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Abstract

Guided reading is an instructional method that is used in various classrooms around the country. This study asked the question: In a literacy clinic, how do literacy candidates understand guided reading, and what characteristics do effective literacy candidates exhibit? Research was done in in Plaintown, New York (a pseudonym) with four literacy candidates in a literacy clinic. Through interviews with literacy instructors and candidates, observations of instruction in the clinic, and by reviewing student work, it was found that there is a distinct difference between what literacy candidates and instructors understand about guided reading instruction and how it should look. These findings call for literacy programs to rethink what they want literacy candidates to know before entering such a course.

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Abstract

Guided reading is an instructional method that is used in various classrooms around the country. This study asked the question: In a literacy clinic, how do literacy candidates understand guided reading, and what characteristics do effective literacy candidates exhibit? Research was done in in Plaintown, New York (a pseudonym) with four literacy candidates in a literacy clinic. Through interviews with literacy instructors and candidates, observations of instruction in the clinic, and by reviewing student work, it was found that there is a distinct difference between what literacy candidates and instructors understand about guided reading instruction and how it should look. These findings call for literacy programs to rethink what they want literacy candidates to know before entering such a course.

**Guided Reading Instruction: How Literacy Candidates Understand and Instruct Using
Guided Reading in a Literacy Clinic**

Over the years, the instructional strategy entitled “guided reading” has become popular among reading and classroom educators throughout the country. No matter what district an educator is employed by, there is a great chance that they will need to know and be able to implement effective guided reading lessons with their students. Guided reading is not only used with primary or elementary students but can be used with students of any age.

Bruce, Salzman, and Snodgrass (2002) provide a quality definition of the guided reading instructional method with the following statement:

Guided Reading provides children with opportunities to develop as individual readers while participating in small groups. Children are placed in flexible instructional groupings based on specific individual needs and taught problem-solving strategies to enable them to read increasingly difficult texts. For instance, over the course of their work in particular groups and based on identified needs, such as comprehension of words in context, students might learn to apply syntax to determine unknown words or to be taught to read to the end of a sentence and return to figure out an unknown word. Texts are leveled so that students can read material on their own instructional level. As children’s automaticity in strategy use and their reading proficiency increase, students read more complex material. Teachers maintain running records, which document students’ uses of strategies for making meaning and utilizing visual, syntactic, and semantic clues. Children respond to their reading of texts by discussing story elements, writing in journal, or responding to specific teacher-generated questions. (p. 45)

Overall, guided reading is a means of instruction that is meant to help students build their reading strategies and gradually move beyond their current reading level. In most cases, guided reading includes literacy practices such as word recognition through problem solving, reading for meaning (comprehension), and discussion of the text between the individual and educator or among a small group of students. Though guided reading lessons should include several specific literacy practices, sometimes educators may adjust their lessons in order to better accommodate their students' needs.

As graduate literacy candidates in a master's degree program learn and practice what "good" guided reading instruction looks like they will begin to implement these practices in their classroom or in their practicum experiences. A beginning literacy candidate may have different experiences in implementing guided reading among different age groups and they may not be as effective as those candidates who work in a classroom setting on a daily basis. I believe that it is important to understand how guided reading instruction should be taught in order to evaluate the effectiveness of a novice literacy educator's instruction.

Exploring the topic of guided reading and how a literacy candidate is taught to implement such instruction is helpful in understanding the differences between effective and less effective candidate characteristics. Without a deeper understanding of how to better instruct novice literacy candidates in effective guided reading methods, a student's progress in a literacy clinic can be hindered. Though students are not graded within such a clinic the expectations are that of growth and development.

By studying the differences between characteristics of effective and less effective literacy candidates within a literacy clinic the findings may be useful in creating an effective candidate profile. At the start of the first practicum experience, literacy candidates will have different

beliefs and ideas on guided reading practices of how it should look within the classroom setting based upon previous or current experience with the instructional method. Literacy practicum instructors may benefit from the creation of such a profile as they seek to instruct and support their students throughout the semester on the central methods related to guided reading instruction. A candidate's profile may also be a resource for the literacy candidates themselves. Literacy candidates may want to gauge their growth throughout the semester and set goals for themselves as they reflect upon their guided reading instruction from week to week.

Having gone through the two literacy practicum classes required within my graduate program, I have learned that guided reading, though it has specific components, will look different for everyone. Some literacy candidates will have more experience with guided reading instruction than others. Candidates who are not working in schools on a daily basis may not have the background and skills required to successfully implement a guided reading lesson right from the start of their first practicum course. These candidates may take longer to progress but their progression will surely be seen in different ways. Candidates who do not have the chance to see or implement guided reading in a school setting may need to spend more time working with their instructors on creating lessons. They may also need to spend more time with the reading materials provided to them about guided reading.

There are many resources to help literacy candidates become more informed on the instructional method of guided reading. Two significant works on the topic of guided reading instruction are: Richardson's (2009) book entitled, *The Next Step in Guided Reading: Focused Assessments and Targeted Lessons for Helping Every Student Become a Better Reader* as well as Fountas and Pinnell's (1996) book entitled *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children*. The authors of these books are pioneers in the field of literacy instruction and their

works provide the tools needed to get a better understanding of guided reading instruction from the start.

It has been said that experience within the classroom is very important for education candidates, but in this economy, it may not always be feasible for graduate students to find and maintain a full time teaching position while also attending school. This poor economy should not hinder their success in their graduate program but should help them be more prepared when they are looking for a job after graduating with their masters in literacy education. The expectations for all students should be the same as that is only fair and there should not be more value placed upon those students who have a full time position over those who are furthering their education before delving fully into the field of education as a full time teacher.

Taking into consideration the different backgrounds of literacy candidates, it is important to analyze the differences between literacy candidates' understandings of guided reading instruction as this is a crucial element of the practicum 1 experience. Given that literacy is a multidimensional concept and success varies depending on the acquisition of language in different social constructs, this action research projects seeks to answer the following question: In a literacy clinic, how do literacy candidates understand guided reading, and what characteristics do effective literacy candidates exhibit? Literacy candidates, even those who attended the same undergraduate colleges and who all participated in the student teaching experience all have different understandings of guided reading instruction. Research was done in Plaintown, New York at St. Mark's (pseudonym) literacy clinic with group of four literacy candidates enrolled in the practicum 1 course. Through observations of the literacy candidates as they implemented guided reading, interviews with the literacy candidates, interviews with the instructors of the practicum 1 course, and student work a variety of useful information was

collected. It was found that there was a difference between what the literacy candidates know and what they actually do when they are implementing guided reading within the literacy clinic setting. The understandings of literacy candidates differ depending on their experience; their effectiveness is dependent on if they are able to adapt instruction to meet the needs of the students they are tutoring not upon their knowledge base as they are still honing their skills throughout the practicum 1 course. Though adaptation to student needs is an important part to guided reading instruction, the implications of this study suggest that literacy candidates need to have more experience with guided reading instruction before entering the practicum 1 experience. The first implication to this study is that literacy courses taken before practicum 1 have a field work component that requires candidates to get out in the field and observe certified literacy specialists or coaches using guided reading. And the second implication to this study is that scaffolded instruction be used with literacy candidates so they can see a model of guided reading instruction and then participate in the instructional approach themselves after being exposed to a model.

Theoretical Framework

Before I begin my research on the instructional method of guided reading and what characteristics effective literacy candidates exhibit, I will first define literacy. Literacy is a multidimensional concept with each dimension of literacy adding to the meaning of being literate in any society. The dimensions of literacy include: linguistic, cognitive, sociocultural and developmental. One does not just learn how to be literate but also acquires the skills needed to be a literate individual working in society. Literacy is not only developed within the classroom but developed when individuals acquire the languages needed to be successful in various social constructs. Apart from being able to maneuver successfully between different social constructs a

literate individual must be able to take on multiple roles within these constructs, they must be able to understand, participate, use, and analyze them. All literate individuals are products of multiple discourses. Discourses are socially accepted ways of using language within social groups or networks of individuals. Gee (1989) defines literacy as “the control of secondary uses of language” (the use of language in secondary discourses such as places outside of primary discourse or the home) (p.23). Gee compares discourses to the concept of an “identity kit”; complete with costumes and instructions on how to act and talk so that others within the group can understand. Gee identified two different kinds of discourses: primary and secondary ().

As humans, we are all awarded at least one form of free discourse which is also known as our primary discourse. Primary discourse is acquired within the individual’s home through interactions between family members (Gee, 1989). Children do not “learn” how to speak within their family or primary discourse, rather, they pick up on the communication systems of the discourse “subconsciously by exposure to models and trial and error” (p. 20). Gee makes note that in order for one to be an effective communicator in secondary discourses, or those discourses outside of the family, they must combine both the act of acquiring and learning.

Another definition of literacy is as follows: “Literacy is a multifaceted set of social practices with a material technology, entailing code breaking, participation with the knowledge of the text, social uses of text and analysis/critique of the text” (Freebody & Luke, 1990, p. 7). From this definition, we can see that in order to be a successfully literate individual one must take on each of the four roles described by Freebody and Luke. These four roles include the following: code breaker, text participant, text user, and text analyst. According to Freebody and Luke, if you are able to take on each of the four roles mentioned, you will be successfully literate individual.

As a professional in the field of literacy, literacy education candidates must be able to identify a student's primary discourse. After identifying their primary discourse they must then help them acquire a secondary discourse that is used within the school setting. Helping students acquire a secondary discourse may be a hard task for a literacy candidate who does not work with children on a daily basis while attending graduate level literacy courses. The challenge may be less for those candidates who work with students on a daily basis.

Literacy candidates are an entity of their own and have their own discourse; like their students, literacy candidates will have a primary discourse that is different than the discourse used within their graduate literacy classes. This difference between discourses adds yet another challenge for educators who are not currently teaching while taking graduate literacy courses. Candidates who are currently teaching in a school setting may have a more developed secondary discourse as it relates to teaching and literacy; whereas, those literacy candidates who are not teaching at the time may not have the chance to develop their secondary discourse because they do not use literacy or teaching terminology on a daily basis.

After defining what I believe literacy is I will now explain how the characteristics exhibited by literacy candidates may differ when it comes to guided reading instruction. The first issue related to how the characteristics exhibited by literacy candidates may differ when it comes to guided reading instruction is the cultural- historical theory. With this theory we look at the history of involvement of a student in literacy practices across all the contexts of their everyday lives (Pacheco & Gutierrez, 2009). Literacy candidates will most likely participate in different activities within their daily lives which involve various literacy and language practices. These various activities and literacy and language practices collide when literacy candidates enter a literacy clinic and practicum class and current job roles do not matter where their tutees learning

and achievement is concerned. The cultural-historical perspective emphasizes that the ways in which students participate in meaning-making activities depends on how adults and teachers socially and culturally organize those activities. In our graduate literacy classes it seems as though we create the same expectations for all students but do not always take into account the experiences or resources available to those who are not currently teaching in a school full time, which is based on our socially and culturally constructed classifications of a graduate education student at a college or university (Pacheco & Gutierrez, 2009).

The second theory which can be related to guided reading instruction and the differences between literacy candidates is the cognitive theory of learning according to the work of Vgotsky (1978) and in particular the “cognitive apprenticeship” teaching method. Vgotsky’s cognitive theory is also called social cognitivism. Social cognitivism suggests that social learning will most likely lead to development which contrasts other theories which suggest development will lead to their learning. In his work, Vgostky focuses on several principles, one of them being the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD, according to Vgostsky (1978) is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determines through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). The basic principles of cognitive apprentice rest under Vgostky’s principle of “zone of proximal development.” “Cognitive apprenticeship is a method of helping students grasp concepts and procedures under the guidance of an expert such as the teacher” (Yilmaz, 2011, p. 209). This principle provides novices (students) with the chance to learn a new concept while being guided by an individual who is more knowledgeable and can provide them with the support they need to succeed. Cognitive apprenticeship’s approach to instruction follows some specific phases, these phases are the following: modeling,

coaching, articulation, reflection, and exploration (Yilmaz). In order to be able to act as an expert and use the cognitive apprenticeship approach to instruction, literacy candidates must know the framework of guided reading and the importance of the different parts of guided reading instruction such as those things that are discussed or worked on before, during, and after instruction has taken place. These candidates must also be aware of the needs of their students and their interests in order to create lessons that will engage their tutees and not frustrate them in the process. Without a solid knowledge and understanding of the guided reading framework, literacy candidates cannot adequately act as the expert and will not be able to articulate or “scaffold” the strategies and skills they are seeking to teach their tutee(s).

Research Question

Given that literacy is a multidimensional concept and success varies depending on the acquisition of language in different social constructs, this action research projects seeks to answer the following question: In a literacy clinic, how do literacy candidates understand guided reading, and what characteristics do effective literacy candidates exhibit?

Literature Review

In order to produce a well-round and informed action research study, it is vital to view the previous research that has helped set the foundation for this study and its multiple components regarding both guided reading and exemplary teacher preparation. Within this literature review, three distinct themes will be addressed. The first theme which will be investigated within this review of literature looks at how teacher preparation and in-service literacy coaching affects the instructional procedures of those who are learning to become literacy specialists or who have already obtained a teaching position but wish to become better versed in the most effective methods of teaching reading to students. Next, the second theme

investigates the detailed components of guided reading and its role within the elementary classroom setting. The elementary setting is where the instructional method of guided reading is most commonly used as a method to develop literacy skills of all students regardless of their skills. The last theme continues to address the instructional method of guided reading but focuses more on its uses with diverse learners and settings. Guided reading has many beneficial traits for learners beyond the elementary school setting. In many cases, guided reading has been implemented and studied within the primary and elementary setting but new research has looked at how this instructional method can be used to enhance the literacy learning of diverse groups of individuals including students with reading disabilities, deaf students, and even low literate adults. This review of the literature will look at these three themes in depth to come to an overall conclusion about the best practices related to guided reading and their implications on how guided reading should be taught to pre-service teachers in the field.

Literacy Professionals and Guided Reading: Impact of Pre-service and In-service Teacher Training

In most undergraduate teacher training programs today, student teaching is one important part of the process. Student teaching involves a pre-service teacher working with and interacting with a cooperating teacher within a school. As education policies shift and new research is conducted, more emphasis on teacher training has been a result. Lesley, Hamman, Olivarez, Button, and Griffith (2009) suggest that pre-service teachers involved in student teaching are provided with a “hidden curriculum” as their interaction with their cooperating teacher is an invaluable aspect of the process. Pre-service teachers learn about the ins and outs of teaching from their cooperating teachers on a daily basis. They essentially learn what the profession entails, because teaching includes more than just working with students, it also includes working

with colleagues and parents. Data from the study done by the College of Education, Texas Tech University (2006) indicated through their study of reading instruction and the relationship between cooperating teachers and student teachers that student teachers instruction of reading goes beyond just watching and then imitating what is seen to be done by cooperating teachers. Models of teaching grade level students can also be used with student teachers as cooperating teacher seek to prepare those who may one day work alongside of them in the field. Lesley et al. (2009) asserted in their study that student teachers may be involved in more than just an imitative process but also different type of collaboration similar to those seen within the elementary classroom like guidance and scaffolding methods. These studies, done by many of the same researchers, sought to answer questions regarding the apprenticeship models which occur during the student teaching process and how these models affect the guided reading instruction student teachers provide to children.

Although Lesley et al. (2009) suggested that imitation was just one of three ways student teachers learned to interact with cooperating teachers. Other ways pre-service teachers are seen to interact with cooperating teachers are through guidance and scaffolding. Similar to the results of Lesley et al.'s (2009) study, the College of Education, Texas Tech University (2006) found that, behaviors exhibited by student teachers during reading instruction were almost identical to their cooperating teachers, suggesting that imitation had taken place. This trend in reading instruction begs to question what type of knowledge base the pre-service teachers have acquired prior to starting their student teaching assignments. Lesley et al. (2009) found that student teachers, especially those who had a low to moderate knowledge base of guided reading instruction had more often imitated their cooperating teacher's instructional methods with students. Their findings suggest that, "the more opportunities student teachers have with

experiencing guidance and scaffolding in orchestrating reading curriculum and assessment during student teaching, the greater their understanding of children's reading development and the greater the likelihood for becoming "quality" reading teachers" (Lesley, et al, p. 52).

Unfortunately both studies found that the imitative and passive experiences of student teachers are the norm in teacher preparation programs today. Even with the support of effective reading teachers student teachers do not show a difference in instructional quality (College of Education, Texas Tech University, 2006). The results of these studies further emphasize the importance of the interactions which take place between student teachers and cooperating teachers. Student teaching with an exemplary reading teacher is a start but it does not always make a significant difference, scaffolding interactions may be more beneficial for a student teacher because they are not blindly reproducing a procedure they may have little or no background in. Lesley et al. (2009) states it best with their suggestion for how student teaching should be done in the future. "We believe strict notions of expert-novice relationships between student teachers and cooperating teachers need to be revised to an inquiry-oriented, reciprocal teaching model" (Lesley et al., p. 53). This inquiry-oriented, reciprocal teaching model would suggest that cooperating teachers provide their student teachers with more opportunities to interact with others in the school in dynamic ways. Cooperating teachers should also be providing their student teachers with more hands on experiences that are guided by the scaffolding approach to teaching, similar to the approach used with students.

Just as coaching instruction for student teachers is suggested as a means to enhance pre-service teacher training, in-service teacher training should undergo the same procedures. Comparable to student teaching, in which cooperating teachers supervise and provide guidance to a pre-service teacher, literacy coaches provide similar supports to classroom teachers in order

to help them enhance their literacy instructional methods. Gibson (2006) claims that, “Literacy coaching has become an important avenue of support for instructional reform” showing that the act of literacy coaching is integral in our school systems today (p. 295). Coaches in schools today can take on many different roles which can vary from district to district. But overall, coaching as a literacy practice is seen as effective if the one doing the coaching possess several attributes.

The International Reading Association states that:

Effective reading coaches must (a) be expert classroom teachers; (b) possess in-depth knowledge of reading processes, acquisition, assessment, and instruction; (c) be excellent presenters and have experience working with teacher to improve their instructional practices; and (d) have expertise in observing, modeling, and providing feedback to teachers. (IRA, 2004c)

Though limited information exists on the best way for coaches to interact with teachers following a lesson, a Self-Assessment for Literacy Coaches does exist. This self-assessment addresses issues related to knowledge and abilities related to literacy coaching. Unfortunately this assessment does not go beyond the coaching conversations which discuss planning, pre-meeting, observation protocols, and reflective dialogues (Gibson, 2011). In addition to the coaching conversations discussed above, the actions that take place after guided reading instruction has concluded is also important to pay attention to in order to see if any change has occurred. In the study by Wold (2003), they moved beyond the typical coaching conversations and sought to express the effects of teachers’ actions after examining their own reflections on teaching guided reading and interactive writing. The coaches in this study provided strategic support to teachers as they were deciding upon guided reading text and how to improve their implementation of the method of instruction. Overall these coaches approach to instruction was meant to help teachers

develop new understandings about the literacy practices in which they pursued more guidance (Wold, 2003). Coaches can also provide feedback and support by different means as well, rather than helping a teacher with the decision making coaches can also help with the reflective piece which comes after teaching takes place.

Observation, feedback, and reflection are an integral part of the coaching process in the literacy education profession. Literacy coaches may, at times, assist teachers as they reflect upon past lessons which they observed. Gibson (2011) argues that, one of the main ways in which literacy coaches may provide assistance, to a teacher they are working with, is through supportive conversations had after an observed lesson. Usually coaching conversations are held shortly after a lesson is observed and include a discussion of what happened during the lesson and how the instruction could be changed in the future to meet the needs of students (Gibson). These conversations are a way for teachers to reflect upon their practice and plan for future instructional approaches that would be beneficial to use with their students. As practitioners, this act of reflection is an important part of the learning process. Wold (2003) conducted a study on how teachers’ learn to act on reflection” and the effects of their actions. The data gathered in this study found that, like literacy learning, literacy teaching is a non-linear process; one may progress in their teaching or regress as they act upon their reflections. Since literacy teaching can be a difficult process, providing feedback to teachers in an attempt to help them reflect upon their teaching can be a tricky and sometimes threatening task. Gibson (2006) conducted a study of one expert reading coach and her experiences with lesson feedback and observations of a kindergarten teachers guided reading instructional practices support the notion that coaching can be a tricky task. The study results suggest that for literacy coaching to be reliable coaches must be knowledgeable of the demands of the role. Technical aspects of the role of coaching require

individuals to have spent time coaching, training, and reflecting, showing that reflection is a key component to literacy coaching and teaching as a whole. Generally the act of reflection to improve literacy instruction is a tough one because literacy teaching may only progress incrementally and teacher reflections are not clearly related to better practice (Wold, 2003).

Congruent to scaffolding in lessons provided to grade level students and even student teachers, coaching experiences may employ a similar approach to instruction. Scaffolding as defined by Lesley et al. (2009) is a collaborative interaction between the expert and novice where, in their study, the student teacher was the novice and the cooperating teacher was the expert. This interaction contains an inquiry approach to instruction where the teacher and student learn together in a reciprocal manner where the teacher will maintain their stance as instructor at the onset but will slowly provide less support to the student(s) as they begin to show growth, resulting in a total release of responsibility onto the student by the end. Gibson (2011) asserts that coaching conversations should include scaffolding for the teacher who is not yet a literacy expert by modeling and assisting them on a regular basis in order to improve instruction in the future. Literacy coaching is not just a matter of answering a teacher's questions and moving them on their way, it is a process in which a coach helps a teacher improve their teaching through guidance and discussion (Gibson, 2006). Teachers, just like students, need to be instructed at times to ensure they are successful in their endeavors. As recommended above, one way that literacy coaches may support and instruct their colleagues is through modeling and/or scaffolding. The importance of scaffolding instruction in the coaching process was reinforced by statements made in the study done by Wold (2003). One of the teachers who participated acknowledged that the process of learning which she was involved in was similar to those of her students. She realized that it took multiple exposures for her to grasp ideas clearly, and the

actions she undertook required ongoing reflection and scaffolding by literacy coaches in order for her to become better versed in the instruction of guided reading. Therefore, it is evident that scaffolding is not just an approach that will help grade level learners engaging in guided reading and other literacy processes but it is also an approach to literacy teaching that supports teachers as they seek to become expert literacy professionals.

Guided Reading: An Effective Method for Instructing Elementary Students

Guided reading today is one of the prevalent instructional methods within the field of literacy. It is most commonly used with those in primary and elementary grades. And it can be seen in many different reading programs throughout the country, but in general it can be seen in programs that use the balanced approach to literacy instruction. Models of guided reading can be different depending on the type of training teachers have been exposed to or consequently not exposed to, some teachers may follow the procedure for guided reading instruction explicitly but others may use it as a means to teach it in accordance to other skills. The literature reviewed, to better understand guided reading and the teacher preparation needed for this instruction to be successful, show many similarities.

Guided instruction can be aligned with responsive literacy instruction which is a part of cognitive theory. The cognitive theory focuses on a type of “cognitive apprenticeship” where the teacher models, guides, coaches, scaffolds and fades strategies and prompts in order to provide students with a means to independence (Tobin & McInnes, 2008). This type of cognitive apprenticeship is relative to the process of scaffolding which is used within the guided learning framework. Frey and Fisher (2010) assert that scaffolding requires an interaction between an expert and a novice in the field of literacy. The teacher will act as the literacy expert and model

how to use specific literacy strategies. At first the students or novices will be asked to observe the strategy being used then later they will be asked to use the strategy on their own in order to become more independent and show what they learned. Educators today can relate this idea back to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the "zone of proximal development" in which learning operates on two levels: the "actual development level" where independent problem solving occurs and the "potential development level" where problem solving occurs through guidance or collaboration with a more knowledgeable individual (Frey & Fisher, 2010). With guided reading instruction the "potential development level" is where students are being taught because they are not being asked to solve problems individually but are being guided through a process by their teacher and are working together with other students in a small group setting. In contrast to the guided learning model of instruction and the idea of scaffolded instruction, Costello (2011) found in a study of his schools literacy program that, direct instruction, which follows a specific process, is used in guided reading. Direct instruction is a process in which students are taught strategies and skills at the front of the class and there is no room for differences to exist. Direct instruction may be used in some schools with guided reading instruction but scaffolding and differentiated instruction seems to be considered best practice in the field. Teachers in the field will more likely apply scaffolding to their teaching of guided reading because it fosters more active learning than direct instruction (Frey & Fisher, 2010).

Guided reading as a literacy instructional method serves multiple purposes for developing reader's literacy skills. Guided reading as an instructional approach was first brought to the forefront of literacy education when it gained popularity in the late 1990s. Fountas and Pinnell (1996) pose that guided reading as a classroom-based practice would provide all students with good first teaching that might reduce the need for pull-out reading interventions. Many times this

type of instruction takes place when other independent work is being done by the rest of the class in centers and a small group of students' works with the teacher to practice problem-solving strategies and skills necessary for that specific group of students. In contrast to this idea, Ford and Opitz's (2008) survey found that primary teachers using guided reading indicated their focus was on demonstrations which is contrary to Fountas and Pinnell's (1996) belief that in the primary classroom the purpose for guided reading focuses on providing scaffolded instruction as students attempt new skills and/or strategies. Demonstrating skills and strategies for students can be used within guided reading as part of the scaffolding approach but it should only be a small part of the instruction. Ford and Opitz's (2008) survey, mentioned above, suggested that it is important for the purposes of guided reading to be better explained in the future so that everyone is on the same page and have a similar focus for guided reading instruction. Since there seemed to be a bit of discrepancy between what is considered best practice in guided reading instruction and what is actually being done in the field it is evident that some changes need to be made. Even with multiple ideas about guided reading, "The essential purpose of guided reading instruction to insure that beginning readers develop the ability to utilize meaning, language, and graphophonic/visual information strategically as they read continuous text" (Gibson, 2006, p. 297). Moreover, the purpose for guided reading is the same no matter how it is taught to students within the classroom. Guided reading is an instructional method which should, if done with the correct purposes in mind, provide students with the necessary skills and strategies to become literate individuals within their school and society as a whole.

As a literacy instructional strategy, guided reading it has specific elements which make it successful. Hornsby (2000) emphasizes that such instruction relies on a three-part lesson plan which focuses on strategies that can be used before, during, and after reading. Strategies that

come before reading can include inferring, determining background knowledge, and reviewing vocabulary. During reading strategies can include double entry journal, think alouds, and self-monitoring, and after reading strategies can include identifying main ideas, summarizing, and compare and contrast. Though strategies are important to take into consideration when working in guided reading groups, book choices are also important to ensure the success of a guided reading group. Guided reading instruction uses texts that are “just right” for students and strategy instruction for all students no matter what level they are performing at (Brown, 2010). Students in guided reading groups are usually placed with a few others based upon similar abilities and strategy needs. A typical guided reading lesson will take about 20 minutes; it will include the sharing of learning objectives around a student’s instructional level text, modeling of key strategies, independent reading and a short discussion at the end to review the sessions teaching (Swain, 2010). Struggling readers may need more support to develop different strategies such as word recognition, comprehension and fluency so teachers may incorporate mini-lessons at the beginning of their guided reading time like the teacher presented in the study done by Poteza-Radis (2010). Mini-lessons are an important part to any type of literacy instruction and could even be taught to the whole group before groups are separated for guided reading instruction. Another aspect of guided reading is the teaching of decoding strategies and sight vocabulary knowledge which known as “word work.” This type of instruction can be presented to individual students before reading a text or during the reading of the text with the whole group. Despite the fact that there are various procedures teachers can follow in regards to guided reading, Gibson (2006) presents the following compilation of the appropriate steps of guided reading instruction:

The procedural steps for guided reading lesson typically consist of (a) rereading of familiar texts; (b) orientation of student to a new text; (c) reading of new text within the

group, but at an individual pace; (d) presentation of a “teaching point” to the group, intended to extend the entire group’s understanding of effective reading strategies; and (e) discussion of responses to the text and/or extension of students’ comprehension.

(p.297)

Though guided reading is an instructional method that has many purposes for developing literacy skills in all readers it is still a complex process.

Guided reading for many years has been considered as a practice primarily done by primary teachers to better develop students reading skills in order for them to be successful as they move from grade to grade. Even though the goal for primary teachers when using this method of instruction is the same not all primary teachers are effective in their attempts. In the National Survey of Guided Reading Practices the levels of texts used with students was found to be of concern as well because it was indicated by teachers that students read texts in their instructional level a little more than half of the time (Ford & Opitz, 2008). These findings are of concern when thinking about the reasons guided reading exists. Ford and Opitz (2008) assert that ,“Guided reading was designed as a return to small group reading instruction to address the overuse of whole group instruction during which many student were not reading texts at their instructional level” (p. 318). Some teachers see guided reading as a means to listen to their students read out loud but these teachers are missing the point of the process. In a study done by Ferguson and Wilson (2009), it was found that many primary teachers used guided reading as a time to work in small groups and practice reading, but it was not always done on a daily basis or in the process indicative of best practice. Best practice suggests that this method of instruction happens on a daily basis for at least 20 minutes. Like the previous study, Fisher (2008) learned that teachers saw a benefit from guided reading but they also saw it as an opportunity to listen to

their students read neglecting to teach strategies to help students as they move towards independence. Students who only get a little time with their teacher working on the strategies they are learning will not have adequate time to practice and internalize what they are learning if it is only done sporadically. Though one teacher, from the Ferguson and Wilson (2009) study wrote “Guided reading groups are individualized based on the weaknesses of the children. We focus on blends, sight words, and decoding skills. We also do questioning strategies for all students to think about the story” (p.297). Teachers from this study saw the importance of guided reading as their students made gains in their comprehension and fluency skills. Grouping practices has also been a cause of concern when the results from the National Survey of Guided Reading were put forth. The survey found that variations in grouping techniques were common, some teachers met with students daily and others met with students once or twice a week which falls short of what would be sufficient for powerful implementation of this instructional method (Ford & Opitz, 2008). Taking into consideration the fact primary teachers are the most common groups to use guided reading within the classroom they should set the example but the research proves otherwise? Primary teachers still have their flaws when it comes to working with students using guided reading methods of instruction.

Best practice for guided reading instruction may be seen by those who work with struggling readers providing them with interventions. Students who struggle can be helped by teachers in the classroom, by reading specialists, or trained tutors who work with them outside of the classroom in guided reading groups. In the study by Bruce, Salzman and Snodgrass (2002) they concluded that, “at-risk students are not at a greater risk of failure on the reading portion of the test than the general population as long as they have appropriate and intensive interventions” (p. 49). Those who struggle may need more instruction outside of the whole-class instructional

framework. When provided with guided reading instruction, students who struggle are able to receive more assistance and word-level support where their peers may not need such support (Brown, 2010). In the classroom, students may also receive indirect support as well direct support through the use of literacy coaches and reading specialists. Student-focused literacy coaching provided by reading specialists is one way to keep students in the classroom while providing them with additional support through guided reading instruction (Woodward & Talbert-Johnson, 2009). On the other hand, interventions for students who struggle with reading may also find it helpful to work with reading specialists or trained adults in an alternative setting. Reading specialists may provide pull-out support to students to help them develop their skills. Bean (2004) suggests that, "...student's receiving small-group, separated instruction may develop an increase in reading confidence by practicing specific skills and reading aloud with peers who share similar literacy development levels" (p. 192). These students are likely to become more successful because their reading level and their needs are similar to their peers, this type of grouping means instruction time can be used for teaching strategies and skills that can be used by all students within the small group. In a study on intervention after grade 1 by Brown, Morris, and Fields (2005), paraprofessionals were trained in how to tutor struggling readers. After being taught the appropriate procedure to use with students, paraprofessionals used guided reading as one means of tutoring support for struggling readers after grade 1. Though these adults were not teachers or reading specialists they were also seen to be effective in providing support to struggling readers, concluding that, "...given reasonable tutoring models, professional supervision, and a little institutional will, we will be able to reach, and effectively teach, more at-risk readers in the future than we have in the past" (Brown, Morris, & Fields, 2005, p. 89).

Guided reading in the classroom does not only support and develop the skills of those who are struggling it also helps all students develop their comprehension skills as these are vital in the upper grades. As Ford and Opitz (2008) suggest, "...questioning during guided reading perhaps needs to re-visit its initial purpose for teachers to 'coach' children's reading comprehension at all levels" (p. 314). At the onset of guided readings presentation into England in 1998 teachers found it challenging to understand, as they previously used guided reading as an approach to listening to student read. They found that listening to students read did not help those who were making gains in literacy, so in response these teachers sought to teach students how to read, understand and create meaning from texts (Fisher, 2008). A reader's response must move beyond the micro-level of text which includes words, sentence level comprehension, and literal understandings of the text in order to be well equipped to handle meaning making activities (Ford & Opitz, 2008). Understanding and creating meaning from reading is the basis for all levels of comprehension. It has been implied that guided reading provides an exceptional context for which the specific reading strategies related to the inferencing and evaluating may abound (Fisher, 2008). Strategies for how to infer and evaluate meaning can be taught more explicitly to students who struggle during guided reading instruction because of its small group nature. Parker and Hurry (2007) provide us with more information on the levels of comprehension:

The literature suggests that there are three levels of comprehension: firstly literal understating derives information directly from the texts, secondly the inferential level interprets meaning beyond what is written in the text and thirdly evaluative comprehension requires readers' 'personal, emotional responses'. (p.302)

Students who may lack in any of the three levels of comprehension may be able to find more success when being instructed in a small group setting. Moreover, guided reading offers students an opportunity to make meaning of text and comprehend through active participation in a less threatening environment (Fisher, 2008). By providing students with this type of instruction fruitful discussions about text can take place fostering a critical response to literature.

The critical theory of literacy can be brought into discussions that take place during or after guided reading has taken place. Critical literacy is more about learning to make a difference outside of the classroom and pairing individual experiences and understandings with text. Guided reading typically places a teacher in the authoritative role which may in turn cause them to overemphasize particular aspects of the text or even bring their own ideologies to the forefront of the lesson (Swain, 2010). A guided reading group that incorporates critical literacy theory will further a student's understanding of the texts but also push them to think beyond the text. In order to achieve critical literacy, Hall (2003) recommends that classrooms should be created where teachers and students work together to see how the texts they read help design the world, culture, and community around them. This type of classroom is one in which students are asked to become critically literate and look at the world with an open mind. Swain (2010) argues, at the start of her study, that guided reading does not allow for this type of thinking based on the goals of this instructional method. Even though guided reading instruction does not have a goal of critical response to text it still can be accomplished. To counter Swain's claim, Hulan (2010) found through her study that regardless of program or materials used within the classroom teachers can incorporate discussion that promotes critical literacy. As Swain (2010) found at the conclusion of her study, though developing critical literacy within guided reading classrooms can be problematic it can still be done. Students can find meaning within their texts and have

valuable discussions even if that is not the main goal of a guided reading because discussion is still an important after reading strategy.

I found that guided conversations around text did support pupils in viewing texts from a more critical and reflective stance, within a relatively short period of time. I would argue that in order for pupils to adopt critical perspectives independently, they first need opportunities to explore this with an experienced reader, so that they can understand the principles involved. In the current primary classroom, guided reading might be the most effective vehicle for achieving this. (Swain, 2010, p. 135)

In order to incorporate critical literacy into the guided reading framework we must build classrooms and questions that are open and accepting to all. We must also allow students the time, space, and freedom to discuss their texts with peers when teachers are present and absent (Hulan 2010). When teachers are away from the guided reading group discussion can still take place and can show us how important peer interactions can be when it comes to critical literacy and guided reading practices.

The practice of guided reading is one that affords teachers time to instruct and have discussions with a small-group of students. This practice is also one that almost guarantees that there will be some time spent away from the teacher either in small-groups or independent. When teachers are working with students in a small group there will surely be discussion around the text being taught but in small-groups away from the teacher peer-led discussions can also take place. There is merit in each type of discussion method, teacher-led and peer-led, as they are related to guided reading practices. Teacher-led discussions can provide students with scaffolding from a more experienced individual, guidance into themes that may not be covered

otherwise, and a plan to help students stay on task (Hulan, 2010). Teacher-led discussions may be the norm in most classes but others may also be used alongside this method or to supplement this method. The teacher-led discussion process is just one dimension of the guided reading process (Ford & Opitz, 2008). As the first dimension of the reading process it can serve students well as a stage used to introduce them to literature discussions that can be led by someone other than the teacher. Even though teacher-led discussions in guided reading groups are important there are also some dangers to them. Teacher-led discussions may cause students to develop an overall view of teachers being an “interpretive authority” rather than an active discussion partner (Hulan, 2010). Guided reading, though it is normally set in a setting where the teacher directs the conversation, can also shift towards peer-led discussions, especially when the teacher must move on to another small-group. Hulan suggests that a teacher, when they must leave the reading discussion, can provide students with prompts to help continue the discussion. Students in this context may feel more at ease than when they are participating in traditional reading groups and even without the teacher leading the discussion students will still engage in conversation. Potenza-Radis (2010) constructed a study looked at how students responded to literature discussions which were peer led vs. those that were set in the traditional teacher-led framework. This study found that, “All participants expressed a preference for being part of a literature discussion group over traditional reading groups” (Potenza-Radis, 2010, p.71). The fact that students are going to be learning outside of the traditional small-group guided reading framework it is important for teachers to plan accordingly. Teachers must realize that time away from needs to be time well spent as this is the second dimension of the guided reading practice (Ford & Opitz, 2008). By taking a short amount of time at the end of a guided reading lesson to work on social skills instruction teachers may be able to change troublesome behaviors of

students when they work independently. A study conducted by Miller, Fenty, School and Park (2010) investigated the effects of small-group instruction of social skills after the implementation of guided reading. They found that using this approach to social skills instruction can be beneficial for students who act inappropriately outside of group settings. Whether students are working on a task related to the guided reading instruction or on another literacy activity students must be productive in their use of time. In conclusion Hulan (2010) states:

Both student-led and teacher-led discussions are useful and important components to instruction, each offering important tools for students' strategic development and manipulation of ideas. While among their peers, students respond to literature with highly cognitive strategies, but only use a few of them. When students are in teacher-led groups, their talk is scaffolded to involve a more-diverse array of strategic responses. When provided opportunities to participate in both peer- and teacher-led discussions all kids, (regardless of reading level) can engage in high-level responses and thinking. (p. 62)

Guided reading is an important process that can lend students, especially those in the elementary grades, to develop into competent readers even when they may struggle at first. This instructional method, though it is complex, is important and has found to be beneficial in many different contexts.

Guided Reading: Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

Literacy instruction in schools today is complex. There are many different literacy instructional methods that teachers can employ in the classroom. Some of the common instructional methods used within the literacy classroom include: shared instruction, direct instruction, differentiated instruction, and guided instruction. These models of literacy

instruction are the basis for literacy programs and guided instruction is one that is quite prevalent today. Guided instruction, though it is most commonly used with students at the elementary and primary grade levels, can be used with diverse learners as well to help them develop their reading skills, social skills, and even bolster their self-efficacy as it pertains to reading.

Given the complex nature of literacy instruction today, it is no wonder that teachers are trying new methods and approaches to help their students develop into competent readers no matter their abilities. In the past, programs battled between instructing students by means of direct instruction or whole language which caused the creation of the balanced approach to literacy instruction (Costello, 2012). Essentially the creation of the balanced literacy was a way to add authentic and inquiry based learning into the teaching of literacy skills. The balanced literacy framework is one that operates under the notion that literacy instruction balances authentic purposes for reading and writing with explicit instruction of skill and strategies (Parsons, Davis, Scales, Williams, & Kear, 2010). Balanced literacy is a considered to be best practice because it accommodates all learners. Teachers in the classroom can employ any of the instructional formats mentioned in order to meet the needs of all learners but in balanced literacy four main instructional methods are used, read alouds, shared reading, guided reading and independent reading (Costello, 2012). Grouping formats can include small-group, large-group, whole-class, and independent reading. These grouping formats can be combined with the reading task formats like: shared reading where the teacher reads aloud and the students follow along in the text, guided reading which involves a smaller group reading by applying skills and strategies as scaffolded and guided by the teacher so students can move towards independence, independent reading which indicates a student will read on their own, hopefully, utilizing the strategies and skills learned within guided reading, buddy reading and reading in small groups

where students read with their peers without the direct support and instruction of the teacher, and lastly reading aloud to students involving students listening to their teacher read to the class as a whole (Wolsey, Lapp, & Dow, 2010). Balanced literacy surely has its benefits for teachers as they incorporate different types of instruction into their classrooms as well as students as all learners perform differently under different formats of instruction. As Spiegel (1998) notes, “Balanced approaches help us meet the needs of most children because such approaches are not restricted to one way of developing literacy” (p.115). Teaching students using a more balanced approach to instruction ascertains that all students are being taught literacy concepts in ways that will fit their unique and individual needs, because not all students learn in the same way.

Balanced literacy supports the idea that all students learn differently and is a responsive teaching method because it does not restrict the ways in which students learn to become literate. Since all students learn differently it is important for teachers working under the balanced literacy framework to differentiate their instruction based on student needs. Dooley and Assaf’s (2009) study comparing the literacy practices of two teachers practicing under different constraints found that differentiation can look different in different settings too, depending on the schools’ districts’ resources. Some districts are able to provide differentiated instruction through a pull-out or push-in model whereas other districts don’t have any choice but to instruct students through one model of teaching like whole-group. Tobin and McInnes (2008) state that differentiated instruction provides all learners with the same essential understandings through various access routes where they are able to understand and make sense of what they are being taught. Guided reading as a means of instruction included in the balanced literacy framework can assist teachers as they seek to provide the best instruction to all students. Costello (2012) indicates that the use of reading levels in the guided reading model was helpful when groups

were being made as well as when decisions were to be made about skills and strategies that should be taught to the groups in question. This indication is in line with the idea that guided reading instruction is best implemented when students are at similar reading levels and are in need of the same type of strategy instruction. Tobin and McInnes (2008) agree with Costello as they present the following as examples for differentiating in the language arts classroom: using reading materials at various levels, using literacy centers with various tasks to match student's needs, interests, and/or preferred learning styles, and lastly grouping as a means to re-teach skills or ideas to students. It has been seen through research that teachers adapt their instruction and differentiate in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons (Parsons et al, 2010). Guided reading is just one way to differentiate instruction for students and an important one at that, especially when we consider the various needs of students within the classroom setting.

Beyond the classroom setting we must also consider the locations of students' schools and how it effects whether differentiated instruction and the use of guided reading can be adequately used. Unfortunately in our society today not all school contexts are the same which creates difficulties for teachers who are not privileged enough to work in the right areas. One goal of reading teachers or literacy specialists is to help students perform well on state mandated tests. Reading intervention will be found in all schools but it may look different depending on the area in which you teach. Effective literacy intervention should include several characteristics particularly there are 10 characteristics that indicate literacy intervention is being done in the best way possible. Woodard and Talbert-Johnson (2009) state that,

The U.S. Department of Education (2006) identified at least 10 characteristics of effective reading intervention, including the following: small group size of three to six students who share the same reading difficulties, daily intervention for at least 30

minutes, intervention that addresses all five essential components of reading instruction, instruction that is explicit and direct but engaging and fast paced, feedback for students when errors are made, and many opportunities for student to respond to questions. (p. 192)

Provided with these essential characteristics of effective reading intervention it is expected that when you enter a school environment you would see such instruction taking place. Dooley and Assaf (2009) found that a school's social capital, sadly, determines how schools will serve students and other public institutions. Suburban districts will have greater means to provide the needed instruction to those who thrive and those who struggle whereas urban districts may not have the means to provide the appropriate interventions to those who need them the most. One-to-one tutoring is beneficial for students who struggle but it can be costly. In some high-poverty (urban) schools it is estimated that as many as 40% of primary students may be reading below grade level which is concerning because it is not feasible for reading specialists to work with these students one-to-one (Brown, Morris, & Fields, 2005). In reality, those who provide reading interventions to students in urban settings are at a great disadvantage because not only are their resources, time, and support limited but their instructional focus is hindered as well. Dooley and Assaf's (2009) study focused on the differences between the two teachers, one who taught in a suburban district and one who taught in an urban district. Their findings showed that the suburban school teacher was not only able to differentiate her instruction to fit the needs of all her students by using guided reading practices and other small-group approaches, she was also able to engage students in more meaningful authentic instruction whereas the urban school teacher felt the need to focus more on strategy instruction so that her students were better prepared for testing. These findings are scary when we know that guided reading and

differentiated instruction is known as “best practice” and we can see that is not able to be done in all contexts.

In all school contexts, there will be students who struggle more than the rest. Sometimes these students will be provided with the necessary supports but others will not. Students who struggle the most and may be identified with reading or learning disabilities may need the most support in order for them to be successful. In the upper grades, students who have learning disabilities may show little or no motivation when it comes to reading and literacy. Many of these students may even experience learned helplessness where they believe that no matter what they do, they will fail, even if they put forth a great amount of effort (Nelson & Manset-Williamson, 2006). In this case, it is important to consider the type of instruction to use to help students progress. Tobin and McInnes (2008) claim that, “Differentiated instruction provides opportunities for students to work independently and with others on authentic literacy tasks, while providing explicit instruction on reading and writing strategies, and creating motivating and supportive literacy environment” (p.8). This approach to instruction is important because motivation for students with learning disabilities is a key factor in their success and self-efficacy. Not only is motivation and explicit instruction for students with learning disabilities important it is also part of the balanced literacy approach which is indicative of “best practice”. Parsons et al. (2010) indicate that the balanced approach to teaching reading, motivates students to partake in real-world literacy experiences and grants teachers the freedom to differentiate their instruction providing explicit skill and strategy instruction to those who need it the most. Students with learning disabilities are complex and as unique as any group of individuals. Considering that many students with learning disabilities possess that sense of learned helplessness, defined above, Nelson and Manset-Williams (2006) decided to perform a study in order to investigate the

impact of guided reading vs. explicit comprehension instruction students' with reading disabilities "reading-specific self-efficacy, attribution, and affect"(p. 216). In this study, they employed the use of guided reading and explicit comprehension procedures with two different focal groups. The guided reading procedure employed the use of modeling specific comprehension strategies to enhance active and strategic reading, whereas; the explicit comprehension procedure consisted of direct instruction of each strategy along with the purpose and value behind its use for comprehending text. The results indicated that the group engaged in the explicit comprehension procedure outperformed the guided reading group on two of the post tests given on reading comprehension. In conclusion Nelson and Manset-Williams (2006) state that,

Compared to the more fluid and teacher-controlled instruction of the guided reading interventions, the explicit comprehension intervention was more rigorous, explicitly calling upon students- after explicit instruction, modeling, and practice- to take control of their strategy usage, set their own goals for reading, and monitor their strategy usage and understanding. (p. 226)

These finding suggest that the explicit comprehension intervention provided to students may have called upon students to use their metacognitive abilities more than the guided reading group in the study. Though this belief may not be true in all cases as Ford and Opitz (2008) argue that the format of guided reading should provide students with the opportunity to become more metacognitive as they take the strategies they learn in guided reading groups elsewhere.

Students who have hearing deficits or are deaf can have difficulties with reading. As a part of reading instruction phonemic awareness and phonics instruction are important entities

along with fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. This knowledge of what reading instruction should contain can cause some question as to how to best teach deaf students how to read when they cannot hear. In the past, an approach such as visual phonics was used to address this issue but one study looked at the effects of guided reading with deaf students. Schrimmer and Schaffer (2010) created a study which sought to answer this question. The study took place in a school that provided instruction the deaf community teaching them in both written English and American Sign Language (ASL). In this study the guided reading instruction was conducted in ASL. In order to measure student's growth the authors used running reading records. Running reading records are used as a means of assessment that 70% of primary reading teachers indicate using within their classrooms, along with daily observations, and or informal reading inventories (Ford & Opitz, 2008). Results found that, by using running records to measure student results, students with hearing impairments benefitted from guided reading instruction just as much as other students who struggle but do are able to hear fully (Schrimmer & Schaffer, 2010).

The history behind guided reading and its use as an instructional framework has had great impacts on children of many different ability levels. Hornsby (2000) presents a position on how guided reading is generally perceived:

Guided reading provides an opportunity for [teachers to support] small groups of children within the same developmental reading stages to apply strategies they already know to texts they do not know. The texts are carefully matched to the children so that they can apply their strategies to overcome the challenges in the text and read it independently with success. (p. 26)

Keeping in mind this perception of guided reading one may surmise that guided reading is a practice that would only benefit children, but one study sought to question that notion. Even though initial research on guided reading done by Clay (1985), one of the pioneers in this field, does not involve readers beyond adolescents Massengill (2004) examined the effects of guided reading practices on adults. In her study she investigated the impact of one-to-one guided reading instruction on low literate adults. It was found that, provided with the appropriate guided reading instruction will make gains in their overall reading level and on average in 20 hours they will make one year's growth. Unfortunately this does not tell us if guided reading in a group setting will have as much of an effect on low literate adults. Though it may be befitting to suggest that the results of such a study would find that one-to-one instruction would be more beneficial considering that even with younger students one-to-on tutoring is more effective in helping at-risk first-grade readers get off to a more successful start (Brown, Morris, & Fields, 2005). Overall it is important to note that in order for guided reading to be effective in any context the training and support must be exemplary and follow the guidelines and procedures set forth for it.

Conclusion

Aspects of the guided learning framework can be seen in teacher training programs across the spectrum of teacher education. Scaffolded instruction, guided practice with strategies, coaching, and reflection after the onset of learning are all aspects of teacher training that can be used with pre-service and in-service teachers to bolster their abilities to provide interventions to those who struggle. Though these guided learning elements are beneficial for adult learners they can also be beneficial for elementary students as well, as seen through the instructional method of guided reading.

Guided reading as an instructional approach to literacy learning is complex. Research has shown that guided reading is effective when used with elementary student but its benefits also go farther. Others who have been shown to make improvements through the use of guided reading include: low-literate adults, deaf students, students with learning or reading disabilities, students who struggle, and students who succeed can all benefit from guided reading instruction. Overall guided learning specifically guided reading is a complex instructional approach to literacy instruction; it is beneficial to all learners, not just elementary or primary students.

Method

Context

Research for this study took place in a literacy clinic at St. Marks College, a private liberal arts college located in Plaintown, New York, an eastern suburb of Guildsville. The participants of this study were Master's Degree students working as reading specialists. The students who received tutoring were from the greater Rochester area and their ages ranged from Kindergarten to 12th grade and were recommended by a teacher or parent. The research obtained for this study was conducted during the literacy graduate course Practicum section 1. The first Practicum course is the graduate literacy candidate's first experience with teaching literacy components to students during a clinic type atmosphere. The purpose of this course is to provide year round assessment-based instruction which helps the candidates as they seek to provide their tutees with authentic, hands-on literacy activities while also addressing their needs in reading and writing. Within this literacy clinic candidates are assigned a small group of children, from one to three, who are in need of additional literacy instruction outside of the daily classroom setting. This course includes two components, the clinical portion which lasts for two hours a session and

an instructional piece which focuses on the theory and practice behind what the literacy candidates are doing with their tutees which takes places after the instruction for another two hours. Through this course literacy, candidates are also instructed in the areas of assessment based literacy instruction, word study and the balanced literacy approach to reading and writing. The practicum course overall has a strong focus on guided reading the framework that is used to implement it with a small groups of students. Literacy candidates are instructed on how to use assessments like the Qualitativev Reading Inventory, The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, and the Words Their Way Reading Inventrory. During the clinical portion of this course, the literacy candidates are asked to provide student's instruction and useful strategies to aide them in the areas of word study, reading, and writing. The educators who are enrolled in this course are dedicated to providing their students with the best instruction they can using the knowledge they have as educators as well as the information they are currently learning from their practicum professors and any additional literacy courses they may be enrolled in.

The St. Marks College Literacy Program's mission statement is as follows:

We are committed to providing high-quality, meaningful reading and writing instruction to a diverse group of children entering grades one through twelve. By providing our services on the campus of St. Marks College, we are affording urban, suburban, and rural children an educational experience in a new and exciting environment; one in which these struggling readers and writers have not experienced failure. At the same time, we are offering our graduate candidates an opportunity to investigate research-based literacy practices with high-need children in a focused, supportive setting. (SJFC Reading Clinic mission statement, p. 1)

The practicum class that was observed was relatively small and contained a total of seven literacy candidates. The literacy candidates who were enrolled within this practicum course worked with either a small group of two or three students or one to one with students ranging from kindergarten to twelfth grade. The study took place within one of the classrooms in the education wing at St. Marks College.

Participants

The participants for this study included four out of seven students which comprise the before mentioned practicum course. Participants were chosen based upon their abilities to effectively implement guided reading during their time instructing at the literacy clinic. The literacy candidates' students ranged in age from kindergarten, first, and second grade to high school. For the purposes of this study the literacy candidates were the main focus and the students they work with were less of a focus but their student work was collected and used within the study. In addition I also interviewed the two instructors of the literacy practicum courses offered at St. Marks College who both have experience with implementing, coaching, and observing individuals as they instruct using the guided reading method.

Literacy Candidates. Ricardo (a pseudonym) was the first practicum 1 literacy candidate observed during this study. He is not currently teaching but is an assistant football coach at a local college. He received his initial teaching certification in Social Studies and Education from St. Marks College. During his practicum experience he is working one on one with an 11th grade male student. In his undergraduate program he took a few courses related to literacy but many of them involved diversity training. Upon entering the practicum 1 course he did not have the opportunity to witness much guided reading instruction within the classroom.

Hillary (a pseudonym) was the second practicum 1 literacy candidate observed during this study. She is not currently teaching but is a nanny for three children. She received her initial teaching certification in Childhood and Special Education grades 1-6 from St. Marks College. During his practicum 1 experience she is working with two students in kindergarten (both male) who are reading at a level B. In her undergraduate program, she took four courses in literacy. Upon entering the practicum 1 course, she did not have the opportunity to witness guided reading instruction in the classroom during student teaching or any of her field work placements.

Kari (a pseudonym) was the third practicum 1 literacy candidate observed during this study. She is not currently teaching full time but is a substitute in four districts in the Guildsville area. She received her initial teaching certification in Inclusive Education and American Studies which lead her to receive four certifications two general certifications grades 1-6 and 5-9 and two special education certification grades 1-6 and 5-9. During this practicum 1 experience, she is working with three students in the second grade (all female) who are reading at a level G. In her undergraduate program she only took one introductory literacy course. Upon entering the practicum 1 course, she did not have the opportunity to witness much guided reading instruction in the classroom but is asked to use the method from time to time in substitute situations.

Amelia (a pseudonym) was the fourth practicum 1 literacy candidate observed during this study. She is currently working at a daycare/preschool as a teacher's assistant. The children she works with range in age from 18-36 months. She received her initial teaching certification in Childhood and Special Education grades 1-6 from St. Marks College. During her practicum experience, she is working with two students in the first grade (one male and one female) who are reading at a level G. In her undergraduate program, she took four courses in literacy. Upon

entering the practicum 1 course, she had the opportunity to observe multiple guided reading lessons but was not able to perform many lessons herself.

Literacy Instructors. Dee (a pseudonym) is an adjunct professor at St. Marks College. She is the current instructor of the practicum 1 course and coaching course at St. Marks College. She also works as an adjunct professor in the literacy program at Bradsport College in Bradsport, New York, and as an instructional coach in surrounding schools. She has earned degrees in education and literacy from Rollingedge College, in Cintaxion, Ohio, Narian College, and Bradsport, she has also worked as a school principal and has, in the past, instructed the methods and instruction course at St. Marks College.

Alice (a pseudonym) is an adjunct professor at St. Marks College. She is the current instructor of the practicum II and the administration and supervision of reading and writing instruction course at St. Marks College, but has taught the practicum 1 course in the past. She also works as an ELA coach at Daniel Plaintown school no. 7 in Plaintown, New York. She has earned degrees in education and literacy from St. Marks College and has worked as a classroom teacher in the past.

Researcher Stance

I am currently a graduate student at St. Marks College working towards a Master's degree in Literacy Education, Birth- 12th grade. I presently have a Bachelor's degree in Childhood Education and Special Education I am also certified in Early Childhood Education and Special Education, from St. Marks College. As a researcher in this study, I acted as a passive observer, meaning that I was strictly observing the participants within the study and did not play any active role or have any privilege in the process (Mills, 2011). In acting as passive observer, I was able to watch what was going on within the literacy clinic without having any

responsibilities for teaching the students or instructing the literacy candidates. As a result, I was able to focus on my data collection and see how guided reading lessons are implemented by the literacy candidates in the practicum course.

Method

During this study, I collected qualitative data to examine how several different literacy candidates implemented guided reading during a literacy clinic. This study specifically examined the characteristics of candidates in order to understand what knowledge is necessary for students to have before entering a literacy clinic. For the purpose of collecting comparative data, students were chosen by the practicum instructor based upon their students' grade levels and the literacy candidates' abilities to implement guided reading instruction effectively with their practicum students. The study took place over the course of two sessions with each literacy candidate. Time spent with each candidate lasted for approximately 15 to 20 minutes as they instructed their students using the method of guided reading. One of the sessions with the literacy candidates was dedicated to observations and the collection of field notes (Appendix A) and one of the sessions was dedicated to interviewing the literacy candidate on their background in guided reading and their current knowledge of the concept (Appendix B). One additional session of study was spent with the literacy practicum instructors in order to conduct an informal interview on the topic of guided reading (Appendix C).

During the course of this study, guided reading instruction implemented by practicum 1 literacy candidates was the focus. I used observations and field notes as the main sources of data collection at this time. In order to determine characteristics of effective literacy candidates I observed one guided reading lessons done by the four identified literacy candidates. The

candidates were not told whether their instruction was exemplary or developing but as the researcher I was able to look for patterns within their instruction relating to current research on the topic.

Following the session, where I observed and collected field notes, I interviewed the literacy candidates in order to get a better understanding of their prior knowledge and experience(s) with the guided reading instructional method. All literacy candidates were asked the same questions in order to gain information on their educational backgrounds, their students' reading needs, motivations for instructing their students in the ways observed, and their ideas on guided reading and its effectiveness with their students.

Finally, during the last additional session of the study, I interviewed the literacy practicum instructors from St. Marks College in order to understand what they see with their literacy candidates. This interview took one time for approximately 15 minutes. By interviewing these literacy professors I was able to get a better understanding of what they think effective guided reading instruction looks like within the literacy clinic or going farther, within the classroom setting.

Quality and Credibility of Research

In executing any action research, it is vital that the researcher evaluates and makes sure that their study consists of both quality and credible research. In order for action research to have both quality and credibility there are several components of qualitative research that must be addressed. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are the main components which must be addressed in order for a qualitative research study to be trustworthy

(Mills, 2011). That being said, all four components stated were examined within this study in order to maintain its trustworthiness.

Credibility is the first component of trustworthy qualitative research. Mills (2011) defines credibility as, “the researcher’s ability to take into account the complexities that present themselves in a study and to deal with the patterns that are not easily explained” (p.104). In order to achieve credibility within my study I practiced what is known as triangulation. In doing research, triangulation is used when one desires to have multiple sources of data and methods at their disposal so that they can cross-check their results (Mills). I triangulated my study by using experiential, enquiry, and examination data methods. I passively observed literacy candidates as they implemented guided reading instruction to their students by taking field notes, conducting interviews with both literacy candidates and their instructors, and collecting and studying the work of the literacy candidates. This information provided me with the methods and data needed to complete the triangulation process.

The second component of trustworthy qualitative research is transferability. Mills (2011) defines transferability as the beliefs researcher’s uphold that, “everything they study is context bound” and their research is not generalizable to groups outside of the study (Mills, p.104). In order to establish transferability within this study, I collected detailed and descriptive data which was compared to other contexts. In presenting descriptive data of the context of the study others are then be able to make their own judgments about how the data may fit within a different context (Mills).

The third component of trustworthy qualitative research is dependability. Dependability, by definition, is the stability of the data collected throughout the research (Mills, 2011). In order

to arrange for dependability within my study I overlapped my data collection by, again using the process of triangulation. By using the data collection methods of field notes/observations, student work, and interviews I was able to make sure that any weaknesses in one data collection method was compensated for within another method of data collection (Mills).

The last component of trustworthy qualitative research is confirmability. Confirmability, according to Mills (2011), is the “neutrality or objectivity of the data collected” (p. 105). Yet again, the use of triangulation within my study helped ensure that confirmability was accomplished. Using various methods of data collection can afford for comparisons and the cross-checking of data (Mills). In addition, I practiced reflexivity by reflecting on my field notes after observations. By doing this I will be able to, “reveal underlying assumptions or biases” that may cause me to create questions or present findings in a particular way (Mills, p.105). Through conducting my data collection and following along with the components mentioned I was able to use the information I found in order to create a trustworthy qualitative research study which answered questions about effective guided reading instruction and the characteristics of the literacy candidates who implement the instructional method.

Informed Consent and Protecting the Right of the Participants

Before beginning my research, I asked for informed consent from the literacy candidates I observed. I also needed to ask for permission from the parents of the students who were tutored so that I could use their children’s work within my study. I provided each literacy candidate with a consent form that explained the purpose of the study and asked for their permission and signature to perform research. Additionally, I asked each literacy candidate to provide their students’ parents with the permission form in order to gain permission to use their child’s work

from the clinic within my study. Though the adults are important within this study, in terms of assent, the students whose work was collected was also asked to sign an assent form so that I can use their work. Students were told that their work would only be used to show how their teacher is doing but will not be graded and will not affect them in any way. The parents, literacy candidates, and the literacy clinic students were also notified that the names of participants were changed to pseudonyms and that any identifying marks were removed from artifacts to protect identities and ensure anonymity.

Data Collection

As previously stated, I used three different types of data collection in order to complete the requirements of triangulation. The first form of data that I used was that of observation and field notes. Being a passive observer afforded me the time and means to observe and collect information during the two sessions where I watched the literacy candidate in the field. For each literacy candidate compiled information about their implementation of guided reading instruction and the activities they engaged their students in before, during, and after reading a the text. Along with this information I also took notes of strategies that they taught and retaught during the guided reading sessions. After compiling the detailed field notes, I kept a record of my own thoughts on the guided reading processes I saw and how it related to research on best practice in guided reading.

Following the observations and collection of field notes, I collected student work from the literacy candidates which were completed by their literacy clinic students. I looked at the students' work to determine what type of impact the guided reading lesson had on the students learning or relearning of a previously taught concept. Additional student work was collected

from the session and studied in order to determine if the guided reading instruction done by the literacy candidate during the literacy clinic correlated to the production of student work.

For my last form of data collection, I conducted informal interviews with the literacy candidates I observed. These interviews included ten questions about guided reading instruction. I used these interviews as a means to help me get a better understanding of why they used guided reading in the ways I observed and what type of background they had in the instructional method before entering the practicum 1 course. Along with interviewing the literacy candidates on their motivations surrounding guided reading and their ways of using it within their practicum, I interviewed the practicum instructors to gain a better understanding of what they look for when they are observing their literacy candidates.

In conclusion, the results from the field notes, student work, and interviews provided me with a wealth of knowledge to help me answer my research question about how literacy candidates understand guided reading instruction and what characteristics effective literacy candidates' exhibit. This research helped me understand and express the characteristics needed to be effective when teaching using the guided reading instructional method as it is an important method used within schools today.

Data Analysis

After collecting the data, I began to analyze and look for commonalities across my data sources. All of the data I collected for this study was qualitative in nature. The data is organized into themes which are then organized into smaller ideas within each theme.

Taking the observation field notes collected during the literacy clinic, I began to look for common practices among the four literacy candidates observed. I was able to see that the

candidates used a three step process to implement guided reading which was also found within a study done by Gibson (2006). The process also included strategy instruction at each stage of the process. Through looking at the field notes I was able to code the information I had collected by creating three different categories of guided reading processes. These categories were the following: before reading, during reading, and after reading. I wrote the titles of these processes on post-it notes and posted them on a table in front of me. As I went through the field notes a second time I was able to pick out specific strategies each candidates used and placed the name of these strategies underneath the one of the three categories I had in front of me. Looking at the categories I created and the strategies which related to each category I was able to make connections between the literacy candidates' practices and had one tentative theme to consider.

The data gathered from the interviews done with the practicum 1 instructors was analyzed next. I went through each individual question I asked the instructors and coded the information in a similar fashion to how I analyzed the field notes; I used post-it notes to categorize the information by noting the instructors' beliefs and ideas on the topic of guided reading instruction. Then I looked at each instructor's response to the questions provided and began to make connections between their beliefs on the topic of guided reading instruction relating it back to the original research question about what effective instruction should look like. The similarities between beliefs were glaring and discrepancies between what they believe and what they see in practice could also be seen with their responses. Analyzing this data provided me with enough information to come up with two more tentative themes relating directly to my original research question, these themes related to effective guided reading instruction and the correct framework that should be used within the guided reading process. Lastly, the interviews with the literacy candidates were coded order to find and similarities between their responses and

their instructors' responses. I went through the responses to the individual interview questions using the post-it note method of noting the literacy candidates' responses and categorizing them. At this point, I was able to place the candidate responses into one of the three tentative themes I had created after coding information from the field notes and instructor interviews. This information provided a good place for me to start when putting my data together.

Going through the information and coding using the post-it note strategy was very helpful when starting to analyze my data, but in order to compare and contrast the information I found with the interview responses, I went through and coded the information one last time. Before putting everything together, I went through each question I asked the literacy candidates and their instructors one last time. When I looked through the interviews this last time, I coded each question according to the three themes I had created: knowledge and experiences related to the guided reading framework, effective instruction and implementation of guided reading, and strategies used in guided reading. I went through each question individually looking at the content of the question and answer and placed the letters "KF" (knowledge and experiences related to the guided reading framework), "EI" (effective instruction and implementation of guided reading), or "S" (strategies used in guided reading) next to the question in the left hand margin depending on what theme I wanted to use the information. This coding method made it easier for me to see where I wanted to use the data I collected without having to go back through each interview individually. The differences seen in the interviews between the literacy candidates' beliefs about guided reading instructor based upon their experience contradicted what their instructors had expected them to know at the onset of the practicum 1 experience.

Findings and Discussion

The initial research done with the literacy candidates was observations done during a literacy clinic at St. Mark's College. This information gathered from the observations and the work produced by the students who were being instructed by the candidates was used to determine what the candidates know at this point in time about the guided reading framework. Interviews were also conducted with their instructors to see what they believe about guided reading as an instructional method. The information gathered from their interviews informed the research on several aspects including what they believe guided reading instruction should look like, where their beliefs about guided reading come from and what they see with their practicum 1 literacy candidates as they are providing instruction during the literacy clinic. The last piece of information gathered to inform the study was a round of interviews with the literacy candidates themselves. These interviews were used to see where differences lie between what literacy candidates know and believe about guided reading instruction vs. what their instructors think they should know coming into the practicum 1 course. The results of these interviews, observations, and student work provided a vast array of differing opinions and understanding about guided reading instruction. The themes I was able to construct through my research include the following: knowledge and experience related to the guided reading framework, effective instruction and implementation of guided reading in the real world, and strategies used in guided reading.

Knowledge and Experience Related to the Guided Reading Framework

The data collected in interviews with literacy instructors and literacy candidates showed a distinct difference between the knowledge literacy candidates maintain about guided reading instruction and the knowledge their instructors expect for them to have when starting a literacy clinic. Being knowledgeable of the framework of guided reading and what it entails is important

for literacy candidates as they are asked to participate in the implementation of such a lesson, on a weekly basis, with their tutees.

The understanding and knowledge of literacy as a whole and guided reading as a method of teaching reading is important as literacy candidates seek to earn their literacy specialist certification. Upon entering the literacy practicum 1 course, the instructors of this course believe that students should have some exposure to the guided reading model. Alice who teaches the current practicum 2 course, but has taught the practicum 1 course in previous semesters, states that at the start of the practicum experience, “Ideally students should know what guided reading is or at least know about it and may have seen it done. They might not understand the nuts and bolts of the process but have at least some knowledge” (Interview, March 15 2013). Alice’s statement shows that upon entering the practicum 1 experience, literacy candidates should have some prior knowledge of the guided reading process even if it is just a baseline understanding. Her expectations are not for them to be experts but to be at least knowledgeable of the guided reading instructional method upon entering the practicum 1 course. Similarly, Dee the current practicum 1 instructor responded with the following when asked about what she expects of her practicum 1 literacy candidates:

I expect that through taking the methods course students can see, know, and understand what it looks like and can implement it. I also expect for them to have some knowledge of the process after taking their assessment course so that they can put it all together and I can just support them rather than teach them about the method. I had wanted to focus on writing with my practicum 1 students but the fundamentals of guided reading were not yet engrained. (Interview, February 26 2013)

Dee's statement, on the other hand, shows that she holds higher expectations for the students entering the practicum 1 course. She really wanted her students to have a good understanding of the process and how to implement it with little support. Her response showed that what she had expected of her students was not reasonable because they didn't know the fundamentals of the guided reading process. Dee wanted to focus on writing with her students but after realizing how little they knew about guided reading she had to shift her focus from writing to guided reading in order to supplement for the discrepancy. Though the literacy instructors expected that their students would have some exposure to the guided reading instructional method upon entering the practicum 1 experience, it was found through the literacy candidate interviews (Appendix B) that all candidates had very little exposure to the method in the past.

The literacy candidates observed and interviewed all responded similarly when asked how much experience they had with literacy before entering the practicum experience. The three literacy candidates who received their initial certifications in Childhood and Special Education were found to have had more exposure to general literacy instruction within their undergraduate experience whereas the literacy candidate who received their initial certification in Social Studies had even less exposure to literacy instruction. Kari who attended The College at Narian stated that, "We only took one literacy class and it was a basic introduction class. I don't remember much of it at all and I've definitely never used anything I learned in that course" (Interview, March 21 2013). Though Kari did not attend St. Marks College for her undergraduate studies, her response shows that her undergraduate courses did not focus on literacy instruction and especially not the guided reading instructional method. Since Kari participated in an introductory literacy course in her undergraduate career her knowledge of literacy instructional methods and concepts only come from the literacy courses she is required to take in her graduate studies.

Hillary, one of the three participants who attended St. Mark's College stated that, "I took two courses in my undergraduate work, they were required courses at St. Mark's" (Interview, March 25 2013) This comment shows that even though there are more literacy courses provided to undergraduate students at St. Marks these courses do not do enough to prepare literacy candidates for the practicum 1 experience. The information found within the responses of literacy candidates like Hillary, who attended St. Marks for her undergraduate studies, show that the basics of literacy instruction and methods should be provided within the initial courses required for students to take before entering the practicum 1 experience, or more should be done in St. Marks undergraduate program when it comes to literacy. Ricardo who also attended St. Marks but received a certification in Social Studies stated that, "I am unsure of the course titles but they involved a lot of diversity training" (Interview, March 19 2013). Ricardo's response shows how little he knows about literacy instruction because he did not obtain his initial certification in childhood education. It could be said that students like Ricardo are really behind when entering a master's literacy program because his background knowledge of literacy concepts and methods is more limited than his classmates. This limited knowledge of literacy concepts is a cause for concern and begs to question what can be done for those literacy candidates who received certifications in subjects other than English.

The assumptions made by the instructors about what literacy candidates entering the practicum 1 course should know in terms of guided reading instruction and what literacy candidates actually knew upon entering the practicum 1 course shows a great disconnect. This disconnect could be a result of a lack of literacy courses required for students to obtain their initial teaching certifications and even a lack of communication between instructors in the St. Marks College Literacy Graduate program in regards to what should be taught in the courses

which are taken before literacy candidates are able to enroll in the practicum 1 course. In order to meet practicum 1 instructors expectations explicit instruction on the instructional method of guided reading and the ability to see a model guided reading lesson done within the classroom setting should be incorporated into pre-practicum 1 courses or else students are going to be behind and much of their practicum 1 coursework will need to focus on something their instructors would like to support rather than teach. Work by Lesley et al (2009) agrees with the idea that the more experience one has with guided reading instruction the better they will be at implementing the instruction. They believe that “the more opportunities student teachers have with experiencing guidance and scaffolding in orchestrating reading curriculum and assessment during student teaching, the greater their understanding of children’s reading development and the greater the likelihood for becoming “quality” reading teachers” (Lesley et al, 2009, p. 52). This quote suggests that novices to guided reading instruction cannot be expected to be able to instruct using the method without some previous guidance or scaffolding in the method because of its complexity and connection to students reading development, providing more evidence about why it is important for literacy candidates to know what guided reading looks like before they enter the practicum 1 course.

When asked if literacy candidates come to the literacy practicum 1 experience with adequate knowledge of guided reading instruction both instructors indicated that the candidates’ knowledge is lacking. Alice said that, “Overall their knowledge is lacking. Some have knowledge of the process, whereas; others have no knowledge but it varies with kids in small groups” (Interview, March 15 2013). Like Alice, Dee found the same to be true with her students, “When I started this semester I assumed they knew more about guided reading instruction than they really did so I had to back track” (Interview, February 26 2013). This

response is not a surprise when three of the four literacy candidates who were observed for this study indicated that they saw little to no examples of guided reading practiced while partaking in any field work or student teaching experiences and were never required to use the instructional method. When asked about whether or not literacy candidates had seen guided reading in the field through field work or student teaching, their responses were similar indicating the similarities between their knowledge of the guided reading instructional method at the onset of the start of their graduate program in literacy. Hillary responded with, "I have not. Now that I think about it I find it odd that I haven't seen or taken part in guided reading, especially in student teaching because I think it's such an effective tool to use in classrooms" (Interview, March 25 2013). This quote shows that this practicum 1 course was Hillary's first real exposure to guided reading instruction. Hillary thinks that guided reading is an effective and important tool in literacy instruction and her response suggests that she would have liked to have seen it being used prior to having to use it herself. Kari responded similarly with, "Not really. Sometimes while subbing I have to teach guided reading groups, but I don't really know what I am supposed to do," (Interview, March 21 2013). Kari's response shows that schools where she is substitute teaching assume that she know how to implement guided reading even though she has had little exposure to it. This is a cause for concern when literacy candidates are working in the field and do not have the adequate knowledge of a literacy instructional method that is used so much within many schools today. Ricardo responded with, "Only a few times" (Interview, March 19 2013). Ricardo's response is not surprising because in the upper grades guided reading is used very little. Though Ricardo may not have seen guided reading used in the field he could have seen literature circles used which are a similar process but more student lead rather than teacher lead. And in contrast to the other candidates, Amelia was the only one who responded

that, “Yes, I have observed many but have performed few” (Interview, March 18 2013). Her response indicates that she is the only candidate that has actually seen guided reading being practiced within the classroom out of the group of four. Based on Amelia’s response she seems to be the only literacy candidate of this group who meets the expectations of Alice since she has seen guided reading before and should have a basic understanding even though she has never performed guided reading before herself. Lesley et al. (2009) indicated that in the student teaching experience pre-service teachers are provided with the opportunity to watch an in-service teacher and imitate their guided reading practices if they have a low to moderate knowledge base of guided reading instruction. Even though student teaching should provide pre-service with at least an example of what to imitate with guided reading instruction it is evident that the three of the four candidates observed for this study were not afforded the opportunity to even see a guided reading lesson before entering the practicum 1 course. This makes it difficult for them and their instructors because not only do they have to learn the basics of guided reading they need to be able to effectively instruct using the method when tutoring within the clinical setting.

Effective Instruction and Implementation of Guided Reading in the Real World

When implementing guided reading it is important to make sure that some specific aspects of the method are addressed for it to be successful. Guided reading has a specific framework that should be followed, at least to a certain extent. Knowing the needs of ones students and being able to use appropriate materials for instruction with those students is important for literacy candidates as they are learning to become literacy specialists.

An effective guided reading lesson has some distinct features. The instructors of the practicum 1 course provided similar responses when asked about what they believe effective

literacy instruction looks like in practice. Dee stated that, “Effective guided reading involves knowing where students are and their instructional needs and having flexible grouping. The process involves strategies to become effective problem solvers, and independent thinkers” (Interview, February 26 2013). Dee’s statement shows that when she thinks about guided reading in practice she expects to see a few different things. In practice, Dee believes guided reading should involve instruction at a student’s appropriate level, the teacher should be able to make changes when necessary, and the process, overall, should include strategies to help students become effective problem solvers and think independently without teacher support. This response shows what she understands about the guided reading process and what she expects to see in an effective guided reading lesson. Alice stated that, “It should be at the students instructional level using both fiction and non-fiction texts which are of interest to them. It will look different across grade levels. The teacher will support them in the handling of the texts by modeling strategies and vocabulary” (Interview, March 15 2013). Alice’s statement shows that, similar to Dee, when she thinks about guided reading in practice she expects to see some specific things as well. In practice, Alice believes guided reading should be at a student’s instructional level, use different text forms, should be interesting to the student, and during the process teachers should be supportive as they model strategies and work on vocabulary. This response shows what she understands about the guided reading process and she realizes that it will look different across various grade levels. The literacy candidates were asked a similar question about the effectiveness of guided reading instruction but this question focused on how they know they performed a successful guided reading lesson and how they will know it is successful, two of the candidates provided answers very similar to those given by the instructors. Hillary stated that, “I feel like I have been successful when I can see that the students can read the text with little

support, can recall events in the story, comprehend the text, and enjoy the lesson overall” (Interview, March 25 2013). Hillary’s statement presents the idea that she knows she has performed a successful guided reading lesson when she is able to see her students growing and needing less instruction to be successful. She specifically looks for her tutees to be able to read a text with little support, recall events, comprehend a text and enjoy the lesson. Her response could show what is important to her when it comes to her group of students in terms of guided reading but it may not show what she believes about the effectiveness of guided reading as a method of instruction.

Kari responded with a similar answer,

Students are able to successfully read the whole text and comprehend what they read and the purpose/activity to follow. If they struggle with reading, talking about it, or writing/doing the activity with it, then I know they struggled with the text and more work can be done. If they were successful in all of those areas, we can move on. (Interview, March 21 2013)

Kari’s response shows that in order for her to consider a guided reading lesson successful the students she is working with should be able to read the whole text and be able to comprehend the text after reading it. Her response, like Hillary’s, could show what is important to her when it comes to her group of student in terms of guided reading but it may not show her true beliefs about guided reading as an instructional method.

The responses of the two literacy candidates about guided reading instruction are less developed than their instructors because it is more situational. The differences between the effective measures of guided reading instruction by the instructors and the literacy candidates may be due to the fact that the literacy candidates have only participated in the guided reading

process during their practicum 1 class and may have not seen the practice done elsewhere, whereas their instructors have seen the process used in multiple settings by multiple individuals.

The statements of the instructors and candidates fall in line well with three common ideas about guided reading found by Ford and Opitz's (2008) study. These three ideas are:

1. Children learn to read by reading so it is important for students to read texts at their independent and instructional levels so that they can become competent readers.
2. Reading for meaning is a primary goal when it comes to issues of guided reading and students should make connections with themselves and the world around them in order to have meaningful discussions around texts.
3. Guided reading can help children become metacognitive, where they think are actively about their thinking.

These responses and the information from the study suggest that there is a goal when it comes to how to effectively implement guided reading. This goal is to provide students with the tools they need to read and comprehend texts independently.

The instructors of the practicum 1 course, as part of their position must observe their students as they implement a guided reading lesson two times throughout the practicum course. These two instructors, when asked what they are looking for when observing their students, generally stated that they are looking for their students to use what they know about their tutee(s) as well as use materials provided to them to make appropriate decisions about how to instruct their tutee(s) during the tutoring sessions. Dee stated that when she is observing her students she is looking for,

...a basic understanding of the framework of guided reading and am looking for students to use their assessment results to guide their daily use of the framework because it is different at each level. I am also looking for students to use resources they understand how to use with the level they are teaching. I would also like them to use their Jan Richardson text and know of some resources to create appropriate instruction for their student so they can expand and become stronger in the framework. (Interview, February 26 2013).

Dee's statement shows that she wants her students to be using what she is teaching them within the practicum 1 course during their guided reading instruction. She would like them to have an understanding of the framework of guided reading but also be able to use their assessment results to guide their instruction. She acknowledges that her students will be instructing their tutees differently depending on their grade level and their needs but expects them to be able to use the resources provided to them so that they can become stronger in using the framework. Dee realizes that her students are not experts in the art of implementing guided reading so she is looking for growth rather than perfection.

Alice similarly stated that when she is observing her students she wants to "...feel like they understand the child they are working with and are able to adapt to their students' needs with how they make instructional decisions for the student they are working with" (Interview, March 15 2013). Alice's statement shows that when she is observing her practicum 1 students, like Dee, she is not looking for perfection but rather she is looking for her students to be able understand their tutee(s) needs and can adapt to their needs. These responses show that the instructors of this course, though they are looking for their students to understand the guided reading framework and what it entails, they are also looking to see how their students are able to adapt and make

decisions about what to do with their tutee(s) from week to week. When the literacy candidates were asked a similar question about their thoughts on good guided reading instruction and what it should look like, the literacy candidates had some similar responses to their peers and to their instructors. Ricardo response included more complex aspects of a guided reading lesson, “It should be well paced, well thought-out, feature open-ended questioning and challenge the students” (Interview, March 19 2013). His response shows that, for him, guided reading should challenge students but not frustrate them. Ricardo’s answer also shows that he believes good guided reading practices should be well thought-out and should be paced well; it should also include open-ended questions, which may be a starting point for good discussions. The other candidates talked more about the guided reading practice at a basic level of instruction. Hillary said that,

Good guided reading instruction has students engaged in what they’re about to read. It is carefully selected text to activate students’ background knowledge and challenge their instructional level of reading. It gets students thinking, discussing and builds their confidence in reading. (Interview, March 25 2013)

Hillary’s statement shows that good guided reading instruction to her is less about how it is planned but more about how it is done in practice. Her statement suggests that she has a good understanding of the format of guided reading as it should include an activation of background knowledge before reading, be at a student’s instructional level but also be somewhat challenging, and the conclusion of the lesson should illicit a discussion that will build their confidence in reading. Though she speaks about the activation of prior knowledge and a concluding discussion, she never mentions strategy instruction which is a major goal in guided reading instruction during reading.

When Kari was asked to discuss her views on good guided reading instruction she stated that,

The teacher should introduce the text and provide a reason for the reading/give students a purpose for reading, students should read the text silently, the group should discuss the text-opinions, what they learn, what was the purpose, there should be an activity that connects with the purpose of the text and some writing. (Interview, March 21 2013)

Kari's response shows that good guided reading to her should follow a sequence of events. She states that in good guided reading there should be an introduction to the text and a purpose should be provided, then the students should read through the text silently, and lastly the text should be discussed and a writing activity could be used as well to help students make connections. Unlike Ricardo and Hillary, it seems as though Kari does not believe guided reading instruction should challenge students rather her response suggest that, to her, guided reading should be connected to a final activity to gauge a students learning.

Amelia responded with the following statement comparable to Kari's when she said that a good guided reading lesson should be...

Clear, explicit directions about how to read and what strategies to use while reading and different activities that engage student in the reading. Teachers should demonstrate what goes through their minds while they read so students can begin to understand what they should also be thinking as they read. (Interview, March 18 2013)

Amelia's response shows that she has a solid understanding of guided reading instruction, she believes that it should include strategy instruction as well as activities to engage the student in the reading. Her response also shows how important the instructor is in the experience and how they should be modeling how they read to show students what they should be doing on their

own. Phillips (2013) state that, "...questioning during guided reading perhaps needs to re-visit its initial purpose for teachers to 'coach' children's reading comprehension at all levels" (p. 118). The literacy candidates seem to work towards a purpose of comprehension coaching, and their answers seem to show that. The instructors of the practicum 1 course, on the other hand, place more of an emphasis on the ability for literacy candidates to adapt to their tutees' needs. Though the literacy candidates and their instructors see good guided reading practices differently the answers of both groups suggest that the goal of guided reading is the same, to provide students with a means to grow in their reading skills. Even though the literacy candidates seem to have a good idea of what guided reading should look like and what it should include it seems as though the instructors do not see these ideas being put into practice when they are observing them in their tutoring sessions. These responses beg to question where the divide may be because it seems as though the literacy candidates are knowledgeable about the guided reading framework but when it is time to implement guided reading with students there is a disconnect between what they believe and what they actually do.

Strategies Used in Guided Reading

Guided reading as a practice can be used to help students learn new skills and strategies that they can take to their independent reading practices. After observing the literacy candidates as they implemented guided reading with their tutee(s) it was found that the framework of guided reading they followed was similar in its basic set up but there were some differences between what was being focused on within each group of students. Guided reading is a three step process and the strategies taught during each step of the process are different from all of the others.

Before starting a guided reading passage literacy candidates are asked to instruct their students on before reading strategies. The literacy candidates observed for this study included some similar aspects of instruction into what they did before beginning their guided reading lesson. All of the candidates included an introduction to the days reading by reading the title to the tutee(s) and providing them with a book walk or picture walk. The book or picture walk provided their students with a short overview of what they would be reading during the days tutoring session. Hillary read the book “Games We Play” by No Saetia with her students, but before the reading began she went over each page discussing what each picture was portraying. For example she showed her tutees the first page, and said how the characters like to play tag, on the second page they like to play baseball, on the third page they like to play soccer, etc., until she reached the final page of the book (Field Notes, February 26 2013). After the picture walks Ricardo, Kari, and Amelia moved on to some vocabulary instruction by providing their students with some words that will be seen throughout the day’s text. Kari read the book “Grow Tomatoes in 6 Steps” by Alyse Sweeney with her students and presented them with a list of “words to look at.” The words she pointed out to them were three words that would be seen regularly within the reading: seedling, transplant, and stake (Field Notes, March 11 2013). Before reading, the literacy candidates also provided their tutee(s) with some pre-reading strategies that provided them with some comprehension by instructing their students on strategies like sequencing, inferencing, activating prior knowledge, and predicting. Amelia read the book “A Seed Grows” by Julie Harding with her tutees and provided an exemplary before reading sequencing activity. She created a worksheet for her students to explain in six steps “How to...” One of her tutees decided to explain in six steps how to “play tag” (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Sequencing Worksheet Used Before Reading

Title: How to PLAY TAG

Steps:

1. ^{SAME} FIRST PICK A TAG
2. SO YOU MUST PLAY WITH
^{LOT OF} PEOPLE
3. YOU MUST PICK HOW IS
^{GO} WEINSE TO BE IT
4. SO THE TAG HAZ TO COUNT
^{THEN THE SAME BE SINCE}
5. THEN WHEN THE TAG IS DOWN
^{RUN} COUNTING EVERY WHEN MUST
6. THEN THE TAG HAZ TO COME TO
^{TAG WITH PEOPLE}

Figure 1 Guided reading sequencing strategy used with students before reading “A Seed Grows” by Julie Harding

Gibson (2006) suggests that guided reading include the teaching of decoding and sight vocabulary knowledge which known as “word work,” this instruction can be presented to individual students before reading a text or during the reading of the text with the whole group. This aspect of guided reading instruction can be clearly seen within the candidates’ lessons with their vocabulary instruction as they all include it in some way or another. Overall it is evident that the students have a basic understanding of what they should focus on with their tutee(s) before reading a text, orient them to the new text they will be reading (Gibson, 2006). Though

before reading can include more than just what the candidates participated in. One instructor interviewed seems to think literacy candidates could use more work in this area of guided reading instruction. When asked what component she thought literacy candidates spent too little or too much time on she stated that,

I have found that many candidates spend too little time on the intro of a book. At this part of the process they could go over text features, genres, and go activate a student's prior knowledge. Many times this part seems to get skimmed over. (Interview, March 15 2013)

Alice's statement shows that, what she has seen in the past is that many of the literacy candidates who partake in the practicum 1 course do not spend enough time introducing the book at the onset of instruction. For her an introduction should include an activation of students' prior knowledge as well as some instruction on the features of the text and the genre of the text. Even though literacy candidates do not include the components of explaining text features and genre commented on by Alice, they seem to have a common understanding of what before reading instruction should look like in guided reading because they do seek to activate their tutee(s) prior knowledge and provide a basis for the guided reading lesson of the session through different activities.

After literacy candidates introduce the text, they will be looking at with their students and have worked on some before reading strategies they can then move on to the reading of the text. At this point in the process, literacy candidates are asked to instruct their tutee(s) in during reading strategies. The literacy candidates observed included similar strategies into their during reading instruction. Candidates who were working with tutees at the elementary school level had their tutees read silently to themselves and would go around and listen to them each read aloud

for a short period of time to see how they were doing. For example, when Kari had her three tutees reading the text I was able to see that while one student was reading out loud the other two tutees were reading silently to themselves, she would observe each tutee read a page or two and then move on to the next tutee until they had all finished the book for the day (Field Notes, March 11 2013). This approach is similar to what Gibson (2006) suggests should be done at the during reading stage, a reading of a new text is done but at an individual pace. Beyond this individual reading using decoding strategies is also a focus at this stage in the process, one strategy that Hillary and Amelia both used with their tutees when needed was chunking and sounding out words. For example, when I observed Hillary one of her tutees was having trouble decoding the word “baseball.” She prompted her student to use the word ball as a clue to help them in reading the entire word of baseball; this showed me that she was providing her tutee with some instruction on how to chunk words into smaller parts when decoding was difficult (Field Notes, February 26 2013). This use of various strategies suggests that the candidates have a similar understanding of what should be happening while their students are reading, they know they need to help their students decode hard words but they also know that they need to provide their students with opportunities to read at their own individual pace by having them read silently and listening to them read orally from time to time.

The last step of the guided reading process is for literacy candidates to instruct their tutee(s) in after reading strategies. All of the candidates seem to have a similar idea about what to include at the end of a guided reading lesson. They all included a discussion of the text, had their tutee(s) retell or recall what they had read during the session and questioned them for their understanding of the text. Amelia’s after reading discussion provided a great example of how to include each of the aspects mentioned above. In her discussion she had her students sequence the

events of the book by having them retell them in order to one another, then she asked the students questions about the book like “What do seeds need to grow?”, “What do roots need to grow?”, and “Why does order matter?” (Field Notes, March 11 2013). It was interesting to see that two of the candidates also had their student’s sequence the information they had read after they had done the reading like Amelia did both before reading as well as after reading the text. It is evident that the candidates all ended with a discussion of the text which shows its importance. This evidence agrees with Gibson’s (2006) ideas about what should be included after the text is read, they believe that after the text is read this is when the students discuss their responses to the text and/or they extend their comprehension. Even though some candidates had more or less included in their after reading stage they all focused on the learning of their students through a discussion of sorts and sought to see what their students understood as a result of the lesson.

Implications and Conclusion

The ways in which literacy candidates in a literacy clinic effectively implement a guided reading lesson depends upon their knowledge of the framework and their students’ needs. Theories such as the cultural-historical theory and the responsive literacy as it relates to cognitive theory help to further strengthen this claim. The cultural-historical theory looks at the way literacy is practiced by students in their daily lives (Pacheco & Gutierrez, 2009). And the responsive literacy instruction as it relates to the cognitive theory is also important because it focuses on the day-to-day instruction of students and having the ability to adapt that instruction to students needs when necessary (Tobin & McInnes, 2008). Taking into consideration these theories it is clear that, literacy candidates who do not currently work within classrooms may not be able to see and surely won’t be able to use the skills needed to be successful at guided reading instruction, therefore; their knowledge will be different from their peers and instruction will look

different. In order to better understand the ways in which literacy candidates in a literacy clinic effectively implement guided reading lessons, I observed four literacy candidates taking the practicum 1 course at St. Marks College as they participated in a literacy clinic to see what their instruction looked like in comparison to others within their class. I also collected student work to determine what types of activities and strategies they used with their students before, during, and/or after guided reading instruction. But the most fruitful findings came from interviews with both the literacy candidates observed as well as the instructors of the practicum 1 course. The results of these findings provided me with information which I presented into three themes of: knowledge and experience related to the guided reading framework, effective instruction and implementation of guided reading in the real world, and strategies used in guided reading. I found that there is a distinct difference between what the practicum 1 instructors expect their students to know at the onset of the course compared to what the literacy candidates actually know and understand about guided reading instruction as a method of teaching reading. This difference implies that some changes should be made in the content of the courses literacy candidates are required to take before entering the practicum 1 course.

In the above findings, the literacy candidates indicated that they had come to the practicum 1 experience with different types of knowledge in terms of how to implement guided reading and their lessons reflect that knowledge. In the student teaching process pre-service teachers are provided opportunities to imitate or passively observe models of teaching like guided reading while they are in the classroom (College of Education, Texas Tech University, 2006). All of these literacy candidates have participated in the student teaching process, but it is clear that their experiences did not afford them with opportunities to see and/or use the guided reading instructional method within that experience. This lack of experience with guided reading

instruction is concerning because in the practicum 1 course literacy candidates are expected to have the knowledge needed to implement a guided reading lesson but without getting that chance to observe a professional in the field before hand, they may be able to see a lesson through a video presentation or read about it but that is not the same as seeing the process first hand. These findings provide me with the first implication to my study that the courses literacy candidates take before entering the practicum 1 course find ways to get candidates in the field and observing real lessons done by certified literacy specialist/coaches or teachers.

Considering the effectiveness of scaffolding with students in classrooms my second implication is that this approach to instruction be used with literacy candidates as well. Scaffolding as defined by Lesley et al. (2009) is a collaborative interaction between the expert and novice where, in their study, the student teacher was the novice and the cooperating teacher was the expert. Scaffolding is done with students on a regular basis and the guided reading process itself employs such an approach. If literacy candidates are able to spend time within a classroom with a certified literacy specialist or coach they will be able to see the guided reading instructional method being modeled with students and see its real world application, then they may be able to try the strategy with a group of students before they are asked to tutor students in the literacy clinic. This type of interaction would be beneficial because the guided reading instructional method is rigid and follows a set framework. A typical guided reading lesson will take about 20 minutes; it will include the sharing of learning objectives around a student's instructional level text, modeling of key strategies, independent reading and a short discussion at the end to review the sessions teaching (Swain, 2010). Without seeing a typical lesson like the one stated above, how would a literacy candidate know what to do, for how long, and what to use to see if they were effective in the process or not?

There were a few limitations in the research done. Time was short and observing the literacy candidates as they implemented their guided reading lessons became hard to do when more than one candidate was teaching at the same time. It was also hard to find times to interview the candidates as schedules did not line up or communication errors occurred. In the future I would like to see more than one guided reading lesson being implemented and how the literacy candidates' instruction had changed after they learned more about the guided reading method.

After completing the research, I was left with some unanswered questions. It was clear that there was a disconnect between what literacy candidates came to the practicum 1 experience knowing about guided reading and what their instructors expected they know about guided reading when they entered the experience. Guided reading is such a popular instructional method used in elementary classrooms today I was shocked to see that the literacy candidates had barely seen it done in any of the classrooms they had observed or student taught in. All of the literacy candidates are around the same age and participated in student teaching around the same time, which was not that long ago, so why did they see little to no guided reading instruction being used in the classroom? This concept is not new and has been around for many years, it started to gain popularity in the 1990's when Fountas and Pinnell (1996) started to talk about how useful it is to reduce pull-out interventions and it is still regularly seen in schools today. In the future, if I were to revise and do this study over, I would want to look into why some schools use guided reading regularly but others neglect its use. What do schools that don't use guided reading do instead to teach reading to elementary students? Do they use basal readers or specific reading programs? Are our schools shifting away from the use of guided reading instruction as we start

to include the common core curriculum into daily use? These are among many questions that could be asked if I were to look deeper into the literacy concept of guided reading.

In conclusion, being knowledgeable and understanding how to effectively implement guided reading, one of the main components of balanced literacy, is important for literacy candidates partaking in a literacy clinic. Undergraduate education programs should be mindful of the classes they require their students to take as these will play a role in their choosing of a graduate program and even their success in the program. These programs should be teaching students about the approaches being used regularly in schools to prepare them for finding a job in the future. Graduate programs should also take into consideration what they want their students to know before entering courses like the practicum 1 course at St. Marks College. Since not all students who enter a Graduate Program today are educators in the field, many times the students in such programs have just graduated from their first four years and get their masters because they know they have to. Keeping the information from this study in mind, it is important for instructors to provide all students with opportunities to be successful within their practicum 1 experience even if they are not classroom teachers, it may mean that changes be made so that pre-practicum courses be more rigorous and focus more on the approaches to literacy instruction being used regularly within classrooms today.

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Appendix A

Field Notes/Observations:

Candidate 1- working with grade 11 student

Time: 3/4/2013 4:50-5:25

Lesson Outline-

Before Reading:

introduction
 prior knowledge
 book walk
 introduces vocabulary
 purpose for reading

During Reading:

prompts- context
 main idea
 word solving

After Reading:

discussion

Connected work to school-used an article

Before Reading:

- Civil rights movement
- Talked about the reasons for the choice of the article → to connect to the topic of reconstruction
- Asked student to name some key people to civil rights
- Student responded with- Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, John F. Kennedy
- Instructor pointed out that Lyndon B. Johnson was also part of this movement
- Predict what they will be talking about as well as philosophy and connections they could make
- North vs. South, civil rights (basic facts)
- At this time laws were passed and added to amendments
- Prompts were used in the discussion to activate prior knowledge about Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and Malcolm X.
- Asked for students person thoughts on civil rights and then went into a word association activity
- Discussed the topic and asked for opinions on it → talked about soccer and equality
- Connected work to previous work done the week before
- Follows the lesson plan

Vocabulary Work:

Word:
 rights
 humble

Speech
 free
 constitution

Student Response:
 something you're granted
 not cocky

voice
 allowed to do what you want
 piece of law

- After defining the words the student will then make changes to their definitions after reading the text
- Instructor said he had never done guided reading before
- Asks student to mark unfamiliar ideas with a post-it while reading

Candidate 2- working with 2 Kindergarten students

Book: Games We Play from Reading A-Z

Time: 3/4/2013 5:45-6:05

Before Reading:

- Introduces the title of the book to students and that it looks like it will be about lots of games kids play
- Instructs students to keep book flat on the table to read words and don't open the book until you are told to
- Goes through the book by means of a picture walk- 1st page they like to play tag, then each page they like to do something else-baseball, soccer, dress up, house, video games,

During Reading:

- Asks students to whisper read at first and use finger to point to words
- While one student whisper reads the other reads aloud to the instructor
- Prompts one child for the word baseball by using the word ball
- Talks about sounding out words
- Then stops and reads with the other student
- Goes over the last page with the student who whisper read to check for comprehension

After Reading:

- Retelling
- Had students recall what games were played in the book
- Told students that they would re-read the same book next week

Candidate 3- working with 3 grade 2 students

Time: 3/11/2013 5:00-5:15

Book: Grow Tomatoes in 6 steps- Reading A-Z

Before Reading:

- Picture walk through the book to introduce to students
- Inferencing was used throughout the picture walk
- Provided students with words to look at: seedling- predict the meaning, transplant- explained word meaning, stake- use picture to define
- Asked students: What do you think you'll learn about by the title? Response: Tomatoes!

During Reading:

- 3 students: had one read aloud while the others read silently
- goes around and observes students as they read silently

After Reading:

- Uses questioning with students
- Recall what the book was about
- How many steps does it talk about?

Candidate 4- working with 2 grade 1 students

Time: 3/11/2013 5:15-5:30

Book: A Seed Grows

Before Reading:

- Picture walk through the text
- Word work/go over vocabulary
- Worked on the concept of sequencing to develop an understanding
- Students wrote up directions on how to do different things that needed to be sequenced in a certain way to be successful

During Reading:

- Silent reading of the text
- Listens to student read aloud as the other student reads silently

After Reading:

- Chunking, picture clues to help students work on their strategy development
- Had student sequence the events and retell to each other what happened in the book
- Asked students questions about the book
- What do roots need to grow?
- Why does order matter?

Appendix B**Candidate Interview Questions**

Name. _____

1. Do you work in a school currently? If so what is your position?
2. Where did you receive your undergraduate degree from and what degree did you receive?
3. What types of literacy courses did you take in your undergraduate program?
4. Did you have to implement any guided reading instruction or create a guided reading lesson for any classes in your undergraduate program or for student teaching?
5.
 - a. Have you ever seen guided reading instruction practiced in the field (through field work or student teaching)?
 - b. If you have seen guided reading in the field, what did the practice look like?
6. What resources have you used to help you with planning for guided reading instruction during practicum?
7. What do you struggle with in implementing guided reading?

8. What is something you feel good about when implementing guided reading?
9. What do you think good guided reading instruction looks like and what should it include?
10. How do you know when you have successfully taught a guided reading lesson? What type of evidence do you use to assess your abilities?

Appendix C**Instructor Interview Questions**

Name. _____

1. What do you believe effective guided reading instruction looks like?

2. Where do your beliefs about guided reading instruction come from? Any texts, authors, etc.

3. What type of knowledge about guided reading instruction do you expect your students to have upon entering the literacy practicum 1 course at St. John Fisher College?

4. What are you looking for when observing your students as they implement guided reading instruction into their tutoring sessions?

5. Have the literacy candidates in your practicum 1 course this semester or in previous semesters come with adequate knowledge about guided reading instruction or is their knowledge lacking?

6. What are some of the biggest differences you see in how your students implement guided reading instruction and what you believe guided reading instruction should look like?

7. What component of the guided reading do you see many literacy candidates spending too much time or too little time on?

8. What do you think can be done to help literacy candidates become more prepared to teach using the guided reading instructional method?

9. Do you think it is more difficult for literacy candidates tutoring students at the middle and high school grade levels?

- 10.** How important is it for a literacy candidate to know how to effectively teach using the guided reading method when looking for a teaching position today?