White and Kim (2008) discuss the importance of encouraging reading during the summer; this helps reduce summer loss. All of this research supports my research study of three
5th grade students that have similar literacy experiences in and out of school.

Michael and Mannan are more successful and receive support frequently from their parents or another adult figure. They participate in activities such as the frequent visiting of the local libraries and sharing reading experiences with members of the family. This occurs during the school year and summer.

Baskwill and Harkins (2009) discussed the importance of utilizing creative and effective ways to engage families in literacy activities, specifically writing. All of the participants stated participating in writing activities such as list writing and short stories. These occur in the primary and secondary discourse. Berthelsen and Walker (2008) share believes similar to Baskwill and Harkins (2009), in that parental involvement in children’s early years increases children’s learning competence, learning outcomes, and their success in school. Parents that communicate with schools tend to be more involved in their children’s academics. Similarly to Baskwill and Harkins (2009), Zeece and Wallace (2009), Saracho and Spodek (2009), Dever and Burts (2002), Neumann and Neumann (2009) and Lee (2010) share the emphasis on the importance of using literature books and reading aloud to children to prepare them for school. Michael’s mother said based on her responses to the questionnaire that she reads aloud with Michael or listened to his reading aloud a few times a week, other times he reads silently. Michael spends the most time reading and doing homework of all the participants and consequently he is reading at the highest level of the three students involved in the research study. Imperto (2009), lists that when parents read with children, they can enhance the reading by engaging the child in phonemic awareness activities, rhymes,
understanding word to word correspondence by pointing to each word as it is read, as well as rereading, all of these activities benefit the early emergent learner in the acquisition of literacy skills. All of the participants indicated that they spend time as a family playing games, card games, and having discussions about the sporting events they watch or engage in. Saldana (2009) discusses the effects of incorporating parents into a book club. She recommends that parents read to children from infancy, create and provide a print-rich environment, and to surround children with opportunities to see parents and family members reading. According to all of the parents and the children, they engage in reading activities daily whether they are independent or a shared literacy experience. Parents consistently took their children to the library, which provides time for students to engage in a rich literature environment and the opportunity to bring the literature home to continue the experience.

Overall, this research supports my data in that students that are engaged in outside activities are more exposed to literacy experiences, are more willing to read for longer periods of time and read a wide range of genres. They also know when to ask for help and have parents that are involved in the school and are available to help the child as much as needed, these children tend to be more successful than those students who do not have the support at home to improve their skills and therefore have the student struggling in literacy skills among other skills required to be a successful student and learner. My data is consistent with the research in that the more involved the parents are the chance of the child being successful increases. This was consistent in my findings with Mannan and Michael because both students
were working at or above grade level. Aarti did receive help from her mother but the mother lacked the confidence in her abilities to help Aarti. This is where the school-home connection would benefit Aarti and her mother. She is willing to help her child but does not always know how to, this is why I think Aarti is still struggling to be at grade level and also lacks confidence in her abilities. This is interpretation of the data and research I have collected and has affected my thinking and philosophy in how a classroom and home-life connection must work to make the most successful environments for the students.

**Conclusion**

My research question was to determine the effects of parental involvement and their child's literacy success. I also looked at what strategies parents can use to support their child academically at home, this includes motivating and working with children that do not want parental support. Parental involvement and the effects of their child’s literacy success need to be addressed to ensure parents are providing authentic literacy experiences for their children. Children benefit from having by being engaged in reading and writing activities during the summer as well as throughout the school year. Teachers can provide parents with different strategies to support their children academically by including games, different genres for reading and writing.

Parental involvement begins in infancy in the home, because all children have different initial exposures to what they come to school knowing, hence, the sociocultural theory begins to shape the importance of parental involvement in their child's academics (Saldana, 2009). Gee (2008) states that, “literacy is control of
secondary discourses, where discourses are socially accepted associations among ways of using language, of thinking, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or “social network” (p. 18). Similarly, Moll and Gonzalez (1994) discuss the “funds of knowledge” in that knowledge and skills that children bring to school is learning in their households. Teachers need to incorporate the sociocultural differences children bring from home to expand how literacy is transferred between discourses and not merely focus on the ability to read and to write, but to have meaningful interactions beyond these interactions (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994).

Through my research and data collection I have found that the more involved a parent is in their children’s academics, the chance of the child being more successful increases. This includes reading frequently with the child. Parents should also be engaging their children in other activities that promote literacy including reading and writing for a purpose. Children should be exposed to outside activities including visiting museums, libraries, zoos, parks, and other places that can promote conversation and authentic learning.

Based on the finding and research I plan to provide opportunities in my classroom for children and parents to be successful. Parents should be given the opportunity to come into the classroom to learn strategies and receive support to help their students. Children should also be completing work at home that they can complete with little support. Homework should not be something that children struggle with and cannot complete, homework is used to practice and reinforce
skills. Parents should be able to support their children and participate in reading together each night.

After conducting my research and data, I wish I were able to collect data from more students and to have a more in depth understanding of what happens at each home. I also want to know what strategies the parents were using to support their child at home. I also think it would be interesting to see the different motivation each gender, male and female have in completing their homework, with or without support. Another aspect that I would like to look into is the cultural differences between each family I worked with because all of the families were dedicated and invested in the children’s learning, but all of the students are working at different levels and have different types of parental involvement and success.

Overall, through my research and data collection, I have found that the more parents are involved with their children’s academics, the more successful the child will be. Parents that have successful students also engage their children in activities outside of school including frequent visits to the library, engaging conversations, and strategies to motivate and encourage their children to be life-long learners. Parents that have successful children make themselves available and present in the home as well as in the schools. This shows the parental dedication to their children’s learning. Parental involvement also does not primarily mean the mother is the support, many fathers provide support for their children and are affective at supporting their children’s literacy learning. By providing engaging and authentic experiences for children in their primary discourse children will be set up to be successful in their secondary discourse, the school. This initial exposure to literacy
begins to shape the child in their academic understanding in the importance of literacy experiences that are provided by their parents who throughout their academic career will play a major role in supporting their literacy learning and success.
References


Doi: 10.1080/0300443022000004666.


Doi: 10.1080/01411920802041996.


Retrieved from ProQuest.


Doi: 10.1007/s10643-009-0365-5


Appendices

Parent Consent Form
Child Consent Form
Parent Questionnaire
Child Questionnaire
Observation Log
Homework/ Reading Log
St. John Fisher College
Informed Consent Form

Title of Study: Parental Involvement and Child’s Literacy Success
Name of Researcher: Karyl Milly
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Gloria E. Jacobs, Professor, Literacy
Phone for further information: (585) 489-0040

Purpose of study: The action research is to determine the affects of parental involvement and their child’s reading success, this includes homework, reading with your child, and engaging in conversations about books children read in and out of school.

This study has been approved by the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board.
Place of study: Literacy Program   Length of Participation: 2/15/11-2/28/11

Risks and benefits: This study presents no risks to you. The benefits are the opportunity for improved teaching.

Your name and the location of the research will be changed in order to protect anonymity. All data will be kept in a locked location and accessible only to the researcher. The findings from this study will be shared with other professionals at the St. John Fisher College Capstone Presentation conference.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:
1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
4. Be informed of the results of the study

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

_____________________________  ____________________________  __________
Print name (Participant)       Signature                        Date

_____________________________  ____________________________  __________
Print name (Investigator)      Signature                        Date

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher listed above. If you experience emotional or physical discomfort due to participation in this study, please contact the Office of Academic Affairs at 385-8034 or the Wellness Center at 385-8280 for appropriate referrals.
Title of study: Parental Involvement and Child’s Literacy Success

Name(s) of researcher(s): Karyl Milly

Purpose of study: The action research is to determine the affects of parental involvement and their child’s reading success, this includes homework, reading with your child, and engaging in conversations about books children read in and out of school.

This study has been approved by John Fisher College.

Place of study: Literacy Program Length of participation: 2/15/11-2/28/11

Risks and benefits: This study presents no risks to you and it will help me become a better teacher.

Your name and the name of the school will be changed to keep your identity a secret. Only my professor and I will be able to see the data I collect. The findings from this study will be shared with other professionals at the St. John Fisher College Capstone Presentation conference.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:
1. You have the right to know what the study is, what the risks are and what the benefits are.
2. You can decide not to participate. It will not affect your grade or anything else in school.
3. You can decide not an answer any questions I ask.
4. You can ask to hear about what I learned.

I, ________________________________, agree to participate in this study. I have received a copy of this form.

_____________________________  ______________________________
Print name (Participant)        Signature                           Date

_____________________________  ______________________________
Print name (Investigator)       Signature                           Date

If you have any questions, please let me know. If anything about this study makes you uncomfortable, let your parents know so they can contact people who can help you.
Title of study: Parental Involvement and Child’s Literacy Success

Name(s) of researcher(s): Karyl Milly

Faculty Supervisor: Gloria E. Jacobs, Professor, Literacy

Phone for further information: (585) 489-0040

Purpose of study: The action research is to determine the affects of parental involvement and their child's reading success, this includes homework, reading with your child, and engaging in conversations about books children read in and out of school.

This study has been approved by the John Fisher College Institutional Review Board.

Place of study: Literacy Program  Length of participation: 2/15/11-2/28/11

Risks and benefits: This study presents no risks to your child. The benefits are the opportunity for improved teaching.

Your child’s name and the location of the research will be changed in order to protect your child’s anonymity. All data will be kept in a locked location and accessible only to the researcher. The findings from this study will be shared with other professionals at the St. John Fisher College Capstone Presentation conference.

Your rights: As the parent/guardian of a research participant, you have the right to:
   1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to allow your minor child to participate.
   2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
   3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
   4. Be informed of the results of the study.

I , the parent or guardian of ________________________________, a minor _________ years of age, consent to his/her participation in the above-named study. I have received a copy of this form.

Print name (Participant)  Signature  Date

Print name (Investigator)  Signature  Date

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher listed above. If you experience emotional or physical discomfort due to participation in this study, please contact the Office of Academic Affairs at 385-8034 or the Wellness Center at 385-8280 for appropriate referrals.
Capstone Questionnaire:

Name__________________________________________ Date__________________________

Background Information

1. Ethnic origin (please circle one):
   White not Hispanic      Black not Hispanic      Hispanic
   Asian or Pacific Islander Filipino American Indian/Alaskan Native
   Other_____________________

2. Gender (circle one):
   Female     Male

3. Please circle the highest year of school completed (circle one):
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Primary/elementary/intermediate)  9 10 11 12 (High school)  13 14 15 16 (College/university)

4. Are you currently (circle one)?
   Married     Separated     Single     Divorced     Widowed

5. On a scale of 1-5, how much do you like to read?
   😞 1 2 3 4 5 😊

6. How often do you read each week? (Circle one)
   30 minutes   1 hour   2 hours   3 hours   Other___________________________
7. What do you prefer to read? *(Circle all that apply)*

- Fiction
- Non-Fiction
- Magazines
- Newspaper
- Emails
- T.V. Guide
- Poetry
- Comics
- Other_______________________________

8. How often do you read with your child? *(Circle one)*

- Every night
- 2-3 times a week
- 4-6 times a week

9. How often do you help your child with homework? *(Circle one)*

- Every night
- When the child asks
- When I have time
- Never
- Other_______________________________________

10. Do you visit the library with your child: Yes No

- How Often: Weekly
- 2 times a month
- 1 time a month
- Other_______________________________________

11. What other activities do you engage your child in? *(Circle all that apply)*

- Letter Writing
- Writing Lists (grocery)
- Puzzles
- Crosswords
- Zoo
- Museum
- Circus
- Park
- Singing Songs
- Playing sports
- Watching sports
- Board games
- Computer games
- Card games
- Attending sporting events
- Video games
- Drawing
- Coloring
- Word Searches
- Other_______________________________________
Capstone Questionnaire:

Name ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Grade: ____________________________ Gender: Male Female

1. On a scale of 1-5, how much do you like to read?

😊  1  2  3  4  5 😞

2. How often do you read each night? (Circle one)

20 minutes 30 minutes 1 hour 1 hour and 30 minutes Other __________

3. What do you prefer to read? (Circle all that apply)

Fiction  Non-Fiction  Magazines  Newspaper
Emails  T.V. Guide  Poetry  Comics
Chapter Books  Picture Books  Books on Tape
Other _____________________________

4. How often do you read with your parent/guardian? (Circle one)

Every night 2-3 times a week 4-6 times a week

5. Do you read with anyone else at home? (Circle all that apply)

Brother/Sister  Grandparent  Aunt/Uncle  Pet
Other _____________________________
6. Where and how do you like to read?

Loud  Quiet
Room  Couch  Outside  Car  Library  School
Stories on the Computer  Other______________________________

7. How often do you ask for help with your homework? (*Circle one*)

Every night  When parent/ guardian has time
When I need help  Never
Other______________________________

8. Do you visit the library with your parent/ guardian:  Yes  No

How Often:  Weekly  2 times a month  1 time a month  other

9. What other activities do you participate in with your parents/ guardians? (*Circle all that apply*)

Letter Writing  Writing Lists (grocery)  Puzzles  Crosswords
Zoo  Museum  Circus  Park
Singing Songs  Playing sports  Watching sports  Board games
Computer games  Card games  Attending sporting events
Video games  Drawing  Coloring
Word Searches  Other_________________________________________
Capstone Observation:
Parent and Child Interactions
Before and After Practicum

Name_________________________________________ Date____________________

Check those that apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greet instructor</td>
<td>Greet Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say Good-Bye to child</td>
<td>Ask how session went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask instructor any questions</td>
<td>Ask instructor what child worked on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrive on time</td>
<td>Arrive late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial expression: smiling/ no expression</td>
<td>Facial expression: smiling/ no expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent rush back out to car</td>
<td>Rush back to their car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child shows parent work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent asks to see child's work</td>
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Notes for additional observations:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Name________________________________________

Log the time you spend reading each night with your child, as well as the time you spend doing homework each night with your child. If your child has spring break during these weeks, please still note what reading and or homework your child completed.

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</tbody>
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Parent’s Signature__________________________________________ *Please return as soon as possible*