

2016

# Kindergarten Teachers' Perspective on Guided Reading

Mary Epperson Carrasco  
*Walden University*

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Mary Carrasco

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Walden University

2016

Abstract

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By

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MEd, Our Lady of the Lake University, 2001

BA University of Texas at San Antonio, 1982

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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July 2016

## Abstract

Within a Southwestern school system, deficits in early literacy skills exist as is illustrated by kindergarten students not meeting the requirements on the Phonological Awareness and Phonics Inventory (PAPI). To address this deficit in early literacy skills, the school system instituted the use of the Guided Reading Approach (GR); however, it was unknown how the kindergarten teachers were implementing GR. The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences and challenges of kindergarten teachers who implement GR. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning and constructivist theory provided the theoretical framework. Research questions explored the thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs teachers hold about GR as well as the challenges teachers face when incorporating GR. A case study methodology was used to investigate 6 kindergarten teachers' experiences with implementing GR through the use of interviews and document analysis. Analysis of data revealed that teachers believed that GR was a necessary component of teaching and increased student success. However, teachers did not have enough training, collaboration, or time to invest in GR. A professional training was developed for teachers as a result. The 3-day training will provide teachers with an overview of GR, opportunities for the participants to collaborate with colleagues, and time for the development of GR lesson plans that can immediately be transferred to the classroom. Positive social change may result by helping teachers better understand GR (components and implementation), which may result in an improved reading program, higher student performance, and information to influence others to improve reading programs.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this study to my husband, David, for his words of encouragement, patience, and support. Thanks for attending to our daughters when I was too busy researching and working on my dissertation.

I would also like to dedicate my achievement to my parents, Jonas and Olga Alvarez, for always instilling in me the importance of working hard and receiving a good education. Thank you for teaching me not to be a quitter. Mother, you have always taught me to put my faith first and that everything else would fall into place. I prayed about this journey, and my prayers were answered. Thank you both!

Last, I want to dedicate my hard work to my three children, John, Raven, and Ashton, and my beautiful grandchildren, Asjahanna and John III, who sacrificed quality time with me while I spent many hours reading, writing, doing homework, and doing work on the computer. I hope you will remember your mother's perseverance and commitment to education. In addition, you will know from my experience that with hard work, dreams do come true. The endless days and nights that I spend studying, researching, and writing are almost over. I am forever grateful to each of you for your love, hugs, support, and understanding.

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Although tempted to give up, faith in God carried me to the end of this journey. Thank you for never giving up on me and helping me accomplish my goal.

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## Section 1: The Problem

### **Introduction**

In elementary school, the major focus of primary level (K–3) instruction is teaching children to read. According to Adams (1990), about a third of all children struggle with learning to read. Literacy continues to be a pivotal part of successful achievement in school. For children to make a smooth transition from being nonreaders to beginning readers it is vital they master early literacy concepts and acquire early literacy skills (Duncan & Seymour, 2000; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2007). Research indicates children who have trouble learning to read at the early grades are not likely to catch up with their peers (Lentz, 1988; Neuman & Dickinson, 2001; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Torgesen, 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). This is why so much emphasis is placed on preventing reading problems in the early grades (Clay, 1993; Pinnell, 1989; Slavin, Madden, Dolan, & Wasik, 1996). To encourage early forms of reading and writing to flourish and develop into conventional literacy, schools must provide effective early literacy instruction, which includes providing students with developmentally appropriate environment, materials, experiences, and social support. One research based approach that a Southwestern school instituted to provide sufficient and appropriate literacy experiences is the guided reading (GR) approach.

### **Definition of the Problem**

At the rural Southwestern elementary campus, students are entering kindergarten with deficits in early literacy skills. Those students having deficits were identified by the Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Inventory (PAPI). Deficits in early literacy skills can

have an effect on kindergarten students as they begin to learn essential literacy skills that will affect them academically and personally throughout their lives (Gomez, 2009). The most important factor in literacy acquisition, indicated by research, is the proper development of early literacy skills (Clay, 2000). The key for children to develop these skills and to be successful independent readers is instruction provided by skilled educators (Jaquinta, 2006). The problem is the teachers at the school may not be adequately implementing the GR program that was adopted to address the issue of poor literacy skills among kindergarten students.

### **Rationale**

#### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

The goal of GR, in accordance with the Southwestern district's curriculum, is to provide the most effective small-group instruction for all readers, struggling or independent, and then pair students with materials that are appropriate for their reading ability at the time (J. Wiatrek, personal communication, October 25, 2012). Struggling to read is accompanied by multiple factors and circumstances. According to Meier (2009), this literacy phenomenon has become an area of concern for educators, parents, and policymakers. The administrators at the Southwestern district saw an increase of students entering kindergarten with deficits in early literacy skills. Because kindergarten students are now expected to enter first grade with beginning reading skills, a decision was made to use GR to enhance early literacy skills for students in their classroom. Evidence from the district's data base indicates a need for an intervention to help students with deficits in early literacy skills. Table 1 below explains what tests were used to identify deficits in

early literacy skills, what year the test were administered, and the total number tested.

The district opted not to administer any type of test during the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. The numbers under the column titled *Developed* indicate the number of students, out of the total tested, that have met the early literacy skills requirement. The numbers under the column *Not Developed* indicate the number of students who have not met the early literacy skills requirement. This data revealed a need for an intervention to enhance early literacy skills in the kindergarten classrooms. The district decided to mandate GR as the reading intervention.

Table 1.

Kindergarten Preassessments

Test	Year	Total tested	Developed	Not Developed
Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)	2007-2008	228	126	64
Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)	2008-2009	277	162	115
Iowa Test of Basic Knowledge and Skills (ITBS)	2009-2010	134	108	26
No Tests were administered	2010-2012			
Phonological Awareness and Phonics Inventory (PAPI)	2012-2013	147	120	27

Six years ago when I was a kindergarten teacher, we were provided 2-days of professional development (PD) on GR. On the first day, the presenter provided a definition of GR and the research behind GR. On the second day the presenter focused on the use of assessment and how to use the data to form groups for GR and the process of GR. The Region 20 presenter visited the school twice during 2009-2010 school year, once in the fall and once in the spring, to see if teachers had any questions about GR and how to implement it in the classroom.

There are currently seven kindergarten teachers. Four out of the seven kindergarten teachers have received some PD and training in GR. The three new kindergarten teachers have received training from the veteran kindergarten teachers but have indicated during Professional Learning Communities (PLC) that they do not feel knowledgeable about GR and how to implement it adequately in the classroom.

### **Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature**

Recent research by the National Research Council (NRC) indicated four in 10 children experience literacy problems (Snow et al., 1998). A large number of people in America cannot read as well as they should to be successful in life (National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 1996). Children at risk for reading difficulties should have access to early childhood environments that promote language and literacy development. These environments should support students' development of skills that predict reading achievements (Snow et al., 1998). Learning to read is a lengthy and difficult process for many young children. Achievement in learning to read is based on



enhancing language and literacy skills very early in life through intervention.

Schickedanz (1999) stated, “Reading and writing, like other aspects of development have long histories that reach back into infancy” (p. 1). It is essential young learners establish a strong foundation for reading because the skills they gain support their academic achievement and their development of social skills.

Studies have shown children who have a solid base of early literacy skills generally have higher achievement in reading than their classmates who lack such skills (Morris, Bloodgood, Lomax, & Perney, 2003; Strickland & Shanahan, 2004; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002; Walpole, Chow, & Justice, 2004). Consequently, teachers must expediently ensure students whose emergent literacy skills are limited receive an array of opportunities to enhance these skills (McMahon, Richmond, & Reeves-Kazelskis, 2001). These literacy experiences can be provided to students who need emergent literacy skills through GR sessions.

In most schools today, implementing a high quality literacy curriculum is recommended to help attain education, financial stability, and personal development (Au, Raphael, & Mooney, 2007). Wepner and Strickland (2008) noted students need to be able to read to meet life’s challenges. Teachers are tasked with providing students varied enough experiences and tools to enable them to gain solid reading skills early in their schooling. Children are born with the tools they need to become readers, and it is up to teachers to encourage students’ engagement in reading by making it fun and enjoyable. GR instruction is among the research-based, best practice approaches used to support early readers in developing broad literacy skills (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996). Fawson and

Reutzel, (2000) indicated GR has become an essential approach to reading instruction in the United States. Mooney (1990) noted children in the early literacy stages can particularly benefit from this approach as they work to gain fluency. GR is a small-group reading instruction designed to provide differentiated teaching that supports students in developing reading proficiency. For the student, the guided reading lesson means reading and talking (and sometimes writing) about an interesting and engaging variety of fiction and nonfiction texts. For the teacher, guided reading means taking the opportunity for careful text selection and intentional and intensive teaching of systems of strategic activity for proficient reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

Because teaching reading is complex, it can be overwhelming for teachers, who have to meet the diverse needs of their students. Teacher may become frustrated trying to meet the needs of all students, yet implementing GR may help address the problem. Fawson and Reutzel (2000) noted, “Teachers we have worked with are typically excited about the possibilities of providing the necessary scaffolding and instructional support to their students that GR offers” (p. 84). To effectively use GR, however, educators need to see it in action in a classroom.

Because teaching and supporting GR uses a different approach than traditional reading programs, it is important to have teaching staff that is properly trained (Fountas & Pinnell, 2007). Iaquinta (2006) stated, “In a truly balanced literacy program, *how* you teach is as important as *what* you teach” (p. 417). Using GR in elementary classrooms allows educators to address the varied needs of students through differentiated reading lessons. Heston (2010) indicated when elementary schools use GR produce students read

more accurately and fluently, and they have better reading comprehension. The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences and challenges of kindergarten teachers who implement GR.

### **Definitions**

There are some variations in how terms related to literacy instruction are used in the literature. For this study, I will use the following definitions of essential terms:

*Alphabet knowledge (AK):* Alphabet knowledge is the degree to which a person knows the names and sounds associated with printed letters (National Early Literacy Program [NELP], 2009).

*Concepts of print:* Concepts of print are certain points of understanding that support children in gaining reading skills, for example, knowing where on the page to start reading; understanding the correspondence between words on the page and words spoken when reading; differentiating among letters, words, and sentences; and recognizing the role punctuation (Clay, 2002).

*Differentiating instruction:* Differentiated instruction is an approach to teaching for which the teacher plans instruction to meet the needs of individual learners (Tomlinson, 2001).

*Early literacy skills:* These are the essential skills such as concepts of print and letter knowledge that students may develop before they attend school through experience with printed materials. These skills are vital for children to become literate (Clay, 2002).

*Early reading intervention:* Early reading interventions include programs, activities, curricula, and related elements that address student weaknesses in phonological

and phonemic awareness tasks (e.g., rhyming; phoneme identification/segmentation /blending), letter/sound correspondence (e.g., sound-to-letter and letter-to-sound identification), and rapid naming (letters, pictures, colors) (Graves, 2004).

*Guided reading:* GR is an approach to reading instruction that includes having students read text at their respective reading levels aloud. When using this practice, teachers provide students with strategies to help them decode and comprehend texts of increasing difficulty (Pinnell & Fountas, 1996). GR instruction usually occurs with small groups of children (approximately six students) (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

*Letter knowledge:* Letter knowledge involves recognizing each letter has a unique name, shape, and sound. It also involves understanding that when letters are combined, they can make words (Pinnell & Fountas, 2007).

*Literacy:* Literacy comprises all the activities involved in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and appreciating both written and spoken language (NELP, 2009).

*Phonemic awareness:* Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate phonemes (Rog, 2001).

*Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Inventory (PAPI):* PAPI is an assessment used to measure phonemic awareness and phonics skills in primary grades. The areas tested include phonemic awareness, letter recognition, letter-sound relationship, and word recognition (PAPI, 2010).

*Phonological awareness:* Phonological awareness is the understanding that words consist of sounds (Rog, 2001).

*Print knowledge:* Print knowledge is a combination of elements of alphabet knowledge, concepts about print, and early decoding (NELP, 2009).

*Readiness:* Readiness is a reading-related measurement that includes components such as AK, concepts of print, vocabulary, memory, and phonological awareness. Often insufficient information is provided to determine the exact content of measure (NELP, 2009).

*Scaffolding:* Scaffolding is the “process of providing higher levels of initial support for students as they enter the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) with the gradual dismantling of the support structure as students’ progress toward independence” (Harland, 2003, p. 268).

*Struggling reader:* A struggling reader is a student who is experiencing significant difficulty learning to read (Cooper, Chard, & Kiger, 2006). According to Chall and Curtis (2003), struggling readers are likely to exhibit difficulties in one or more of the following areas: background knowledge experiences; oral language; decoding, including phonemic awareness; and phonics knowledge.

*Zone of proximal development (ZPD):* ZPD is “The distance between the [child’s] actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and [his or her] level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

### **Significance**

A common approach in many elementary classrooms is the use of GR so it becomes important to understand GR from the perspectives of the teachers who are using

guided reading. There are a variety of PD resources and books available to assist teachers in learning about GR which allows them to begin implementing it in their classrooms (Fountas and Pinnell, 2001). The implementation of GR may look different in each classroom because of the way each teacher understands and implements it (Fountas & Pinnell 2001). Understanding the teachers' concerns about GR and their GR practices can aid in identifying what can be done to help teachers improve their GR practices.

When teachers are preparing to implement GR, they must call upon what they know about literacy development and the process of literacy acquisition. GR is most successful in developing literacy skills when the teacher knows the right time to introduce the different skills and strategies (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996). The GR lessons for each group will look different based on students' areas of strength and their needs (Fountas and Pinnell, 2001). The individual elements of lessons associated with GR each support different elements of literacy development, and work in concert to help students find meaning in the text (Fountas and Pinnell, 2001). According to Fountas and Pinnell (2001), these elements help students construct meaning from text by providing opportunities to learn in different ways. To build comprehension, teachers must create a solid base by using the following components: selection, introduction, reading and discussion of the text, teaching processing strategies, word work, and extending the meaning of the text. This study explored the teacher's perceptions of how they are implementing the GR program and what challenges they face in implementing the program.

### **Guiding/Research Question**

The keystone to children's school success is their ability to read. Young learners must acquire adequate skills for life, and acquiring sufficient reading skills builds a healthy sense of accomplishment. Developing the skills of literacy is the responsibility of families and teachers. Parents expect schools to produce literate students; likewise, schools expect parents to partner with them in this endeavor (Iaquinta, 2006). One research-based approach to helping students is the GR approach.

Teachers at a Southwestern elementary school are using GR to help students in learning early literacy skills. There must be a consistent and uniform understanding among the kindergarten teachers about GR to ensure students are assessed and taught based on their individual needs. When students are taught using texts at their own GR level, they begin to develop an excitement for reading which results in them becoming independent readers. The problem with having significant differences in implementing GR is some children will develop a love for reading and become confident and experienced readers, while other students may not be as confident or skilled at reading. Those students who do not have a strong reading foundation give up because they cannot read.

Past research indicates a need to understand the kinds of methods and materials that can be used to teach GR. The research questions for this qualitative case study are:

RQ1: What do kindergarten teachers' understand about the present instructional approaches to GR?

RQ2: How do kindergarten teachers implement GR in their classrooms?

RQ3: What do kindergarten teachers, who implement GR, see as their biggest challenge?

### **Review of the Literature**

The purpose of this literature review was to examine current research on GR. I will present a conceptual framework of the subject before addressing specific topics relevant to GR. Although GR embraces a multitude of instructional components, in this literature review I will focus on only those topics central to my inquiry. The section examines the following key instructional topics: definition of GR, the process of GR, how to group with GR, how to assess with GR, and how to manage GR within a balanced literacy project.

Review of the literature includes peer-reviewed articles from periodicals, research studies, and dissertations found through the Walden University Library databases ERIC, Sage, and ProQuest. A few articles were discovered by searching the Google Scholar database. Key search terms used to locate articles included emergent *literacy*, *balanced literacy*, *components of reading*, *guided reading*, *constructivism*, *assessments*, and *reading interventions*.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was based on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural learning theory of constructivism, which has been influential in the development of instructional models of basic English language acquisition and literacy like GR. Vygotsky, according to Berk and Winsler (1995), held that cognition is a profoundly social phenomenon in which individuals use their social experience to shape



their interpretation of the world. Language, according to Vygotsky (1978) is the “critical bridge” (p. 12) between the social setting and the individual. Vygotsky’s theory of intellectual development supports the balanced literacy framework with teachers balancing explicit and constructivist instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners (Bingham & Hall-Kenyon, 2013). Antonacci (2000) discussed how Vygotsky’s theory underlies the use of GR in the classroom. Antonacci (2000) identified three principles from Vygotsky’s theory that supports GR in primary classrooms: “(a) Learning is social and occurs in social contexts; (b) Learning is mediated by language; and (c) Learning or the development of concepts and higher mental functioning takes place within the student’s ZPD” (p. 23). If teachers implement GR appropriately, they will be providing students the opportunity to learn socially, to learn through conversation, and to scaffold instruction during the time the student is in his or her ZPD.

Vygotsky (1978) defined the ZPD as “the distance between the child’s actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and his or her level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). An instructional metaphor for the support given to students working in their ZPD is scaffolding. This scaffold or support enables students to work at a level above what they could achieve independently (Vygotsky, 1978). Students are encouraged by this scaffold or support to work beyond their independent level in order to acquire and develop new skills and strategies. This social environment is described by Berk and Winsler (1995) as a scaffold. Instructional scaffolds are described by Pentimonti and Justice (2010) as a continuum of low to high

support for learners so “Low levels of support featuring minimal levels of adult assistance are those scaffolding strategies provided when a child is nearing maturation in a given area of development” (p. 343). Scaffolds that are more structured in nature provide more adult assistance; these are categorized as offering high support for learners (Pentimonti & Justice 2010). Teachers create scaffolds for students by organizing groups of students with similar reading needs in GR. This setting allows for the teacher to be able to prompt students when they get stuck on a word and to ensure that the students are working with materials in their ZPD. Leveled texts have language that developmentally match the syntax and organization of emergent, beginning, and fluent readers’ speech (Allington, 2013; Avalos, Plasencia, Chavez, & Rascon, 2007). In other words, the reading level of the students’ text should be just beyond their independent level (i.e. at their instructional level), and the teacher needs to support students as they work through the challenges they find in this text.

The social and constructive nature of learning is essential to the practice of GR. Standard approaches to GR organize students in small groups to provide opportunities for social interaction, while allowing individual learning. Exemplary teachers of literacy weave scaffolds into their reading instruction, particularly in small group lessons (Ankrum 2006; Ankrum, Genest, & Belcastro, 2014; Ankrum, Morewood, Bean, & Genest, 2008; Morrow 2011; Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2003). The level of support is adjusted to meet the needs of the readers. Some expectations of students are to draw upon their social and cultural backgrounds, to make sense of the text, and make predictions about the text before they read it. Sharing their personal response to the text

and relating the text to their personal experiences are some comprehension strategies students can use while reading the text (Davis, 2013). Through dialogue, the teacher can facilitate instruction. To support students in their reading of the text, the teacher can use a discussion before and after the reading of the text in an attempt to meet students' needs while they work within the ZPD (Antonacci, 2000). Even with the ability to apply deep knowledge to lesson planning, it is important for teachers to be responsive to their learners; it is essential that teachers have the ability to adapt their lessons to meet the evolving needs of their students during instruction (Ankrum & Bean 2008; Boyer, 2014; Parsons, Davis, Scales, Williams, & Kear, 2010). As Morrow (2011) explains, exemplary teachers “teach skills within a meaningful context and in an explicit manner” and “view all students as capable learners who progress at their own developmental level” (p. 89). Therefore, it is essential that teachers reflect on possible ways to talk with students and to consider the types of scaffolding one might provide for learners.

Both sociocultural theory and social constructivism, which also contribute to the theoretical underpinnings of GR instruction, highlight the importance of the social environment and its effect on students' learning (Au, 1998). In constructivism, the teacher's focus is on facilitating student understanding (Nagowah & Nagowah, 2009). Constructivism asserts that students create their own knowledge and understanding (Gordon, 2008). The GR design is intended to be the scaffolding part of a balanced literacy approach. The scaffolding part of GR concurs with Vygotsky's ZPD (Harland, 2003). The ZPD is a developmental thought process which addresses the tasks between one's actual development level and one's potential development (Vygotsky, 1978). In the

beginning, the student may be unable to perform these tasks independently, but with guidance they may reach their potential.

With the use of GR, the teacher can meet readers at their instructional level, which is just above their actual development, and guide them in their respective ZPD (Antonacci, 2000). GR, according to Dorn, French, and Jones (1998), scaffolds the reading of texts the students would be unable to read through a rich and meaningful discussion before-reading, during-reading, and after-reading. GR prepares the reader to read the text independently. Although GR embraces a multitude of instructional components, in this review of the literature, I focus on only those topics that are central to my inquiry. Therefore, this section examines the following key instructional topics: early literacy skills, definition of GR, GR process, GR groups, assessment, and managing GR within a balanced literacy project.

### **Early Literacy**

Early literacy skills, according to Coyne and Harn (2006), are the foundation for development of later reading skills and strategies, including semantic, narrative, and conceptual knowledge. Early literacy skills include phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, letter identification, print awareness, and phonics, as well as emerging reading fluency and comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000). Research indicates that deficits in early literacy skills broaden over time and become intractable to intervention efforts (Benner, Nelson, Ralston, & Mooney, 2010), therefore early intervention is critical to increase the likelihood students are reading on grade-level (National Reading Panel, 2000).

The critical time for children's development and learning is between the years from birth through age 5. The NELP (2009) stated the development of early literacy skills is important in the area of literacy. Providing young children with significant early literacy skills can offer a path to improved performance (NELP, 2009). Early literacy skills are vital to early learning experiences that support academic achievement, reduce grade retention, increase in graduation rates, and enhanced productivity in adult life (Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006). Therefore, it is vital that all teachers have the knowledge, skills, and inquiry stance to make every moment with students a valuable learning experience. According to Galarce (2014), teachers need to teach every child placed in their care to read and write with whatever resources are available. Literacy teaching does not come as a set formula or as a prepackaged commodity.

Studies, according to Snow et al. (1998), have revealed a correlation between early literacy development and school achievement. These studies indicate students identified as at-risk for failure have benefited from the early literacy curriculum as an intervention process. The central part of a comprehensive early childhood curriculum is to measure children's early literacy development. Assessment, according to McAfee, Leong, and Bodrova (2004), can measure a child's development and learning. Teachers can use assessment results to guide their lesson, planning, program planning, decision making, identification of children who may require other services, and to communicate, and report to others (McAfee et al., 2004). GR stresses the value of using assessment and monitoring strategies to plan instruction. The teacher's assessment data can be used to address students' needs during GR and to plan subsequent GR lessons. Effective literacy

differentiation for all student is dependent on the teacher's ability to diagnose student variance, comprehend content, analyze cognitive processes, strategically design grouping arrangements, appropriately select materials, and manage student behaviors (Davis, 2013).

In 1997, in response to a congressional request, the National Reading Panel (NRP) was created (NRP, 2000). The organization comprises 14 members, to include reading teachers, educational administrators, parents, college's representatives, and reading research scientists (NRP, 2000). The NRP discussed and debated many topics such as phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. These are the five essential components of reading (NRP, 2000)

The NRP reviewed research available on the reading acquisition process and noted evidence-based strategies are the most effective for teaching children to read (NRP, 2000). The NRP also described effective reading instruction methods for use in classrooms use, recommended ways to inform schools about this methods, and suggested a research plan for learning more about reading development and instruction (NRP, 2000). This analysis elucidated the fact that explicit instruction in phonemic awareness is the best approach to reading instruction, along with phonics instruction, fluency strategies, comprehension enhancement approaches (NRP, 2000; NRP, 2013). Table 2 shows a summary of the panel's findings.

Table 2:

*Summary of the National Reading Panel's findings (NRP, 2000)*

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finding</b>
<u>Phonemic Awareness</u>	Means knowing that spoken words consist of smaller parts called phonemes. Teaching phonemic awareness gives children a basic foundation that helps them learn to read and spell.	The panel found that children who learned to read through specific instruction in phonemic awareness improved their reading skills more than those who learned without attention to phonemic awareness.
<u>Phonics Instruction</u>	Phonics teaches students about the relationship between phonemes and printed letters and explains how to use this knowledge to read and spell.	The panel found that students show marked benefits from explicit phonics instruction, from kindergarten through 6th grade.
<u>Fluency</u>	Means able to read quickly, knowing what the words are and what they mean, and properly expressing certain words - putting the right feeling, emotion, or emphasis on the right word or phrase. Teaching fluency includes guided oral reading, in which students read aloud to someone who corrects his or her mistakes and provides him or her with feedback and independent silent reading.	The panel found that reading fluently improved the students' abilities to recognize new words; read with greater speed, accuracy, and expression, and better understand what they read.
<u>Comprehension: Vocabulary instruction</u>	Teaches students how to recognize words and understand them.	The panel found that vocabulary instruction and repeated contact with vocabulary words is important.
<u>Comprehension: Text comprehension instruction</u>	Teaches specific plans or strategies students can use to help them understand what they are reading.	The panel identified seven ways of teaching text comprehension that helped improve reading strategies in children who did not have learning disabilities. For instance, creating, answering questions, and cooperative learning helped to improve reading outcomes.
<u>Comprehension: Teacher Preparation and comprehension strategies instruction</u>	Refers to how well a teacher knows things such as the content of the text, comprehension strategies, and interest producing techniques.	The panel found that teachers may be better prepared to use and teach comprehension strategies if they received formal instruction on reading comprehension strategies.
<u>Teacher Education in Reading Instruction</u>	Includes how to teach reading teachers how effective his or her methods of teaching reading are and how research can improve his or her knowledge of teaching students to read.	In general, the panel found that studies related to teacher education were broader than the criteria used by the panel. Because the studies did not focus on specific variables, the panel could not draw conclusions. Therefore, the panel recommended more research on this subject.
<u>Computer Technology in Reading Instruction</u>	Examines how well we can use computer technology to deliver reading instruction.	Because few studies focused on the use of computers in reading education, the panel could draw few conclusions. It noted that all of the 21 studies on this topic reported positive results from using computers for reading instruction.

Phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension of text, and vocabulary are considered the five areas of reading vital to early reading instruction and assessment (NRP, 2000; NRP, 2013; Pufpaff & Yssel, 2010; Walpole, McKenna, Uribe-Zarain, & Lamitina, 2010). Dowell, Bickmore, & Hoewing (2012) stated that the skills and knowledge necessary for effective literacy leadership are an important subset of instructional leadership that provide the framework that transcends all areas of leading for learning. State-level (large-scale) assessment may not assess all five of these areas, but local districts can do so to assess reading instruction and identify needs for future instruction (NRP, 2000). Policy recommendations for state assessment need to consider the complementary nature of state-, district-, and classroom-level assessments (NRP, 2000). These five areas are incorporated as essential components of effective reading instruction in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Reading First initiative (NRP, 2000). These five aspects work together to create the reading experience. As children learn to read they must develop skills in all five of these areas in order to become successful readers (NRP, 2000).

The responsibility of teaching reading can be challenging. A teacher's beliefs and knowledge about reading and reading strategies can have a significant impact on how they use and control their knowledge (Bingham & Hall-Kenyon, 2013). A teacher uses his or her knowledge to assess their students' reading and make real time adjustments to instruction during the GR session. It is during this time that a teacher can capitalize on teachable moments, provide scaffolding, and engage a student in a conversation over a text. According to Tripple (2015) the guidance offered by the



teacher during the meaning-construction process is essential to the development of readers.

It is vital that teachers be able to demonstrate implicit knowledge of sound-symbol correspondences and their relation to English word structure (i.e., phonics). Explicit knowledge of the rules and conventions of the English language and how recognizing words easily and accurately for rapid decoding would demonstrate the teachers understanding of fluency/decoding instruction. Instruction of vocabulary, facilitated by adequate skill in phonological awareness, requires an understanding of semantic structures, rules of grammar and word structure relationships. Comprehension instruction requires a thorough knowledge of linguistic concepts and complex sentence structures (Cunningham, Perry, Stanovich, & Stanovich, 2004; Mather, Bos, & Babur, 2001; McCutchen et al., 2002; Moats & Foorman, 2003). Having information about effective instructional practices is not enough. Teachers must be willing to use this information to help them fulfill the responsibility of teaching children to read (NRP, 2000). Teachers who are knowledgeable about the five reading components are prepared to teach children to read by using materials and instructional strategies that have proven to be effective (NRP, 2000).

For children to learn to read, instruction must include all of the five reading components. Teachers must know how to incorporate these components to meet the needs of each child. They must recognize the importance of phonemic awareness and phonics in the process of building word recognition skills, and know how to identify students who need assistance in these areas and subsequently provide it to

them (DeVos, 2011; NRP, 2000; NRP 2013;). Although the literature does not indicate a specific order or ranking of importance for the five domains of reading, the research indicates that teachers are most likely to have training in phonological awareness when compared to the other key literacy skills (Spencer, Schule, Guillot, & Lee, 2008). Further, the phonological awareness knowledge and skill of educators is commonly linked to student outcomes (Spencer et al., 2008). Teachers know that the emphasis on phonemic awareness and phonics, two essential components, will decrease as students become competent readers (Spencer et al., 2008).

A teacher makes numerous decisions that affect student achievement (Griffith, Massey, & Atkinson, 2013). Effective teachers know how to use research based strategies to help students read fluently. They recognize the importance of the manner in which it supports understanding of a text. Teachers use various word learning strategies to help students building vocabulary. Finally, teachers support students in developing comprehension, the ultimate goal of reading, by teaching students comprehension strategies (NRP, 2000).

Teaching children to read requires a continuing commitment to looking for new ways to help students gain the necessary skills from the five components (Learning Point Associates, 2004). Additionally, teachers must be secure in their understanding of these five reading components and how they influence reading and reading achievement (Learning Point Associates (LPA), 2004). GR provides an effective means for teaching the five components (LPA, 2004). When the teachers have a deep understanding of these components, they will be able to diagnose, plan, provide instruction, monitor, and

evaluate the reading materials and instructional practices (Calkins, Ehrenworth, & Lehman, 2012; LPA, 2004). In addition, they will help other teachers become effective teachers of reading.

## **Guided Reading**

### **What is Guided Reading?**

GR, according to Ford and Opitz (2008), is one component of a balanced literacy program, rather than a complete program itself. Research that focuses solely on GR is limited (Hauptom, 2012); however, based on the NRP's recommendations, GR provides an appropriate balanced literacy framework (Fountas & Pinnell, 2013; also see Iaquinta, 2006; NRP, 2000; NRP, 2013). Guns (2012) stated that GR is a beneficial instructional approach that provides students with differentiated, tailored instruction, and is crucial to improve the reading skills and strategies of students in the elementary setting and will provide students with successful reading experiences.

For GR, students read texts, chosen to match their instructional level, out loud (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Fountas & Pinnell, 2013). Teachers who provide reading support through effective strategies help student's process increasingly difficult levels of text. GR instruction usually occurs with small groups of children (approximately six students) (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Teachers give students what they lack and strengthen what they already know during guided reading sessions. For children to become strategic readers teachers must help them develop reading behaviors. However, this can only happen when teachers know the reading behaviors to identify and support. Denton, Fletcher, Taylor, Barth, and Vaughn (2014) states that teacher's plan lessons

based on clear objectives and provide direct explanations and modeling of concepts, skills, and strategies, along with extended opportunities for guided and independent practice with a clear corrective and positive feedback. Ford and Optiz (2008) reiterate that the teacher's knowledge of the components and the implementation of guided reading is the catalyst to the success of this approach.

Teachers use the needs of their struggling readers to provide instructional practices that allow intensive and accelerated instruction (Clay, 1993), ample opportunities to read (Allington & Gabriel, 2012), and questioning based on authentic discussion of text (Peterson & Taylor, 2012). Graves's (2004) identified two important points that relate to the teaching of reading from a constructivist perspective. He described "making meaning," emphasizing the active role of the reader in interpreting and comprehending text. The second point involves the subjective nature of the meaning, which is constructed from the reader's processing of text. In essence, learners' construction of their knowledge should not be separated from the social context in which the learning takes place. All social interactions, both group and face-to-face interactions, potentially influence the way that people perceive and describe the world (Au, 1998). The social and constructive nature of learning is part of GR.

During a GR session the teacher introduces a leveled book to a small group of students, the students read the book simultaneously and independently while the teacher coaches them and follows up with a discussion and specific teaching point. These students read at about the same level and use a common text (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Fountas & Pinnell, 2013). Researcher, Mesmer (2010) found that children who read

qualitatively leveled texts had an advantage over students who read decodable texts.

Goals for the reading experience include enhancing comprehension and fluency skills and supporting lifeline reading by having children use and practice strategies for independent reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Comprehension strategies, according to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) (2013), are skills children apply to understand what they read. Skills such as retelling the story, summarizing what was read, among others (NICHD, 2013).

The essential components that characterize GR, according to Antonacci (2000), are (a) using books for instruction, (b) having children read the entire text independently, (c) choosing reading materials appropriate to the children's reading level, and (d) using dynamic grouping to accommodate students changing needs (p. 22). Antonacci (2000) concluded:

Because a child's development is constantly changing the grouping methods used in GR should reflect this change. GR should also be dynamic, place children in groups, according to his or her specific literacy skills needs and his or her needs change at different rates. Thus, continual observation, and informal assessment practices of children's literacy strategies by the teacher are a critical element embedded in GR instruction. (p. 21)

Through GR, teachers coach students as they learn to read. Teachers know their student's needs and make the instructional decisions to support them as readers (Yanez, 2015).

Teachers place students in reading groups, based on their performance level, using the strategies described above.

Antonacci (2000) noted GR melds multiple aspects of learning into tools that support reading comprehension for diverse reading materials. Through GR students learn to read new texts and to see connection between what they are reading at the moment and previous texts they have read. The before-, during-, and after-reading activities can teach reading comprehension skills and strategies. Antonacci (2000) identified three elements in the framework for GR (a) learning is social process and it take place in social contexts, (b) language mediates the learning process, and (c) students develop understanding of higher-level concepts and higher cognitive functioning when they are working in their ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). Further research needs to be conducted on the potential of using GR and an approach for improving literacy skills. GR helps students improve word knowledge, reading fluency, and reading comprehension by using a variety of techniques (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

Opitz and Ford (2001) noted the way GR instruction is implemented depends on who is facilitating it; however, it is generally defined as providing ability-sensitive reading instruction in small groups that are formed dynamically based on students common instructional needs. According to Klein (2012), students at the primary level, early and beginning readers, focus on three foundational components of reading, including alphabet recognition, phonics and phonological awareness, and high frequency word recognition. GR takes place when teachers help students develop reading strategies providing them with text that are continually increasing in their level of difficulty (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). This teaching method supports children in developing key reading skills, while providing teachers the opportunity to take note of problems students

have in producing correct words and understanding the text and to provide scaffolding through immediate feedback (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). The information teachers gather through observing GR helps teachers plan subsequent lessons by providing the teacher with valuable information regarding specific teaching points and literacy activities that expand the groups' literacy knowledge (Schwartz, 2005). Tiring literacy instruction allowed students to gain a more in-depth understanding of the content while also placing the context of instruction within a student's level of current understanding (Sheehy & Clemmons (2012). By focusing instruction at children's own instructional level, regardless of how limited reading skill is, GR can be an effective approach. The student can read the text at this level with approximately 90% accuracy, missing approximately 1 out of every 10 words (Brown, 2003; Fawson & Reutzel, 2000; Rog & Burton, 2002). Running records can be used to assess this 90-94% accuracy, which will be explained further in the assessment section (Tompkins, 2006). According to Fawson and Reutzel (2000), an effective GR lesson should progress through three steps:

- Introduction of the text (before-reading): Teacher engages students in a general discussion about the contents of the book to help activate students' prior knowledge of the subject.
- Supported reading (during-reading): All students quietly read the introduced out-loud simultaneously, but not chorally (students should read at their own pace). This way the teacher can hear each student and provide the necessary scaffolding for students to gain comprehension. Students must read independently, not chorally, as the goal of GR is to develop efficient

independent readers, not choral readers (whisper phones are a good way to prevent students from falling into choral reading; see Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005).

- Follow up (after-reading): At the completion of the reading the teacher may opt to engage the students in some sort of extension of the text activity. This may include written responses, dramatic events, role play, and oral response. This is not a “required” step and is up to the teacher’s discretion, but it may be beneficial to students in many contexts.

By following the balanced process above, children are able to make reading progress, even if they are struggling readers (Duffy-Hester, 1999).

### **Research Supporting Guided Reading**

GR is a highly researched topic that is becoming an exceedingly supported form of teaching reading within a balanced literacy program. GR appears to provide teachers with additional opportunities to match students’ individual needs with direct instruction (Brabham & Villaume, 2002; Burns, 2001; Gambrell, Malloy, & Mazzoni, 2011; Guns, 2012; Witherell, 2007).

Iaquinta (2006), author of *Guided reading: A research-based response to the challenges of early reading instruction*, discussed the manifestation of GR as best practice in literacy instruction. Iaquinta emphasized GR provides teachers with the opportunity to coach reading strategy use and guide students as they learn to apply such strategies. Additionally, Kimbell-Lopez (2003), author of *Just think of the possibilities: Formats for reading instruction in the elementary classroom*, recognized GR as one of



six components that most successfully meets the needs of readers. Both authors reference the International Reading Association's (IRA) (2002) summary of the NRP report and discuss their determination of what effective reading instruction should include. It should include teaching phonemic awareness and phonics, incorporating guided oral reading within literacy instruction, and teaching students to apply strategies to increase comprehension.

The NRP report found guided oral reading has a profound positive influence on fluency, word recognition, and comprehension (IRA, 2002). Reading aloud was found to have a greater impact than guided silent reading. GR provides students the opportunity to apply their constructed knowledge of strategic reading practices in the context of authentic reading experiences (Wall, 2014). Additionally, when students are provided with the opportunity to apply cognitive strategies, comprehension increases significantly. GR significantly influences literacy instruction by providing teachers with a practicum which incorporates the findings of the NRP report (IRA, 2002). Consequently, as part of a balanced literacy approach, GR is becoming widely researched and supported as a best practice in literacy instruction.

### **The Process of Guided Reading**

At the kindergarten level, students are emergent readers because they have established few independent reading strategies, and they need the teachers' support. Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, and Rodriguez (2010) state that teachers need to develop the skills of organizing small, flexible GR groups around specific areas of reading needs. According to Rog (2003), the group size should be relatively small groups of two to four

students, and the lessons should be approximately 15-20 minutes long. Those emergent readers who do not have a repertoire of high frequency words or an understanding of letter-sound relationship can benefit from a small group setting using early, emergent level texts to focus instruction on their particular needs. At this stage, the teacher uses a more shared reading approach to scaffold the students through the text (Rog, 2003).

The interest and reading ability of a student can assist the teacher when selecting and introducing a text. At this level, GR consists of the teacher observing the students who are reading the text. Every lesson, according to Rog (2003), includes before-reading, during-reading, and after-reading components. The teacher introduces the book and discusses the topic before reading the book. During this introduction, the student is guided to make a personal connection with the topic. The teacher ends the discussion with the “I wonder” statement to set a purpose for reading a book. During the step called the picture walk, the teacher guides the students through the text using the pictures before the students actually read (Lipson & Wixson, 2009). The teacher uses the picture walk to discuss and expose the students to any words and patterns that they are likely to encounter. Rog (2003) suggested the teacher hold the book and not distribute copies to the students until it is time to read independently. The teacher should model tracking each word as it is read, making sure students know where to start reading on the page and how to make a return sweep at the end of the line (Rog, 2003).

During a GR session, while students wait to read independently, the teacher scaffolds reading by demonstrating some prereading strategies they can use. Hauptom (2012) states that scaffolding excellent reading skills and strategies while using an

interesting text could increase perceptions of competence and certainly increase task value. Strategies can include looking for words and images they know and telling their neighbor about their predictions or connections. At this stage, students will be using patterns, context, and pictures to read the text. As the students read, the teacher is circulating among the students, noting strategies, and providing help as needed. Emergent readers should begin to use initial sounds in words. After students have completed the text, the teacher conducts a short lesson that focuses on developing a skill related to the text (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Some mini-lessons can include strategy use, concepts about print, letter-sound relationships, initial and ending sounds, and high frequency words (Rog, 2003). Following the mini-lesson, teachers encourage students to practice reading, emphasizing the use of initial sounds in words and other prereading strategies. After teachers reads the story, they use drama, writing, or art to extend the story (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). GR is intended “to help children become independent, fluent, silent readers. Teachers use the teaching process that scaffolds students’ selection and application of a variety of effective reading strategies” (Fawson & Reutzel, 2000, p. 85). Appropriate instructional levels must be addressed to reach this goal. Instruction should include left-to-right reading, tracking of print, and a small base of sight words.

Iaquinta (2006) supported the benefit of using GR. Researchers focused on students’ early years as the best time for prevention of problems. Research indicates when children begin poorly in reading they have a difficult time catching up (Iaquinta, 2006). Iaquinta (2006) states that GR is among the most successful research-based approaches to keeping children on track for reading. A powerful context for beginning

reading instruction is the GR lessons. According to Schwartz (2005), these lessons are particularly helpful for students with early literacy challenges.

The various steps of GR comprise a balanced literacy program—a program that uses multiples reading and writing strategies (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). By reading aloud, sharing readings, participating in literature circles, engaging in learning center activities, and producing shared writings students have the opportunity to see how reading works and receive support as they read. These processes lead students to read independently. The purpose of GR is successfully to enable children to use and develop strategies they can use “on the run” (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p. 2).

GR serves as a cornerstone to balanced reading programs. Although many recognize that GR is a valuable tool, they are not necessarily skilled at implementing it (Guastello & Lenz, 2005). A national study of 1,500 K-2 educators showed they had several concerns: (a) they are unsure how to conduct GR sessions, (b) they are not clear what students who are not engaged in small group sessions should be doing, (c) they are concerned about how to choose appropriate texts, (d) they are unsure how to form student groups, and e) they are not clear on how to evaluate students GR group participation (Ford & Optiz, 2008). Universally, teachers in this study indicated they need additional PD to effectively implement GR (Ford & Opitz, 2008).

### **Grouping with Guided Reading**

Grouping within the classroom is always a controversial practice that is a continual struggle for teachers (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). According to Fountas and Pinnell (1996) most teachers are confronted with a wide range of levels within the

classroom that make it difficult to teach whole-class lessons or heterogeneous groups, but ability grouping students within the classroom can have an adverse effect on students.

Many researchers argue ability grouping does not enhance performance (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). These researchers argue most students assigned to a group never move to a higher group, the high- and low-grouped students often receive different instruction, and the low-grouped students' self-confidence and self-esteem are impaired.

Additionally, many students benefit from heterogeneous grouping as they learn from each other. Consequently, teachers are challenged with the need for readers to read text at their level and the negative implications of homogenous grouping (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

Research shows that substituting smaller focus groups for heterogeneous groups in some instances may support achievement (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). Thus, Fountas and Pinnell (1996) presented an interesting compromise between heterogeneous grouping and homogenous grouping called dynamic grouping. Dynamic grouping was developed based on three main characteristics of a typical classroom: students will demonstrate a wide range of prior knowledge, experience, skills, and intellectual ability; students will differ in their knowledge and skills; and children will learn at different rates. Dynamic grouping allows teachers to group students effectively for efficient and meaningful teaching.

Dynamic grouping, according to Fountas and Pinnell (1996), is the process of combining flexible ability grouping with a wide range of heterogeneous grouping in the classroom. This process will allow teachers to conduct GR in a small group atmosphere where students are reading at their level. The groups will be flexible because students will move within the groups as abilities change and grow. However, all other literacy groups are

heterogeneous groups (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Dynamic grouping allows teachers to teach readers at their level while avoiding many of the negative implications typical ability-grouping presents.

Although Fountas and Pinnell (1996) provide an appealing approach to teaching GR in small leveled groups while attempting to avoid the negative implications of ability grouping, there are still educators and researchers who completely disagree with any form of ability grouping. Cunningham, Hall, and Defee (1998) are three researchers who believe all literacy should be taught through non-ability-grouped, multi-level instruction. These researchers base their approach on the idea that low-ability grouped students stay in the low-ability groups throughout their educational experience and encounter difficulty meeting grade-level standards. Cunningham and co-researchers assert all literacy teaching including guided reading should be taught in heterogeneous groups. When making GR groups heterogeneous, Cunningham and Hall (2001) suggested modifying GR from leveled groups to a book club. With this arrangement, teachers provide students with three or four books tied together by topic, theme, author, or genre. The teacher introduces each book and then allows students to pick their first, second, and third choice. The teacher separates students into groups keeping in mind students' reading levels but ensuring the groups remain heterogeneous. Most students end up reading close to their level, while believing the groups are separated by student choice. This approach is designed to avoid tracking students and damaging their self-esteem, while maximizing students' heterogeneous interaction (Cunningham et al., 1998).

Although Cunningham et al. (1998) present a practical alternative to ability grouping within GR, a pivotal aspect of GR is students reading at their level. The book club idea may not ensure students are reading at their level. Thus, dynamic grouping remains the most practiced way to incorporate ability grouping within the classroom while avoiding its negative implications.

### **Assessing With Guided Reading**

Assessment, according to William and Leahy (2015), is the bridge between teaching and learning. According to Dorn and Soffos (2001), students' literacy development should be studied along a literacy continuum. A literacy continuum permits educators to analyze literacy behavior as it changes over time, rather than narrowly focusing on specific grade level standards. As children learn, they move from awareness to automaticity or self-regulation. A successful literacy assessment shows how students' literacy skills change over time on a literacy continuum.

Clay (2005) has developed standardized assessments on a literacy continuum that show development over time. Clay's Observation Survey is a group of tasks that provide teachers with a systematic observation method that can be repeated. The tasks are based on Clay's research in New Zealand and supported by 20-plus years of implementation. These observation tasks provide the teacher with information about a young reader's oral language usage, knowledge of how printed language works, ability to read continuous text, knowledge of letters, reading and writing vocabulary, and ability to hear and record sounds in words. Clay's Observation Survey allows teachers to systematically pre-assess students at the beginning of the year or before GR, assess students continuously during

the year or GR approach, and post assess at the end of the year or culmination of the GR approach (Clay, 2005). Thus, teachers have qualitative and quantitative data that show the reader's growth over time.

A commonly used tool, the Observation Survey, is used systematically to evaluate early reading and writing behaviors. Reading Recovery, a nationally based short-term reading intervention program, was designed to reduce the number of extremely low first grade readers and has used Clay's observation survey as a systematic, reliable, and repeatable form of assessment (Reading Recovery of North America, 2008). According to Reading Recovery, the observation survey is a valid and reliable assessment tool supported by national norms to aid in interpreting scores. Reading Recovery cites Denton, Ciancio, and Fletcher (2006) as a source in supporting the validity and reliability of the observation survey. When reading this validity, reliability, and utility test, it is apparent the researchers found limitations to the assessment, noting the floors and ceilings were inadequate, benchmarks needed development, and caution was needed when monitoring progress. Despite these limitations, Denton et al. (2006) concluded "overall, with some limitations, the Observation Survey can be implemented validly to evaluate components of early reading development" (Denton et al., 2006, p. 8). With the validity test supporting it, the observation survey has been used in countless studies as the reading assessment tool providing a systematic, replicable way to assess early readers.

Clay's observation tasks include concepts about print, running records, letter identification, word reading, writing vocabulary, and hearing and recording sounds in words. The observation task, concepts about print, allows teachers to observe what



readers have learned about how printed language works (Clay, 2005). There is ample information to learn about written code and how it works. Eventually, readers need to know all the rules of printed language. This task provides the teacher with an accurate, systematic assessment of the reader's concepts about how printed language works (Clay, 2005). These tasks provide numerical data that can be analyzed and interpreted quantitatively as well as anecdotal data that can be analyzed and interpreted qualitatively.

Ongoing assessment is directly linked to instruction. Gambrell, Malloy, and Mazzoni (2011) wrote, “The classroom teacher must be adept at identifying student needs through ongoing formative assessments and providing appropriate whole-group, small group, and individual instruction” (p. 17). At any given point, the teachers can gather data from informal and formal assessments to provide themselves information about their students’ progress in learning. Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, and William (2004) defined assessment for learning as “any assessment for which its design and practice serve the purpose of promoting students’ learning” (p. 10). During the GR assessment, the student reads continuous text, while the teacher takes a running record for later analysis and reading level determination (Fountas & Pinnell, 2013). GR, an instructional approach, enables teachers to promote students’ learning by offering support and feedback as students are working through the text; therefore, GR can be considered as a component of assessment for learning practices. As a result of on-going assessment, teachers have the ability to select from a wide-variety of instructional strategies and approaches to scaffold the learning to ensure that each student obtains the knowledge necessary to achieve understanding (Davis, 2013).

## **Managing With Guided Reading**

One of the most challenging aspects of GR discussed by educators and researchers is the practical implementation within the classroom. Teachers face challenges as they attempt to engage the other students in class during GR time. In addition, all developers and researchers of GR agree that GR is one part of a balanced literacy program. The literature presented here will address how to implement GR within a balanced literacy program (Dorn & Soffos, 2001; Ford & Opitz, 2002; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Guastello & Lenz, 2005).

GR is one component within a balanced literacy approach. It is the step before independent reading that guides students as they become independent readers. A balanced literacy program needs to include all aspects of literacy: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Dorn and Soffos, 2001; Ford & Opitz, 2002; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Guastello & Lenz, 2005). Balanced literacy programs should present all forms of literacy along the apprenticeship continuum of modeled, shared, guided, and independent work. GR should not serve as students' lone opportunity to interact with text, but as one portion of the literacy instruction. Teachers can implement read-aloud, shared reading, poems, literature circles and interactive writing, among other practices. Teachers can implement GR with literacy corners and or kid stations to incorporate guided practice and independent work (Dorn and Soffos, 2001; Ford & Opitz, 2002; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Guastello & Lenz, 2005).

Phillips (2013) states that GR instruction should include strategy instruction as well as activities to engage the student in the reading. GR focuses on teaching problem

solving strategies and provides opportunities for students to apply those skills in guided lessons. Teaching problem solving strategies, reading strategies, and word recognition is only one part to a balanced literacy approach. Along with the explicit teaching of skills and strategies of reading, problem solving, decoding, and word recognition, students need to be exposed to rich literature and authentic reading and writing. As researchers Pressley, Roehrig, Bogner, Raphael, and Dolezal (2002) noted, “Excellent literacy teachers do it all!” The aforementioned researchers conducted a study analyzing the literacy instruction of 150 primary teachers highly recommended by reading supervisors, administrators, teachers, and parents as excellent literacy teachers. What they found was a common balance within their literacy instruction. Students were exposed to explicit teaching of skills and strategies as well as numerous encounters with authentic reading and writing. Students should have the opportunity to read and discuss rich literature, experience writing authentically, and learn the skills and strategies they need to become good readers (Pressley et al., 2002). One major concern voiced by Short (1999) regarding balance in literacy instruction is the over-reliance on GR within literacy instruction. Short argued although GR is pivotal in teaching readers about language, strategies to attack language, and providing learners with the opportunity to apply such strategies, guided reading should not take the place of literature circles. Short emphasized literature circles provide students with an invaluable opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue about thought-provoking literature. Fountas and Pinnell (1996), Clay (1991a), Dorn and Soffos (2001), and Short (1999) are all in agreement that GR, an integral part of a balanced reading program, should remain one portion within balanced literacy instruction.

The balanced literacy framework includes GR as a means of instruction that 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 GR 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. Dorn and Soffos (2001) suggest although literacy corners successfully engage students during GR time, engagement is not the purpose of literacy corners. Literacy corner activities should give students an opportunity to demonstrate or transfer the information they have gained from teacher-directed activities; they are the final stage of apprenticeship learning. Literacy corners provide students with opportunities to use their skills and experience to resolve comparable problems in different situations. As children participate in independent work, they begin to generalize and internalize their knowledge. Consequently, literacy corners, according to Dorn and Soffos (2001), should be designed to require students to apply what they already know. Many researchers support literacy corners as both a successful tool to instill independent work and a practical way to engage students during GR; many educators are still challenged and frustrated with the implementation process of literacy corners during GR.

Guastello and Lenz (2005) provided some appealing suggestions on how to successfully implement this process in their model of GR kid-stations. First, they suggest the literacy centers or literacy corners should be transformed into kid-stations. Kid-stations are portable centers allowing the teacher to move the centers for successful implementation. Second, they suggest lengthening the rotation time from 15-20 minutes

to 30-35 minutes only meeting with each GR group once a week with a maximum of two meetings per week. The purpose of this arrangement would be to allow the teacher time at the end of the rotation to observe the kid-stations and provide assistance to struggling students, while the GR group was responding to the story independently (Guastello and Lenz, 2005). Next, Guastello and Lenz recommend taking five to seven weeks to demonstrate and incorporate various activities into the kid-stations. First, the teacher models the activities. Next, the whole class works on similar activities. Then, the activity is incorporated into a kid-station. Finally, they recommend teachers conduct a fishbowl during GR during which one group participates while all other students take notes. The teacher and students will discuss what is needed for the GR sessions to be successfully completed. This process provides students with ownership of the process, which may subsequently increase accountability and good behavior during kid-stations. Guastello and Lenz (2005) provide teachers with a practical way to implement GR using literacy corners.

There is one significant discrepancy between Guastello and Lenz's kid-station model and Clay's GR. GR is designed to be implemented at least three times a week and up to five times a week. Guastello and Lenz's kid-stations model only allows for one or two sessions a week. Consequently, it is left up to the teacher to decide how to juggle the practical implementation of GR with the need to follow the GR structure highly supported by research.

### **Implications**

The literature review revealed a lack of understanding of the thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, and challenges that kindergarten teacher's face when implementing GR. The emphasis of the current body of research focuses on the process, grouping, assessment and management of GR but gave little regard to kindergarten teacher perceptions on how to implement GR.

Decreasing the deficits in early literacy is dependent upon examining the kindergarten teacher's beliefs and current practices. The purpose of this project study will be to explore the kindergarten teachers' perceptions of how they are implementing GR and what challenges they face in implementing the program. The information gathered might determine if the kindergarten teachers are in need of special training to assist them in understanding and implementing GR.

### **Summary**

According to the literature, GR can make a significant difference in student reading success. The National Institute for Literacy (NIL) (Ambruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001) stated the most effective teaching practice for students learning to read is explicit instruction. The components of explicit instruction include direct explanation, modeling, guided practice, and application. All these components take place during a GR session. Using a qualitative research approach will allow data to be collected through interviews and GR lesson plans from teachers regarding what they understand about GR. When I collect answers to the research questions, the results may lead to the designing of a project such as a PD to assist teachers in their understanding and implementation of GR.

Section 2 will contain the methodology for the study. This section will include information on the research design and approach, the participants involved in the study, and a description and justification of how the data will be collected and analyzed. Section 3 will include a description and discussion of the project study based on answers collected from the participants in the study and a review of the literature related to the research topic. Section 4 will include the final reflections and conclusions of the project study.

## Section 2: Methodology

### **Research Design and Approach**

I used a qualitative case study to explore kindergarten teachers' understanding, implementation, and challenges about GR. A case study allowed me to investigate deeply into the feelings and beliefs of the research participants (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Using a case study allowed me to gain a deep understanding of GR from each participant's point of view. Lodico et al., stated that a case study is appropriate when a limited number of participants are available and or a time constraint exists. I had to conclude my research during the school year, and I had a limited number of participants.

Ethnographic studies, according to Rubin and Rubin (2005), describe norms, traditions, and values shared by a group of people who portray aspects of their identity. The kindergarten teachers classify as a cultural group and share the same experiences about GR and its implementation. Ethnography research requires extended lengths of time to collect data (Creswell, 2012). Because it requires a large time commitment by the participants and researcher, the use of ethnography was not appropriate (Lodico et al., 2010). A phenomenological study is intended to create understanding a common event from the participants' points of view (Creswell, 2012). A phenomenological study was not appropriate for this research study because each participant's experience with GR takes place within a separate classroom and is therefore not a common, shared experience (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

The grounded theory and narrative research designs were not considered for the following two reasons: (a) I wanted to conduct a study that involved using purposeful



sampling and interviews not multiple stages of data collection and the theoretical sampling of different groups needed for a grounded theory study; (b) According to Creswell (2009), a narrative research involves studying the lives of individual and asking individuals to provide stories about their lives. The narrative combines the views from the participant's life with those of the researcher's life in a collaborative narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Therefore, grounded theory and narrative research designs were not necessary to study my research problem. In grounded theory, according to Creswell (2012), a researcher seeks to generalize findings to explain the experiences of a group. Grounded theory, like ethnography, requires a time commitment outside the scope of this research.

According to Yin (2003), case study is the ideal approach when the following are true: (a) the study is intended to answer *how* and *why* questions; (b) participants' behavior cannot be manipulated; (c) context is important to the phenomenon being studied; or (d) the phenomenon and context appear to be inextricable. Creswell (2008) suggested researchers consider the research problem, audience, and the researcher's experiences when choosing a research approach. The basis of the research approach should take into account the researcher's "worldview, personality, and skill" (Merriam, 2009, p. 1). After taking into account the research problem, intended audience, and my beliefs about how to create knowledge and meaning, I selected a case study approach for this study.

Qualitative research, according to Creswell (2009), is used to explore and understand the meaning of individuals or groups ascribed to social problems. A case study worked best

for my project study about kindergarten teachers' perceptions and experiences on the implementation of GR.

Data was collected through face-to-face interviews and document analysis. A case study, similar to ethnography and grounded theory, uses face-to-face interviews and document analysis to develop an understanding of the thoughts and experiences of each participant, but also considers how these thoughts and experiences work to create the phenomenon under study.

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to explore the kindergarten teachers' perceptions of GR, its implementation, and identify staff development needs related to GR. I gathered information through teacher interviews and document analysis of teacher lesson plans. I reported these types of data in words that best fit the qualitative design (Creswell, 2003).

### **Procedures to Gain Access to Participants**

Kindergarten teachers who implement GR in their classrooms were offered the opportunity to participate in this study. Creswell (2012) stated that qualitative studies can contain a limited number of participants, which can range between two and 30 individuals. I invited six kindergarten teachers to attend a meeting at which I presented the purpose of my research, outlined the expectations of each participant, and provided the informed consent form. All six teachers attended the meeting and gave their consent to participate in this research study. Each of the participants had various years of experience in kindergarten to ensure that different perspectives on GR were included in the study.

Before receiving Walden University's IRB approval, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the district's superintendent. This superintendent was responsible for the approval of any request to conduct research within the district. To gain permission, I sent an e-mail to the superintendent. The e-mail included (a) the college the researcher is attending, (b) the title of the study, (c) a sentence stating a request for permission to conduct research in the district, (d) the participants invited to participate in the study, (e) the purpose of the study, and (e) the type of data collected. A Letter to Conduct Research in the District (Appendix B) was sent to the superintendent for her signature. A Letter to Conduct Research on the Campus (Appendix C) was sent to the principal for his permission. He gave me permission to conduct research on the campus (Appendix D).

Once I obtained permission from the district's superintendent and Walden University's IRB (11-25-14-0126333), I sent a Letter of Invitation to the participants to Participate in a Research Study (Appendix E) to all six kindergarten teachers. Each kindergarten teacher was sent an e-mail that included (a) the time, (b) the date, and (c) the location of where to meet, and (d) a brief explanation of the study. I used a purposeful sampling of teachers with early childhood certification from the selected school site.

I conducted a meeting with the six kindergarten teachers after school. The meeting included (a) the purpose of my study, (b) the college the researcher is attending, (c) an explanation of what was expected of them, (d) an explanation of the consent form, and (e) the type of data to be collected. I provided a time for questions and answers. At the conclusion of the meeting, I distributed the consent forms and discussed the voluntary

nature of the study, the risk and benefits of being in this study, compensation, confidentiality, and my contact information. The participants were asked to sign the consent form at their convenience and then return it to me.

After I had collected the consent forms, I was able to establish interview times with the participants. I reviewed the consent form (Appendix F) at the beginning of each interview. The consent form provided confirmation on the amount of time required for the study, reinforced that their participation was voluntary and that the teacher could stop participation at any time. At each interview, I reminded the research participants that their responses were confidential and that each participant would be assigned a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality. Additionally, I informed them that all interviews were confidential. I also informed them that a copy of the interview, document analysis, and member checking data would be kept in a secure file on my computer. I also told them that their consent forms would be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home. I did not have any participants drop out of the study; the data analysis did not contain any missing or discrepant cases.

According to Lodico et al. (2010) there was an ethical responsibility to ensure that the participants would not face physical or emotional harm by participating in this study. The participants in this research study did not endure harm beyond what they would experience in a typical school day. Some participants may have experienced stress at agreeing to participate in this study because it would give them additional responsibility on the day of the interview that could have led to fatigue. The added responsibility of member checking may have added additional stress to the participants.

The participants were reminded that I would make no judgments on their implementation process of GR nor would I share their raw data with other members of the district. The consent form did note the risks and benefits of being in a study and the nature of the study so that participants could make an informed decision if they would choose to participate in the study. Efforts to provide confidentiality included using a pseudonym, storing all files on a password-protected computer, and keeping all records in a secure location.

### **Data Collection**

The procedures for the data collection were chosen to fulfill the research design and answer the research questions. I based the research design and questions on theories that are explained in the literature review section of this study. Janesick (2004) stated, “Frames influence the questions we ask, the design of the study, the implementation of the study, and the way we interpret data” (p. 8). I used the interview data collection technique to garner teachers’ perceptions of their understanding, implementation, and challenges of GR. I gathered information about how teachers assess, group, plan, document, and organize instruction through document analysis of lesson plans. I used these methods to enlighten myself on teacher perceptions of early literacy skills, the importance of emergent literacy skills, assessment, grouping, and management of GR within a balanced literacy program. I kept myself focused on ensuring the data I collected aligned to the research purpose and questions.

Other qualitative traditions of data collection, such as focus groups, would not have proven as effective as interviews and document analysis for a variety of reasons.

Specifically, my desire was to gather participants' perceptions directly. Interviews provided this opportunity. In a focus group setting, often participants do not share as much as they would in a more intimate setting such as an interview. According to Hatch (2002) and Patton (2001), frequently important matters are hidden when researchers only conduct observations; these features of importance, such as teaching philosophy and unique reasons behind scheduling, may be forgotten by participants because they take items for granted. By conducting interviews, in addition to content analysis of the teacher lesson plans, I had the opportunity to view each participant's experience and understanding of GR from multiple perspectives.

### **Interviews**

I conducted semi-structured interviews with six teachers. All interviews were conducted in the privacy of the librarian's office during non-instructional hours. All the interviews were tape-recorded and lasted approximately 45 minutes. All the participants gave me permission to audiotape the interviews.

To provide structure to the interview process as well as to record information, such as time and the date of the interview I used an interview protocol (Creswell, 2012). Questions for the interview protocol were developed to address the following research questions: (a) what do you understand about the present instructional approaches to GR? (b) How do you implement GR in your classroom?, and (c) What challenges do you face when implementing GR? I provided each participant with a copy of the Interview Guide for Teachers (Appendix G) so that they could follow along as I asked the questions. I kept a log of all the interview dates and times in my notebook. An analysis of the

interviews allowed me to learn more about the teachers' understanding, implementation, and challenges of GR.

### **Documents**

Document analysis provided the opportunity to study documents used by teachers to plan instruction. Using the consent form (see Appendix F), I requested teacher permission to review lesson plans. I reviewed the GR lesson plans to learn more about how the kindergarten teachers provided reading instruction during guided reading. Hatch (2002) found that documents are powerful indicators of the value systems operating within institutions (p.117). According to Hatch, data from documents are gathered without the direct involvement of research participants; they are unobtrusive because their collection does not interfere with the ongoing events of everyday life.

A document analysis form similar to Creswell's (2007) protocol forms was used to note elements from the research questions in teacher lesson plans (see Appendix H ). The document analysis checklist (Appendix H ) included (a) state standards to be taught, (b) lesson content, (c) teaching strategies, (d) resources, (e) before-reading activities, (f) during- reading activities, (g) after-reading activities, and (h) general note taking. The GR process (before-, during-, and after-reading activities) was a point of focus on lesson plans as it was directly related to the research questions. Analysis of lesson plans allowed me to learn more about the teacher planning and documenting process for kindergarten readers.

My role as the researcher, throughout the data collection process, was to record the perceptions of the participants and to ask probing questions that added to my understanding about the participants' beliefs, perceptions, and challenges pertaining to GR. My personal beliefs, perceptions, and challenges were not interjected into the interviews or document analysis. In guarding against inserting my opinions, I assumed a neutral role during data collection. I am well known in the district and campus in my role as a bilingual teacher with more than 30 years of experience. As I did not serve in a supervisory role to participants, the established relationships did not hinder data collection or bias the collection of data. Data analysis began upon completion of the first interview.

### **Data Analysis**

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) described case study research as a recursive method of investigation that elicits constant researcher interaction with collected data. They stated data analysis in a qualitative case study is an inductive process of concurrently summarizing and interpreting the information collected throughout the research process. I used a case study analysis of raw data in my field log that I collected from teacher interviews and document reviews to address this study's research questions. Additionally, the teacher participants' strengths and weaknesses were identified and conferred based on the information gathered from the interviews and lesson plans. Analysis of lesson plans will allow me to learn more about each teacher's assessment, grouping, planning, and documenting of the process for guided reading and help me



identify areas where they appear to need more training and support. Table 3 shows how data collection techniques were aligned to data analysis techniques.

Table 3

*Data Collection Aligned to Data Analysis*

Analysis	Codes	Descriptions	Management
Interview	X	X	X
Document	X		X

### **Interview Transcript Analysis**

I transcribed each interview into a Word document. To ensure accuracy, I provided each participant with a copy of a Word document reflecting the findings for each respective participant's interview. Each participant had the opportunity to review and comment on the findings. All data collected were kept in a separate database. I began the analysis by reading each transcript to look for and highlight key words and phrases. I placed highlighted words in a separate Word document. I moved words around and reorganized them until themes emerged. Emerging themes were organized, sorted, and put into separate documents. I cut and pasted in passages that were tied to each theme into the respective document. It was my plan to use themes not parallel to other findings to identify discrepant cases. Including discrepant cases, according to Glesne (2011), increased the trustworthiness of the data and reduced any reporting bias. In this study, there were no discrepant cases.

The themes for each interview were derived as I read through each transcript. I used the same color to highlight any similar beliefs, thoughts, or ideas I came across. I created a Word document labeled *analysis of data* and items of the same color were added to this document. I identified themes for each research question through this process. After completing my interview and document analysis, member checking occurred by giving the participants the opportunity to review the findings and comment on the findings of their individual interviews. Adjustments to the findings were made to reflect any comments made by the participants.

### **Document Analysis**

To enhance the accuracy of my data, I conducted a document review of the teacher's lesson plans. Document analysis provided an opportunity to study documents such as a teacher's lesson plans to plan GR instruction. I used the consent form (see Appendix F), to request teacher permission to review teacher lesson plans. I reviewed the lesson plans to learn more about how the kindergarten teachers implement GR and to identify aspects of GR that they are not implementing or appear to be implementing incorrectly. Hatch (2002) "found that documents are powerful indicators of the value systems operating within institutions" (p.117). I gathered data from documents without the direct involvement of research participants; this process is considered unobtrusive (Hatch, 2002).

I analyzed lesson plan documents using the Document Analysis Lesson Plan Form (DALP) (Appendix H). I used the components of the DALP, state standards, lesson

content, teacher strategies, resources, and before/during/after reading activities, as themes to guide my analysis of each lesson plan. Themes were color coded for organization. I assigned the following colors to each component of the DALP. State standards were coded red, lesson content was coded lime green, teacher strategies were coded pink, resources were colored purple, before reading activities were color coded light blue, during reading activities were color coded gray, and after reading activities were color-coded red.

I quickly learned that the lesson plans did not follow the DALP format. Participants A, C, E and F turned in GR lesson plans. Participant B did not turn in a GR lesson plan because she was never instructed to write a GR lesson plan for each of her reading groups. Participant D stated that she did not use lesson plans; instead she placed all books and other materials in a basket and proceeded with her GR lesson.

The lesson plans provided by Participants A, C, E, and F did not reflect the state standard; the content; the objectives; resources; or the before-, during-, and after-reading activities. This may be one of the issues that affect the teachers' implementation of the GR approach. For example, by not recording the before-, during-, and after-reading activities, they may not be implementing the GR components appropriately. This may be a reason they are having difficulty implementing the GR approach.

Data were analyzed through typological analysis. The early themes were as follows: experiences with GR, implementation of GR, and challenges. These themes were derived from the research questions to give me a basis from which to start the coding process for the document analysis. This list helped to guide my study and elicit data that

matched my research questions and study purpose. The interviews and document analysis findings are organized in the following sections to show the themes, tables, and direct quotes from data collection. The overall themes that were present and color coded in the data collected were experiences with GR, the decision to implement GR, beliefs about GR, and challenges when implementing GR. These themes aligned closely with the tentative codes that were developed early in the study. I looked at the transcriptions and each section of data and highlighted based on the predetermined codes so that they could correspond to a specifically highlighted color. Data that related to experiences with GR were color coded yellow. Data that related to the decision to implement GR were color coded lime green. Data that related to beliefs were color coded pink. Data that related to challenges were color coded blue. Other noted items were color coded to fit into the general themes above. These were common items taken from the lesson plans the participants submitted. These coded items were as follows: GR process, teaching point/strategies, title of book, GR level, high-frequency words, word work, vocabulary, comprehension, and types of assessment. The overall findings of the study show some variation, however, the four main color coded themes provided above were most predominant. A sample of a coded lesson plan is provided in Appendix J. Several sections of this lesson plan were coded with multiple colors because they depicted the participant's experiences, implementation, beliefs, and challenges with GR. The sample lesson plan did not show the complete use of the before-, during-, and after-reading activities. In some instances, the participant did attempt to use before- and after-reading activities but did not include during-reading activities.

### **Data Analysis Results**

The most important factor in literacy acquisition, indicated by research, is the proper development of early literacy skills (Clay, 2000). The key for children to develop these skills and to be successful independent readers is instruction provided by skilled educators (Iaquinta, 2006). The problem is the teachers at the study site were having difficulty implementing the GR approach that was adopted to address the issue of poor literacy skills among kindergarten students.

Guided reading mirrors Vygotsky's (1978) theory in that it allows teachers to instruct within the students' ZPD and according to students' specific needs. In this zone, teachers create learning experiences for the learners by carefully selecting and introducing a text, supporting and interacting with the learners during reading instruction, and teaching with clarity after reading the text (Fountas, & Pinnell, 2001). Fountas and Pinnell (2001) state that teachers guide students to reflect and understand the text and use it as a way to learn more about reading.

The purpose of this case study was to investigate the experiences and challenges of kindergarten teachers who implemented GR and to answer the research questions. Those experiences and challenges were about constructing an effective ZPD for guided reading, and the research questions provided a way to examine that instructional process of construction.

1. What do kindergarten teachers understand about the present instructional approaches to GR?
2. How do kindergarten teachers implement GR in their classrooms?

3. What do kindergarten teachers, who implement GR, see as their biggest challenge?

Based on the data, I identified four overarching themes from the interviews. These included: (a) experiences, (b) decision making, (c) beliefs, and (d) challenges. The themes reflect how guided reading instruction was shaped by constructivist thinking. A constructive approach uses the implementation of multiple instructional strategies that develop understanding of the content or skills taught (Danielson, 2007; Danielson, 2013). Antonacci (2000) identified three principles from Vygotsky's theory that support guided reading in primary classrooms: (a) "Learning is social and occurs in social contexts;(b) Learning is mediated by language; and (c) Learning or the development of concepts and higher mental functioning takes place within the student's ZPD" (p. 23). If teachers implement GR appropriately, they will be providing students the opportunity to learn socially, to learn through conversation, and to scaffold instruction during the time the student is in his or her ZPD.

### **Experiences with GR**

**Research Question 1: What do kindergarten teachers understand about the present instructional approaches to GR?** Interview Questions number 1, 5, 8, and 10 addressed research question number 1. The responses of each participant were important because they gave me a deeper understanding of the participants' experience with GR. Based on the data, five sub-themes that emerged from the participants' responses included: (a) when they use GR, (b) how they feel about GR, (c) success with GR, (d)

why they used GR and, (e) when they started using GR. Those experiences were about the teachers understanding of the instructional approaches for GR, and the framework provided a way to situate teacher experiences within a constructivist approach to learning and instruction. The context of the specific responses for each theme is discussed below and summarized in Table 4.

**When they use GR.** The master schedule has a GR time built in for each grade level from kindergarten through fifth grade. Based on the data, all participants stated that they implemented their version of GR on a daily basis. This response was about when the teachers used GR. The concern was whether or not they were implementing GR effectively and without collaboration each teacher was left on their own to implement GR to the best of their knowledge. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**How they felt about GR.** Teachers should feel confident in their understanding of GR, its components and how to implement GR. Based on the data, even though the teachers expressed different understandings about GR, they did express positive feelings about GR. This response was about how the teachers felt about GR. Participant A and B specifically stated that GR helped students learn to read. Participant C stated that it was a great way to provide differentiated reading instruction. Participant D stated that she liked GR but did not elaborate on why she liked it. Participant E stated it was helpful but did not elaborate on how it was helpful. Participant F stated that she had been doing a good job of implementing but did not elaborate on any specific things that she was doing.

Effective literacy differentiation for all students is dependent on the teachers' ability to diagnose student variance, comprehend content, analyze cognitive processes, strategically design grouping arrangements, appropriately select materials, and manage student behavior (Davis, 2013). Some of the teachers lack of understanding about GR could be the reason they were unable to verbally explain and or elaborate on how GR was helpful to the students. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Success with GR.** Deficits in early literacy skills can have an effect on kindergarten students as they begin to learn essential literacy skills that will affect them academically and personally throughout their lives (Gomez, 2009). The children need instruction provided to them by skilled educators in order for them to develop these early literacy skills and to become successful independent readers. The district adopted the GR approach to improve early literacy skills and reading. Based on the data, most of the participants expressed they were having success with GR. Participants A and C stated specifically that their students were successful. Participant B seemed hesitant but stated that she hopes her students are learning. Participant D defined success more specifically, indicating that it constituted students achieving at their pace. Participant E stated that her students were making progress but did not elaborate or give an example of student progress. Although Participant F did state that her students were successful, she did not elaborate on those gains. This response was about their success with GR.



Teachers must be informed about the pieces of GR, so that the students can become independent readers who apply the reading strategies learned on their own. GR allows students to have the opportunity to practice fluent reading and to comprehend the texts that they are reading (DeVos, 2011). In explicit approaches, teachers need to plan lessons based on clear objectives that progress purposefully from less challenging to more challenging skills and content (Denton, Fletcher, Taylor, Barth, & Vaughn, 2014). The participant's lack of understanding about GR and its components might be one of the reasons they are unable to write effective GR lesson plans that meet the needs of the students. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Why they use GR.** The school district requires all teachers, from kindergarten to fifth grade, to use GR on a daily basis. The results of the data indicated that most the participants were implementing their version of GR daily because it was part of the master schedule and it was required. This response was about why they use GR. Participant A stated that she was required to do GR daily. Participant B stated that she had to do GR every day. Participant C stated that when she moved to kindergarten from teaching at another grade level other teachers were using GR, so she did, too. Participants D and E stated they use GR because it is very beneficial to the students. Participant F stated that she just got thrown into using GR.

Teacher's beliefs in their capabilities influence their behavior and the decisions they make to deliver instructional strategies, engage students, and manage their

classrooms (Yanez, 2015). Although the district requires the use of GR daily, the teachers also need to buy into the importance of this research-based approach. Once the teachers understand GR and how it works they will be able to implement it more effectively. As a result, students will be more successful in the area of reading. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**When they started using GR.** The key for children to develop these early literacy skills and to be successful independent readers is instruction provided by skilled educators (Iaquinta, 2006). The problem is the teachers at the school may not be adequately implementing the GR approach that was adopted to address the issue of poor literacy skills among kindergarten students. Based on the data, Participants D, E, and F indicated that they began using GR when they were teaching second grade. Participant A stated that she began using GR 3 years ago when she moved from pre-kindergarten to kindergarten. Participant B stated that this was her first year teaching, she did not have training in GR and was not sure if she was implementing it appropriately. Participant C stated that she began using GR when she taught third grade. Overall, these responses were about when they started using GR.

Table 4

*Teachers Experiences with Guided Reading*

Participant	When they use GR	How they feel about GR	Success with GR	Why they use GR	When they started using GR
A	Well I do GR every day in my classroom.	GR is a good way to help students learn to read.	My students have been successful.	We were required to do GR daily.	3 years ago
B	GR every day in my kindergarten class.	It helps kids to read.	I hope my kids learned.	I have to do GR every day.	My first year.
C	I do GR daily in the classroom.	Great way to provide differentiated reading instruction.	They are successful.	When I moved to Kindergarten they were using it.	When I was teaching third grade.
D	I do GR with my kids every day.	I really like GR.	Successful at their own pace.	It is very beneficial to the kids.	When I was teaching first grade.
E	GR in my class is done daily.	It's been helpful.	They are making progress.	Benefits the kids.	I did GR at second grade.
F	In my classroom, GR is done daily.	I've been doing GR pretty good.	I see great gains.	I just kind of got thrown into it.	When I was in second grade.

Reading is a complex aspect of instruction for many educators. Because of this fact, many educators are easily overwhelmed by the wide variety of student needs, which should be addressed. According to Fawson and Reutzel (2000) studies that have already been conducted in the area of GR indicated educators needed to first understand what GR

instruction was and how it looked in a classroom before they could effectively implement such a program. Because teaching and supporting GR uses a different approach than traditional reading programs, it is important to have teaching staff that is properly trained (Fountas & Pinnell, 2007). Based on the data, most of the teachers use GR because it is required by the district but are not certain whether they are implementing it effectively. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

### **Decision to Implement GR**

**Research Question 2: How do kindergarten teachers implement GR in their classrooms? Interview questions number 2, 3, and 7 addressed research question 2.**

The teachers' decision to implement GR is important to the success or lack of success of the GR approach. Based on the data, there were four reasons the teachers decided to implement GR into their instructional practices. They included (a) importance to the teacher, (b) importance to the student, (c) increased diversity, and (d) school requirement. Those experiences were about the teacher's decisions to implement GR and the framework provided a way to understand teacher decision making from a constructivist learning perspective. The context of the specific responses for each theme is discussed below and summarized in Table 5.

**Importance to the teacher.** How the teachers view the program to be implemented, plays a vital role in its implementation. The success or lack of success of

the GR approach depends on how important the program is to the teachers. Based on the data, the teachers felt that GR was important because it helped meet student needs, it was part of their daily schedule, and because they needed to prepare the students entering kindergarten with deficits in early literacy skills for learning how to read. This response was about the importance of GR to the teacher. Participant A stated GR was the approach she used for teaching reading. Participant B stated that when she learned more about GR, then she would understand how to use it to help all her students. Participant C stated that GR was important to her because it provided individualized instruction in reading. Participant D stated that her day was incomplete if she had not given her students their time to work on their skills and practice reading. Participant E stated that GR allowed her to work with her students at their different reading levels. Participant F stated that GR groups are based on the level and skills of each student, and that was important to her.

A teacher's prior beliefs and knowledge have a significant impact on his or her own knowledge use and control. A teacher uses his or her knowledge to assess students' reading and make real time adjustments to instruction during GR. The participants lack an understanding of GR and its components. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Importance to the student.** It is important that all students feel that their classroom is a warm and welcoming place to learn. Students learn best if they feel they are a part of a community in which all members take responsibility for their own learning and also for one another's learning. Based on the data, all participants reported that GR

kept the students interested and engaged in reading. This response was about the importance of GR to the student. All participants indicated that GR allowed the students to work in small groups, be partners in learning, and be risk takers. Most agreed that GR also helped build student's confidence. Participant A stated that GR allows the students to work with partners in a small group. Participant B stated that the students like to come to her table and work together. Participant C stated that GR made the students feel successful because they can read at their level. Participant D stated that GR allowed the students to work on a book that was of interest to them. Participant E stated that the students like to read and share what they know. Participant F stated that GR allows all children to participate and be successful at their pace or level.

GR is a beneficial instructional approach that provides students with differentiated, tailored instruction. Not only is GR crucial in improving the reading skills and strategies of students, it can provide students with successful reading experiences. If the teachers are not providing the appropriate reading instruction at the child's reading level how do they know if the students is successful or not. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Increased diversity.** Classrooms are full of a wonderful diversity of children; differentiated instruction is needed to reach all of them. Many teachers, according to Fountas and Pinnell (2012), have embraced small-group teaching as a way of effectively teaching the broad range of learners in their classroom. Almost every aspect of the teaching and learning process is culturally influenced, such as attitudes about what is

important to learn and decisions about how learning is best accomplished and assessed. While student diversity provides a rich educational resource, it also adds to the complexity of teaching in a standards-based context.

Based on the data, most of the participants agreed that they decided to implement GR not only because it was required but as a part of their daily schedule due to the increased diversity in the district. This response was about the increased diversity of children in the classroom. Some of the participants agreed that all students do not learn in the same way and that implementing GR allowed them to differentiate reading instruction to meet the needs of all students in their classes. Participant E stated that she implemented GR because students' needs have changed. Participants A and B implement GR to address the different skills of each reading group to meet the needs of all the students. Participant C and D stated that GR helped them differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the different reading levels. Participant F stated that she implemented GR to close the achievement gap in reading and to meet the students' early literacy needs.

Inherent in the concept of GR is the idea that students learn best when they are provided strong instructional support to extend themselves by reading texts that are on the edge of their learning (ZPD), not too easy but not too hard (Vygotsky, 1978). If the teachers are not effectively implementing the GR components then the students are not receiving differentiated instruction in reading. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**School requirement.** The critical time for children’s development and learning is between the years from birth through age 5. The NELP (2009) states that the development of early literacy skills is important in the area of literacy. Providing young children with significant early literacy skills, according to NELP (2009), can offer a path to improved performance. Early learning experiences are linked with academic achievement, reduction in grade retention, increase in graduation rates, and enhanced productivity in adult life (Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006).

Based on the data, although GR is a district requirement, four out of the six participants agreed that GR was an integral part of teaching and was important as the course of study. This response was about the school requirement for the use of GR. However, some of the participants decided to implement GR because it increased the enjoyment of teaching reading. All participants agreed that GR helped to meet the reading needs of all students, but it was especially useful in addressing the range of student skills and reading levels. For example, one teacher stated, “The GR approach is a powerful way to support the development of reading strategies and a way to make reading fun for students.” Although some participants implemented GR to meet the needs of the students in their classroom, many implemented GR because it was a school or district requirement. Participants B and F stated that GR was part of their daily schedule. Participants A, C, D, and E stated that GR was required by the district. Table 5 provides a summary of why teachers decided to implement GR.

Table 5



*Why Teachers Decided to Implement Guided Reading*

Participant	Importance to the teacher	Importance to the student	Increased diversity	School requirement
A	The approach I use for teaching reading.	Allows them to work with partners in a small group.	I address a different skill daily to meet the needs of the students.	Required by the district.
B	If I learn more about GR then I can understand how to help all my kids.	Kids like to come to my table and work together.	I divided them into groups depending on the skill they mastered.	Part of our daily schedule.
C	To provide individualized instruction in reading.	It makes them feel successful because they can read at their level.	Helps me differentiate my instruction in reading for the different reading levels.	Required by the district.
D	The day is incomplete if I haven't given my students their time to work on their skills and practice reading.	To work on a book that is of interest to the student.	Meet the needs of all my readers who are at different levels.	The district wants us to do GR.
E	Able to work with my students at their different reading levels.	The kids like to read and share what they know.	Student's needs have changed.	The district decided we should use GR.
F	GR groups are based on the levels and skills of each student.	Allows every child to participate and be successful at their own pace or level.	To close the achievement gap in reading we need to meet the student's early literacy needs.	Part of our daily schedule.

**Beliefs about GR**

**Research Question 3: What do kindergarten teachers, who implement GR, see as their biggest challenge?** Interview questions 4, 6, and 9 addressed this research question. It is important to understand the participants' beliefs about GR and what challenges the participants face when implementing GR because this may have an effect on the success of their GR approach.

Based on the data, six sub-themes arose regarding the participant's beliefs about GR. These included: (a) time and effort, (b) success, (c) accountability, (d) achievement, (e) student efficacy, and (F) why GR. Those experiences were about the beliefs the teachers had about GR and the framework provided a lens to understand these beliefs that teachers had from Vygotsky's constructivist learning perspective. The context of the specific responses for each theme is discussed below and summarized in Table 6.

**Time and effort.** Good lesson planning is essential to the process of teaching and learning. A teacher who is prepared is well on his/her way to a successful instructional experience. The development of interesting lessons takes a great deal of time and effort. As a dedicated teacher you must be committed to spending the necessary time in this endeavor. Based on the data, all the participants believed that GR required a considerable amount of time and effort. This response was about the time and effort the teachers spent on their lesson plans. Participants A, B, C, and E stated that it takes some time to plan for each group. Participant D stated that the biggest thing was the time factor. Participant F stated that preparation is time-consuming. All the participants felt that GR was worthwhile because the students were more invested in learning how to read. The problem is that the participants may not be implementing GR effectively to meet the

needs of all their students. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively to meet the needs of the students in their classrooms.

**Achievement.** During GR students read texts, chosen to match their instructional level, out loud (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Teachers who provide reading support through effective strategies help student's process increasingly difficult levels of text. According to Schwartz (2005), by focusing instruction at children's own instructional level, regardless of how limited the reading skill is, GR can be an effective approach.

Based on the data, most of the participants believed that incorporating GR increased student achievement in the area of reading. This response was about student achievement. Participant A indicated that her students had been successful. Participants B, C, E, and F indicated that they had seen some progress, some growth, and great gains in student achievement. Participant D stated that she saw the students more focused and engaged with the books. Participants indicated they saw success when implementing GR because students' attitudes towards reading and their performance increased.

Exposure to a different text is a critical component of learning to read (Allington, 2013). It is important for the teachers to scaffold their reading instruction. Scaffolding instruction, according to Boyer (2014), helps teachers differentiate instruction to meet individual student's needs and learning pace, strengthening student skills and proficiency with the reading process. Based on the data, each participant is implementing their version of GR. As a result, the students may or may not be advancing in their reading.

This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Accountability.** Accountability is about helping others to reach their goals through purposeful, sustainable action. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark (FPB) and running records are two types of assessments that can be used to identify the reading level of each student. According to Antonacci (2000) GR should also be dynamic, placing children in groups, according to his or her specific literacy skills needs and his or her needs change at different rates. Thus, continual observations and informal assessment practices of children's literacy strategies by the teacher are a critical element embedded in GR instruction.

Based on the data, Participants A, C, D, E, and F all stated that they use the FPB and running records to identify the reading level of each student in the class. Participant B stated she only used the FPB and that this was her first year to administer it. This response was about accountability. Assessment, according to William (2014), is the bridge between teaching and learning. Assessments provide much more than just feedback to the teacher on how the students is progressing, they provide feedback to the teacher on the effectiveness of his or her own instruction. The lack of understanding about the importance of assessment maybe a reason some of the teachers are not grouping students according to their reading level. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of assessment and it importance in identifying the students reading needs.

**Success.** Grave's (2004) identified two important points that relate to the teaching of reading from a constructivist perspective. First point is making meaning. This refers to the active role of the reader in interpreting and comprehending the text. The second point involves the subjective nature of the meaning, which is constructed from the reader's processing of text. As a result, the learner's construction of their knowledge should not be separated from the social context in which the learning takes place. The social and constructive nature of learning is part of GR.

Based on the data, most of the participants also indicated that GR empowered the students to take risks and apply their reading strategies to new text during small group instruction. This response was about student success. It allowed them to be successful. Participant A stated that GR allowed the students to be successful at their level. Participant B stated that the students show her what they can do. Participant C stated that she used FPB and running records to documents student success in reading. Participant D stated she used assessments, FPB, running records, and anecdotal records. Participant E stated that she administered the FPB and running records to move students from one reading level to the next. Participant F stated she took notes, administered the FPB, and used a recording data sheet. The data from the assessment are used to group students according to the instructional reading level. If teachers lack the understanding of how to interpret and use the data to form their reading groups they may not have the students reading at their instructional level. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of how to administer, interpret, and use data from assessments to form small groups for reading instruction.

**Why use GR?** The diversity in classrooms today require that teachers differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of their students. GR is one research-based strategy that can differentiate reading instruction to meet the needs of the students. Based on the data, most of the participants stated that they use GR to meet the reading needs of their students. This response was about why the teachers used GR. Based on the data, most of the participants stated that they use GR to meet the reading needs of their students. Participants A, D, and E stated that GR allowed them to meet the reading needs of their students. Participant C stated that GR was a great way to provide differentiated reading instruction. Participant B stated that she used GR to teach students the skills they need to learn to read on their own. Participant F stated that GR allows all children to participate and be successful at their pace or level. It is important to understand the GR process to implement it correctly.

**Student efficacy.** Students' successful experiences boost self-efficacy. Students who challenge themselves with difficult tasks and who are intrinsically motivated have a strong sense of efficacy. Based on the data, Participants A and D stated that GR helps build the students' confidence. Participants B and C indicated that GR made the students feel good when they can read. Participant E stated that GR made the students feel good about themselves. Participant F stated that during GR is when students realized they could read and felt smarter. In general, the participants agreed that GR (a) helped increase students success in reading (b) allowed students to show their strengths, and (c) allowed students to grow as learners. This response was about student efficacy and the framework

provided a way to consider how these reasons could be understood in a ZPD instructional context.

Participants chose to incorporate GR because they believed that each child learns differently and has specific reading needs. They expressed GR allowed them the opportunity to work in small groups and build relationships between them and the students and allowed teachers to meet the learning needs of students. They noted if they were not using GR they would not be able to address the range of different reading levels in the classroom. Finally, GR allowed students to realize that they could be successful, helped students gain self-confidence, allowed students to use their strengths, and facilitated students ability to realize their potential.

In general, most of the participants said that incorporating GR increased student success in the classroom. Participants saw growth in students' self-confidence, motivation to learn, and engagement in the reading process. Five out of the six teachers believed that GR required more time for planning to implement properly. Participant D felt that the time was the biggest factor but did not elaborate on time and effort. Table 6 provides a summary of teacher beliefs about GR.

Table 6

*Teacher Beliefs about Guided Reading*

Participant	Time and Effort	Achievement	Accountability	Success	Why use GR	Student Efficacy
A	It takes time to plan for each group.	My students have been successful.	FPB; running records.	Allows the kids to be successful at their own pace.	To meet the reading needs of all my kids.	They have more confidence.
B	It takes a lot of time for preparation.	They are making progress.	FPB	They show me what they can do.	To teach kids the skills they need to learn to read on their own.	The kids feel good when they can read to me.
C	It does take time to plan for each group.	I saw growth.	FPB; running records.	In small group they open up more.	A great way to provide differentiated reading instruction.	Makes them feel good when they can read.
D	The biggest thing is the time factor.	They are focused and engages with the book.	Assessments; FPB; running records; anecdotal records.	Meet the needs of my readers who are at different levels.	The way I know I can meet all my groups reading needs.	Builds their confidence.
E	It takes a lot of time to plan for.	I have seen growth over the year.	FPB; running records.	I can give them more attention.	I am able to work with students at the different reading levels.	Makes them feel good about themselves.
F	Preparation is time consuming.	I have seen great gains.	FPB; take notes, recording data sheet.	They can demonstrate what they have learned.	Allows every child to participate and be successful at their own pace or level.	They realized they could read and felt smarter.

An important challenge when implementing a new program or approach is the time needed to initially to organize the environment and to orient the students in understanding and accepting their responsibility as part of the new program or the new innovation. The current findings suggest that overall the teachers felt that their students were making progress, had more confidence, and felt successful at their own pace. Based on the data, some of the teachers have not had any type of formal training on GR, its components, and



how to write a GR lesson plan at the kindergarten level. This lack of knowledge of the GR approach could be interfering with the proper assessment and grouping of students, and the proper small group instruction which leads to GR not being implemented effectively. An implication of these responses appears to be the lack of PD on GR, assessment and grouping, and writing a GR lesson plan.

### **Challenges When Implementing GR**

**Research Question 3: What do kindergarten teachers, who implement GR, see as their biggest challenge?** Interview questions 4, 6, and 9 addressed this question about challenges when implementing GR. It is important to understand the participants' perspective on what challenges the participants face when implementing GR because this may have an effect on the success of their GR approach. Based on the data, an analysis of the challenges category revealed four sub-themes (a) time, (b) planning, (c) PD, and (d) collaboration. This response was about the challenges of implementing GR and the framework provided a lens to examine how these challenges could be understood in a constructivist instructional context. The context of the specific responses for each theme is discussed below and summarized in Table 7.

**Time.** Lesson plans play a vital role in the implementation of GR. The GR lesson should consist of specific components such as before-reading activities, during-reading activities, and after-reading activities. It takes a great deal of time and effort to write appropriate GR lesson plans. Based on the data, in general, the participants agreed that the greatest hindrance to implementing GR appropriately was not having the time to write complete GR lesson plans to ensure they were teaching the standards and content

necessary for each reading group. This response was about the time it took to plan GR lessons. All the participants stated that it took a lot of time and preparation to plan a GR lesson. Participants A and D stated that it takes some time to plan for each group. Participant B stated it took lots of time for preparation but did not go into detail about whether she was preparing the lesson plan or preparing the materials or both. Participant C indicated that it took a lot of time to prepare lessons. Participants E and F indicated that it took a lot of time to plan but did not elaborate on why. All the participants felt that the lack of time to plan out activities for each groups hindered their GR sessions. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR, how to write an effective GR lesson plan, and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Planning.** Planning for GR is an essential part of the implementation process. The lesson plans must include the GR components (before/during/after reading activities) and other required components such as state standards, content, teacher strategies, and resources. The participants had different views and responses to planning. Based on the data, Participant A stated that it took some time to come up with activities for each reading group. Participant B stated she needed first to figure out the correct process, as this was her first year teaching. Participant C simply stated that planning was not easy but did not give any details as to why. Participants D and E indicated that they needed to be more creative when planning the lessons. Also Participant D stated that planning differentiated lesson took time. Participant F mentioned that she looked at the students' skills and reading levels to help her plan. This response was about planning GR lessons.

Overall, the participants felt that getting started with GR was difficult and that it took some time to find leveled books, time to plan activities, time to take running records, and time to use other assessments. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of assessments, the components of GR, how to write a GR lesson plan, and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Professional development.** Allington (2001) and Koepf (2008) believed that each teacher has a personal obligation for their own ongoing PD. A teacher's commitment to PD should be driven by their desire to become a better teacher each year they are in the profession. Additionally, the district should be committed to helping develop and support each teacher in their professional growth. Based on the data, all the participants agreed that more training in GR was necessary to ensure that they were implementing it appropriately. This response was about professional development and the framework provided a way to view the need for teachers to acquire instructional knowledge and skill of GR from a constructivist learning perspective.

Participant A indicated that she needed more training because most of what she knew about GR she learned from reading about it, talking to other teachers, and observing other teachers during a GR session. Participant B stated she needed training because this was her first year, and she had never heard about the GR process. Participant C stated that she would like some training to make sure she was implementing GR appropriately in kindergarten because she had started using it when she taught third grade. Participant D stated that she would like more advanced training in GR. Participant

E stated that she wished she had PD because the first time she started using GR was when she taught second grade, and she wanted to know if she was following the GR process correctly for kindergarten. Participant F stated that she would like some formal training because she too had started using GR when she taught second grade and was unsure if she was doing it correctly in kindergarten. The participants did not perceive that enough PD time was allotted to GR so that they could understand it and implement it appropriately. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of the components of GR and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

**Collaboration.** Effective teacher collaboration is defined as engaging in regular routines where teacher communicate about classroom experiences in an effort to strengthen pedagogical expertise (Brownell, Yeager, Rennells & Riley, 1997) and push colleagues to try new things (Davis, 2003). Based on the results, most of the participants emphasized that that they did not have enough time to for collaboration. Participants A, C, D, E, and F, stated they never had time to collaborate with other teachers to ensure if they were planning and implementing GR appropriately. Participant B indicated that some collaboration took place at the beginning of the school year but did not elaborate on the rest of the year. The collaboration was important for the participants because it allows them to share ideas, activities, and books with one another to make their planning more creative and less time consuming.

All participants faced similar challenges as they worked to implement GR into their teaching practices. According to the participants, the main challenge was that they

did not have enough time to plan, collaborate, and implement GR appropriately and did not have sufficient PD training at the district level. All participants faced the challenge of availability of colleagues with whom they could collaborate. Five out of the six participants thought that they were alone in their attempt to make GR a part of their daily schedule because they had not one to share their concerns or ideas with, and no one to hold them accountable.

Table 7

*Challenges Teachers faced with Implementing Guided Reading*

Participants	Time	Planning	Professional Development	Collaboration
A	It takes time to plan for each group.	It takes time to come up with activities.	More training.	I have no one to collaborate with.
B	It takes lots of time for preparation.	I need to figure out the correct process.	I need training.	Collaborated at the beginning of the year.
C	It takes a lot of time to prepare lessons.	Planning is not easy.	Some training.	I never get to collaborate with other teachers. (table continues)
Participants	Time	Planning	Professional Development	Collaboration
D	Planning for each group takes time.	Planning differentiated lessons takes time and creativity.	More advanced training.	Not having the time to collaborate with others.

E	Takes a lot of time to plan.	Be more creative when I plan my lessons.	I wish I had training.	I do not have time to or someone to collaborate with.
F	Planning takes so long.	Look at their skills and reading levels.	Some sort of formal training.	Never given time to collaborate with my team.

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Teachers must have a clear definition and understanding of the five reading components and how they influence reading and reading achievement. The five components can be taught effectively through the use of GR. When the teachers have a deep understanding of these components, they will be able to diagnose, plan, provide instruction, monitor, and evaluate the reading materials and instructional practices (Learning Point Associates, 2004). Based on the data, the teachers were not developing GR lessons because they did not understand how to write a GR lesson plan and did not have time to write a plan for each group.

The current findings indicate that a hindrance to implementing GR appropriately included: a) not having the time to write complete GR lesson plans to ensure they were teaching the standards and content necessary for each reading group; b) lack of training on GR; and c) lack of time to collaborate with other teachers. According to Iaquinta (2006) the quality and effectiveness of a program may never be realized, not necessarily because of the program itself; rather, the understanding with which it is practiced. The responses clearly address the need and desire of each teacher to be supported as she implements GR in their classroom. The effort by the district to support the teachers'

understanding has been provided from within the district and has been minimal. It is apparent that the teachers believe in GR and are receptive to more training. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of GR and its components in order to implement GR affectively in their classrooms.

### **Document Analysis Findings**

A document analysis form similar to Creswell's (2007) protocol forms was used to note elements from the research questions in teacher lesson plans (see Appendix H). GR and its components was the point of focus on lesson plans as it directly relates to the research questions. The document analysis was about constructing an effective lesson plan to scaffold the ZPD for GR and the framework provided a way to examine GR lesson plans from a constructivist instructional perspective. Analysis of lesson plans allowed me to learn more about each participant's understanding of the components of GR, assessment, grouping, planning, and documenting of the process for GR and helped me identify areas where they appear to need more training and support.

The participants lesson plans varied in structure. Only four out of the six participants submitted a GR lesson plan. The participants presented daily or weekly GR lesson plans for a reading level of their choice. The purpose of the lesson plans was to identify whether or not the GR components were being implemented and how they were being implemented. The lesson plan should have served as documentation of when and how the teacher implemented GR in the classroom.

**Research Question 1.** The teachers discussed in their interviews their understanding of the GR process. Based on the data, their lesson plans confirmed that the teachers did not understand all the elements of the process. This response was about the teachers understanding of the GR process. Notably, only some elements of the GR process were found on some of the lesson plans. Only one of the participants, Participant A, included daily activities on her lesson plans to identify activities for the readers throughout the week. Most of the lesson plans resembled checklists that the participant could use to check off what was or was not completed. Some of the lesson plans included an area for jotting notes.

When looking at Theme 1: Teachers' experience with GR, the lesson plans submitted did support that the participants were using GR every day in their class. The lesson plans also indicated how the participants felt about GR as most of the lesson plans were more of a checklist while Participant A's lesson plans included more details of the activities she was conducting with her reading group. The lesson plans also indicate why the teachers are seeing some progress and or success with their students. If the lesson plans are not focused on a particular skill or strategy that needs to be taught, then how are the students supposed to make progress. The participants stated that they were required, by the district, to implement GR daily and this is reflected in the lesson plans because 3 out of the 4 were more like checklists and very vague. If they are required to implement GR appropriately, the lesson plans should have been more detailed and included the components from the DALP, which includes the GR process. Most of the participants stated that they had used GR when they were teaching in an upper grade but did not



elaborate on whether or not they used the same lesson plan format from the upper grade or used a different one for kindergarten. Overall, based on the data the teachers do not have a clear understanding of GR, its components, or how to implement it. According to the framework the students should be working in their ZPD. To ensure that students are working in their ZPD, the teachers must plan lessons to meet these needs. This lack of understanding of how to write a GR lesson plan indicates that more training on GR is needed.

**Research Question 2.** During the interviews, the teachers discussed that the district required the implementation of GR but they found GR was beneficial to their students. Although their daily schedule reflected a block of time for guided reading, there was no evidence of this practice on the lesson plans for documentation. None of the components of GR were listed on any of the teacher lesson plans. This response was about the implementation of GR and the framework provided a way to review teacher lesson plans as documentation of implementing GR from a constructivist perspective.

Teacher A had weekly lesson plans organized by daily activities such as sight word review, letter identification, phonological awareness, comprehension, oral language, phonemic awareness, word work, vocabulary, and a writing activity. Each activity had a main focus or question for the students to answer to show mastery. The plans were in the form of a checklist. The teacher checked off what the student had completed or mastered. Teacher A did not list the standard, content, and before-, during-, and after-reading activities. Participant A's lesson plans supported her responses to Theme 2: Why Teachers Decided to Implement GR. Participant A stated that the district

required the kindergarten teachers to use GR, and so this was the approach she was using to teach reading. Her lesson plans indicated that she does include some strategies and skills taught and she includes other activities such as sight word review, letter identification, phonological awareness, comprehension, oral language, phonemic awareness, word work, vocabulary and a writing activity. This supports that GR is important not only to her but her students as well. All the activities, skills, and strategies will help her meet the needs of each of her students at their reading level.

Teacher B did not submit any lesson plans because she was a first-year teacher and stated that she had not received training and that she did not understand the GR process or how to write a lesson plan for GR. This lack of lesson plans did support that she did not understand GR and that she did GR as a school requirement. Although she mentioned that the students liked coming to her table and working together, I had no lesson plan to support what she was doing during the GR session or how she was dividing her students into their reading groups.

Teacher C had daily lesson plans for each of the reading groups. Teacher C did not list the state standards, content to be taught, or the before-, during-, and after-reading activities on her lesson plans. She did list the group level, the book to be used, the activity for word work, the reading strategies, running records, and notes. The plans were organized but did not align with the GR components. Looking at Theme 2: Why teachers decided to implement GR, the lesson plans did support her response that it was required by the district because she did do daily GR lesson plans. She wrote notes about their success or areas of weakness. She also mentioned that GR was important to her students

because it made them feel successful when they could read at their level. Although, she stated that GR was important to her to provide individualized instruction in reading and that it helped her differentiate instruction in reading for the different reading levels, this was not reflected in the lesson plans submitted.

Participant D did not submit any lesson plans. I attempted to get a copy of her lesson plan several times. Then Participant D sent me an email. She stated, “I have a basket prepared for each reading group, and then I take it from there.” I decided to move forward because this response appeared to indicate the teacher likely did not use a lesson plan and any additional efforts to gain access to the lesson plans might be perceived as pressure to participate. Participant D has taught in the district for many years and previously conducted the Response to Intervention pull-out program. In the interview, she was knowledgeable about GR and how to look for books of interest and plan activities for each of the GR groups, but she did not submit a lesson plan to support that she did these things. I was looking forward to reviewing her lesson plan to support Theme 2: Why teachers implement GR. She indicated during the interview that GR was important to her and her students and that it helped meet the needs of all her readers at different levels, but she did not submit a lesson plan to support her beliefs.

Participant E submitted daily lesson plans she used for reading groups; however no state standards, no content, and no GR process were listed. The lesson plans had a list of activities for the group, but did not include instructional materials. Teacher E did include a section for general note taking. Looking at Theme 2: Why teachers decided to implement GR, the lesson plan did support that Participant E was conducting GR sessions

daily, as required by the district, that it was important to her because she had a daily lesson plan for each reading group. She indicated that it was important to the students because she did write comments about what skills or strategies the students were successful with and what skills or strategies the students had difficulty with. The lesson plans did not depict a clear picture of differentiating instruction to meet the student's needs.

Participant F submitted a daily lesson plan but did not include the state standards, the content, or the GR process. She submitted a GR Observation list in which she lists the names of the students in that reading group, the book/level, and behaviors observed. When looking at Theme 2: Why teachers decided to implement GR, Participant F's lesson plans did support that she was implementing it daily, as required by the district, it did reflect that it was important to her to form her groups based on the levels and skills of each student. Her lesson plan also supported that every child participated but did not go into detail about what activities the student participated in at their level and pace. The behaviors observed section did support the success or areas of weakness for each student.

Overall, based on the data, the participants did not have a clear understanding of how to plan an effective GR lesson plan which includes the state standards, content, materials, and the GR stages (before-reading, during-reading, and after-reading activities). These components are vital if the teachers want to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the students in their classroom. In relation to the framework, the teachers should be explaining, modeling, and using the GR components to actively assist and promote the growth of their students, so the students can develop the skills they need

to fully interact, make meaning, and comprehend the text. This lack of understanding indicates that PD in the area of how to write and deliver an effective GR lesson plan was needed.

**Research Question 3:** The participants' lesson plans did not support Theme 3: Teachers beliefs about GR, but did support Theme 4: Challenges teachers faced when implementing GR because the lesson plans did not show evidence of the GR process. The participants' lesson plans were not written appropriately or written at all. Based on the data, most of the participants discussed during the interview that some challenges in implementing GR included (a) not having a GR lesson template, (b) the length of time to plan, (c) they had to find activities for the other students, and (d) no time to collaborate with other teachers. This response was about the challenges teachers faced implementing GR. The participants' belief that it took time and effort to plan for each group was supported by the different formats each participant used as a GR lesson plan. The participants stated that they used GR to teach the skills necessary to meet the needs of all reading groups, but this was not reflected in their one-page lesson plan. Student efficacy was not supported by the lesson plans submitted nor was accountability. This reflects the importance of how PD efforts could be used to support the teachers growing understanding of GR, its components, and how to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

In relation to Theme 4: Challenges participants faced with implementing GR, none of the lesson plans showed evidence of what state standards participants were teaching, the content, resources, or activities they provided for the students in the

classroom during a GR session. This indicates that one of the challenges the participants faced was not understanding how to plan and write a GR lesson. This problem could be attributed to their response about needing more training on GR. Another challenge is the collaboration with others. The lack of collaboration with other teachers about how to plan and write a GR lesson plan could also have an effect on why they are not writing effective GR lesson plans. If the GR lesson plans are not effective, then they are not meeting the instructional needs of each student. This lack of time to write lesson plans and to collaborate indicates that more PD on GR is needed.

### **Summary of Results**

Teachers believed that GR was an important part of teaching and should continue to be a focus for the district. They used GR to support the many reading needs that students bring to the classroom. They also believed that GR requires a considerable amount of time to research, plan, and implement but the extra effort was worth it because GR increased student achievement, accountability, self-efficacy, and success.

Teachers also believed that time was the greatest impediment to incorporating GR. The teachers also agreed that the lack of training also prevented GR from becoming a part of many teachers' practice. Furthermore, all participants agreed that continued professional development training was necessary. Teachers wanted to see the GR components and strategies, to have opportunities to work with others writing effective GR lessons, and to see GR modeled. Also, the teachers felt as if they worked in isolation and needed to collaborate with like-minded peers. These responses were about teacher's understanding, implementation, and challenges with GR and the framework provided a

constructivist lens to view teacher's understanding of the challenges involved with implementing GR.

About Research Question 1: What do kindergarten teachers understand about the present instructional approaches to GR? Those experiences were about the teacher's understanding about the present instructional approaches to GR. Overall, the participants expressed good experiences with GR but based on the findings, what the participants said conflicted with the practice in their lesson plans. The lesson plans that were submitted were more like checklists and not actual GR lesson plans with all the components addressed for each reading group. This could be attributed to the participant's lack of training in GR. As a result, the participants do not understand the present instructional approaches for GR and are not providing the students with appropriate lessons to meet their needs. These results indicate a need for PD on GR.

About Research Question 2: How do kindergarten teachers implement GR in their classroom? Those experiences were about the implementation of GR. Overall, the participants are implementing GR on a daily basis because the district requires it and because a block of time for GR is built into the master schedule for grades kindergarten through fifth. Based on the findings, the lesson plans do not reflect the use of the GR components, and this could be a good indication that they are not implementing GR appropriately. As a result, students' needs may not be met in the area of reading. These results indicate a need for PD on GR, its components, and how to implement it effectively.

Research Question 3: What do kindergarten teachers who implement GR see as their biggest challenge? Overall, the participants agreed that it took time to plan lessons for each group, they needed training on how to write lesson plans, and they did not have time to collaborate or anyone with whom to collaborate. Based on the findings, the lesson plans did reflect these responses. Those experiences were about the challenges with implementing GR and the framework provided a way to examine those challenges from a constructivist learning perspective. The lesson plans were short, one-page checklists with a few activities and a notes section to write comments about the students' success or area of weakness. Without the DALP and GR components of the lesson plan, GR is not being implemented appropriately. For example, by not recording the state standards, the teacher may not be aware of which standards they are meeting and which ones they still need to meet. By not including the before-, during-, and after-reading activities, they are not following the GR process. The lack of training, time for planning, and opportunities for collaboration may have had affected teachers' ability to produce appropriate lesson plans.

The document analysis was about constructing an effective lesson plan to scaffold the ZPD for GR and the framework provided three reasons regarding teachers GR lesson plans. The overall findings of the document analysis indicated the following: (a) the participants lacked a good understanding of how to write a GR lesson plan that included all the Document Analysis Lesson Plan Form (DALP) and GR components, (b) no planning time, and (c) no collaboration time. These issues may be affecting the teachers' implementation of the guided reading program.



A project that might serve as an outcome of this study is 3 days of the PD in the area of GR. The PD will consist of 6 mini sessions that would cover the following: (a) what is GR? (b) assessments, (c) before- and during-reading activities, (d) after-reading activities, (e) time to collaborate and write a GR lesson plan, and (f) a follow-up training.

### **Conclusion**

The responses to the interview allowed me to come to a deeper understanding of GR from the participants' perspective. The participants' responses revealed a deep commitment of the teachers to continue to incorporate GR in the classroom. However, the participants indicated they had not been provided enough PD time to learn the GR process and how to write appropriate GR lesson plans, did not have opportunities to collaborate, and did not have opportunities to learn from other teachers on the campus. A proposed outcome for this study would be to develop continued PD opportunities for teachers in this district in the area of GR.

Section 3 will include a description and discussion of the project study based on answers collected from the participants in the study and a review of the literature related to the research topic.

### Section 3: The Project

#### **Introduction**

Based on the findings for this study, teachers have three main areas of concern related to implementing GR: they need more training in GR, they need more opportunities to collaborate, and they need more models of effective GR lessons. The project for this study addresses these concerns. I developed a 3-day professional development workshop to allow teachers to increase their knowledge and enhance their skills related to GR (Appendix A).

I plan to offer the morning session of Day 1 as a refresher course for those who have had previous GR training yet feel they still do not understand the approach and its components. This session will cover what GR is and the components to use when incorporating GR. During the afternoon session of Day 1, I will discuss formative and summative assessments, conduct a formative assessment, (FPB-Running Record) and explain how teachers should use the data from the assessments to inform their GR planning and instruction.

The morning session of Day 2 will be dedicated specifically to the first and second step of GR, which includes the before- and during-reading activities. During this session, teachers will see me model how to do before- and during-reading activities as well as watch a video on before- and during-reading activities. The afternoon session of Day 2 will focus on the third step of GR, which includes the after-reading activities, and writing effective GR lesson plans. In the first half of the session, I will model as well as provide a video clip of a teacher using after-reading activities during her GR lesson. The

second half of the session will include time for the teachers to collaborate and write an effective GR lesson plan. Sessions 2-4 include a period of instruction in which GR modeling will occur for the teachers. In addition, each session will include opportunities for participants to discuss, collaborate, participate in hands-on activities, and share ideas about their understanding of GR, its steps, and the use of formative assessment data within their planning and instruction of GR. The reading coach at the campus may assist with the training and support these teachers.

The third professional development day will be a follow-up training that will occur 2-3 months after the initial 2 days of PD. Scheduling in this manner will allow participants time to apply what they learned about GR in the 2-day professional development sessions. The morning session of the follow-up training will be for the participants to have time to discuss their successes as well as challenges with implementing GR in the classroom. This afternoon session will also allow the participants to share any GR lesson plans that they have created and implemented in the classroom with other participants. Ultimately, the follow-up training will give participants the opportunity to fine-tune their GR practice after having had the opportunity to implement the skill they learned in the initial training.

### **Goals of the Professional Development**

Day 1 goals will focus on helping teachers understand the steps of GR. There are five goals for the morning session of Day 1. Teachers will (a) learn the definition of GR; (b) learn the principles, goals; and purpose of GR, (c) learn what GR is and why GR is used as a method of reading instruction; (d) learn when students are ready for GR and

teacher preparation; and (e) learn about the benefits of GR. The teachers will collaborate with each other and participate in a variety of activities throughout the session to develop an understanding of GR.

There are four goals for the afternoon session on Day 1. Teachers will (a) learn the definition of formative and summative assessment, (b) learn how to use formative assessment (FPB) with their students, (c) see a formative assessment modeled, and (d) collaborate with teachers at their grade level on how to use the assessment data to form GR groups. The goals for Day 2 are for teachers to (a) learn the steps of a GR lesson, (b) see each GR step modeled, and (c) collaborate with other teachers to develop an effective GR lesson plan. The goals for Day 3 are for teachers to (a) share their successes in implementing GR in their teaching, (b) share their challenges in implementing GR in their teaching, (c) share lesson plans they have created and implemented in the classroom, and (d) collaborate with other teachers about GR.

### **Rationale**

The purpose of the PD is to provide opportunities for training, modeling, and collaboration. Guskey (2009) states that PD is the main component of a teacher's professional growth. According to Ebert-May, Derting, Hodder, Momsen, Long, and Jardeleza (2011), PD allows for major gains in teacher knowledge and skills. PD training is appropriate because study participants indicated they lacked sufficient skills or training to implement GR appropriately as part of their classroom practice (Table 7), and a multiday PD workshop would meet those needs.

The use of PD substantially increases teacher knowledge and skills and shifts teachers' thinking toward new pedagogy (Ebert-May et al., 2011; White, Syncox, Heppleston, Isaac, & Alters, 2012). Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009) noted that not only is PD training the main avenue for increasing student achievement but also it is recognized as the only way to improve instructional practices. A 3-day PD would provide training for teachers who feel their skills are deficient, it would provide time for teachers to practice using and analyzing formative assessment, it would provide time for teachers to learn how to use the data to guide their planning and instruction for GR, it would provide a specific session on the GR steps for teachers learn alongside their grade-level teams, and it would provide time for teachers to become proficient in designing GR lesson plans.

The study findings revealed that teachers needed to see GR modeled for them, and needed time to collaborate with other teachers at grade-level (Table 7). According to Killion and Hirsh (2011) a key attribute of PD is collaboration. Many of the teachers interviewed said they worked in isolation. DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2008) states that because most teachers work in isolation, it is not known what teaching practices an individual teacher incorporates. According to DeSantis (2012) collaboration allows for teachers' voices to be heard. Collaborating with peers during PD, according to Latz, Speirs, Neumeister, Adams, and Pierce (2009), decreases feelings of isolationism and promotes risktaking behavior. Giving teachers a place for discourse and opportunities to collaborate would lessen their feelings of isolation and promote implementation of GR.

Developing a shared vision builds a sense of community and unites teachers under a common goal (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011).

The possibility of teachers transferring learning into classroom practice can be increased through PD training that allows participants to practice what they have learned. Persellin and Goodrick (2010) states that teachers who participate in PD training are more likely to use new skills once they return to the classroom. More important, student achievement, according to Hochberg and Desimone (2010), improves when teachers use knowledge and skills acquired during professional development. Swinton, De Berry, Scafidi, and Woodward (2010) found a significant increase in students' achievement when teachers participated in a summer PD. Teachers who participate in the training saw a greater increase in student achievement than those teachers who do not participate in summer PD.

Findings from the present study revealed the participants' lack of PD on GR, a lack of time to collaborate with other teachers, and a lack of time to prepare GR lessons as substantial challenges. A major hindrance to applying new strategies is the lack of time (Ebert-May et al., 2011). Conducting a 3-day professional development training provides the time and opportunities needed for teachers to learn about GR. The focus of the sessions is to provide specific information about the GR approach and assessments, coupled with ample opportunities for collaboration and collegial support throughout each session.

## Review of the Literature

The main avenue for improving student learning outcomes is PD. There is a paucity of research linking teacher professional development, teacher beliefs and practices, and student achievement outcomes (Enderle et al., 2014; Hill, Beisiegel, & Jacob, 2013; Thomas et al., 2012). According to Eun (2008) and Bayar (2014) professional development is the best way to improve teaching and learning. PD is also believed to have the greatest potential to change what teachers know and can do (The National Staff Development Council [NSDC], 2011; Van den Bergh & Beijaard, 2014). Brodzik (2012) defines professional learning as “job-embedded, student-centered, collegial, ongoing, and meta-cognitive” (pg. 54). Effective professional learning happens when teachers intrinsically have a need for professional development.

Teachers improve, student achievement also improves (NSDC, 2011). Three days of PD provides an ideal way to improve teachers’ understanding of GR and increase student reading achievement. Hamre and Hatfield (2012) suggest focusing short term PD on discrete skills and dedicating larger PD resources to more complex, comprehensive skills. Odden (2011) states that taking credit-based university courses was not effective in improving classroom practices. Similarly, teachers’ engagement in independent PD negatively affected student achievement (Alton-Lee, 2011). According to Guskey and Yoon (2009) and DeMonte (2013), collaborative professional development for teachers is the most effective means of improving student learning. The most efficient way to train teachers, according to Lucilio (2009), is through district-sponsored PD. Positive change and improvements can be gained by the collaboration among educators at different

schools within a district (Guskey, 2009). Howes, Hamre, and Pianta (2012) suggest a practice-focused approach that supports teachers and programs beyond a one-time only training is needed. PD workshops are most effective and efficient because they target the greatest number of people at the lowest cost (Eun, 2008). Providing a workshop is a justifiable means of delivering PD training on GR.

The use of a 3-day workshop is the preferred duration of PD. Teachers, according to Bouma-Gearhart (2012), prefer PD that lasts for several days rather than several weeks. Lucilio (2009) found that most teachers wanted to attend a training of either a half-day or 1 to 2 hours in length. Knowing that teachers prefer short-duration sessions, I divided the training for this project into six, half-day sessions provides content in sessions of an appropriate length.

A major expenditure of most school districts is PD, but it is a worthwhile investment. When implementing change the teachers should be the first priority. PD funds, according to Neudecker (2012), expended on teachers will reap more benefits than ignoring staff and focusing on the change itself. Teachers are the most important factor in the classroom so time and finances should be spent on effective professional development in order to improve student achievement (Devaney, 2012). Islas (2010) states that each year more than \$20 billion is spent on PD. According to Odden (2011), the approximate cost of PD is \$590 per student. Stakeholders can have confidence in investing in PD because there has been a link between quality PD and student achievement (Alton-Lee, 2011). PD allows teachers to develop new knowledge and skills that will increase student achievement (Gibson & Brooks, 2012). Engaging in PD, according to Alton-Lee (2011),



has more effect on student learning than any other type of leadership focus. Effective PD is not only the foundation for closing the achievement gap between students but also is linked to improved instructional strategies by teachers that directly improved student learning (Odden, 2011). Hochberg and Desimone (2010) stated that low achieving students and those with learning disabilities stand to gain the most when teachers participated in PD. Swinton et al. (2010) found that students gained as much as a .25 standard deviation increase in achievement when teachers participated in professional development. Professional development is a low-cost way to improve learning for all students.

Although study such as those mentioned above show a positive correlation between teacher PD and student achievement, conflicting studies exist. Although most teachers attend professional development, some do not change practice because they are resistant to change (Gibson & Brooks, 2012). Even when teachers desire to change, Elbert-May et al., (2011), stated that implementation of new strategies does not necessarily occur. Teachers also tend to continue to use strategies with which they are most comfortable (Elbert-May et al., 2011). Gibson and Brooks (2012) stated that teachers are faced with the conflicting desires of wanting to change but also wanting to appear competent. Nevertheless, the individual teacher is the driving force in improving teacher practice and student learning (Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

Teachers are accountable for ensuring all students are learning at high levels (Hochberg & Desimone, 2010). Teachers need PD and in-service training to assist them in learning about best practices such as teaching strategies, assessment, follow-up

coaching, and curriculum development. Although many school districts offer such programs, the delivery is often hit or miss and the sustainability of such efforts is dubious (Jenkins, 2012). Without PD, Killion and Hirsh (2011) stated that teachers do not have the skills needed to improve their teaching through the duration of their career. Attending high-quality PD increases the likelihood that teachers will change practice (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). Although teachers are resistant to change, providing them with high-quality PD fosters the knowledge and skills necessary transform classroom learning.

Teachers revealed that most PD opportunities do not meet their professional needs (Hill, 2009). Many school leaders, according to Guskey (2009) plan PD haphazardly. The PD must be of high quality for it to be cost effective. A high-quality PD is one from which teachers learn new strategies, have opportunities to practice strategies, have time allotted for reflection and collaboration, provide active learning, and offer techniques that are content specific (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Frost, 2014). Killion and Hirsh (2011) stated that PD that does not have these key attributes will not produce student achievement. Effective PD must include these opportunities within its structure to change teacher's practices and increase student achievement.

Teachers participating in a high-quality PD must be allowed to learn new strategies. Student achievement does not increase simply by asking teachers to try harder (Alton-Lee, 2011). Teachers must gain the knowledge and skills that help students achieve (Hochberg & Desimone, 2010; Mizell, Hord, Killion, & Hirsh, 2011). The likelihood that PD will result in increased student learning is dependent upon teachers acquiring new knowledge and skills. Another way to increase teacher motivation is

through ongoing PD. PD, according to Sutterby (2011), must be appropriate for the learners involved otherwise teachers will not be motivated to implement what they have learned. Motivation is a behavior or internal process that allows a person to move towards a goal (Leontiev, 2012). Motivation and success go hand in hand.

Students deserve to have teachers who are well equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to improve their learning (Mizell et al., 2011). Teachers, interviewed for the present study, stated that a challenge to incorporating GR was the need for additional training (Table 7, Column 3). The proposed project includes the opportunity for teachers to receive the training they require. I designed each session so there is a period of instruction allotted for the learning of GR, assessments, and the GR steps. According to Wu (2013) for differentiation to be successful, teachers must start slowly. We can assume the same for GR, as a method for differentiating reading instruction. Teachers must start slowly and understand the purpose and goals of GR. Teachers become overwhelmed when the instructor introduces too many strategies and or activities in one setting (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2012). Gibson and Brooks (2012) state that teachers deem sessions with too much information as ineffective. Teachers cannot develop their learning sufficiently when asked to apply too many strategies at once (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). Thus, each session for this PD training includes a limited number of strategies and activities.

Teachers in a high-quality PD program must have time to reflect. For teachers to change practice, they must have opportunities to reflect on what they have learned (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Sanchez, 2012). After the introduction of each

GR step teachers must think about what activity they could use for each step during a GR lesson. Following a period of reflection, teachers are asked to share their ideas. Staff development leaders must consider teacher beliefs and experiences if they are to change teaching practices (Tohill, 2009). Teachers must have time in PD not only to reflect but also to share their thoughts and ideas (Tohill, 2009). Sharing is believed to be an essential component of PD (Clauzet & Murphy, 2012). Eun (2008) states that teachers' growth as learners happens through social interactions. These social environments are enhanced through collaborative learning and joint practice that encourages interactive feedback and discussion (Patton, Parker, & Pratt, 2012). Providing time throughout each session for reflection and sharing with peers is a necessary component and included in the training plan for this project study.

Teachers enter professional development as self-directed learners with previous experience, defined expectations for their learning outcomes, and a willingness to collaborate with teaching colleagues (Tannehill, 2014). Collaboration must be included in the high-quality PD. Tricarico and Yendol-Hoppey (2012) stated that most teachers have few opportunities to collaborate or pursue collegial conversations with other educators. Many studies revealed that collaboration is a necessary component of PD training as well (Cormas & Barufaldi, 2011; Lutrick & Szabo, 2012; Valerie, 2012). National Staff Development Council (NSDC, 2011) reported collaboration allows educators to share common visions and allows for different perspectives to be heard and respected. Developing a shared vision through collaboration builds trust and a sense of community among participants (Beavers, 2009; Guskey, 2009).

Hord and Tobia (2012) stated that the social nature of learning through the creation of a structured and human supportive environment permits intentional collective learning and the application of that learning, thus paving the way for a transformation of teachers' thinking. These social environments are enhanced through collaborative learning and joint practice that encourages interactive feedback and discussion (Patton, Parker, & Neutzling, 2012). Collaborating, according to Killion and Hirsh (2011), allows teachers to examine their practice and learn from and challenge each other. Easton (2008) states that collaborating with peers improves pedagogy and facilitates teachers' learning. Collaboration can improve teaching practices (Killion & Hirsh, 2011). DeSantis (2012) stated that teachers build self-efficacy through collaborating with peers. Collaboration can also improve teachers' commitment to change (Hochberg & Desimone, 2010). Collaboration among teachers was found to improve student learning (Honawar, 2008). Professional collaboration can be a challenge for teachers who are used to working in isolation.

Collaboration during PD is one of the top two characteristics associated with student achievement (Mizell et al., 2011). When teachers have the opportunity to process their learning with colleagues, achievement increases (Alton-Lee, 2011). Most important, collaborating helps teachers to overcome isolationism, which is a major barrier to improving teaching practices (Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill & Pitts Bannister, 2009; Kensington-Miller, 2011; Lucilio, 2009). Time for collaboration was also identified as a major challenge for teachers interviewed for the present study (Table 4,

Column 4). Each session of the proposed training provides time for teachers to work with peers to collaborate, plan, and create lesson plans using the three steps of GR.

High-quality PD must be content specific. PD is effective when teachers can process their learning with others in their content area (Alton-Lee, 2011). PD in specific disciplines, according to Bouwma-Gearhart (2012), can build trust among participants and produce substantial gains in teacher learning. Teachers value learning and collaborating with others who teach in their same discipline (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). Teachers interviewed for this project study stated they need time to collaborate with others at their grade level (Table 7, Column 4). Wei, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson (2010) stated that teacher's rate content-specific professional development as their greatest need. PD training is most effective and most likely to improve teachers' skills and knowledge when it is content specific (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Sessions that are content specific are most effective because they allow teachers to combine theory and practice and allows skills to be transferred into the classroom (Anfara & Mertens, 2012; Valerie, 2012). Most importantly, content-specific PD is more likely to change teaching practices (Hochberg & Desimone, 2010). According to McLesky (2011) when teachers improve their practices, student learning follows. Days 2 of the 3-day PD designed for this project study specifically focus on the steps of GR for those teachers who teach reading.

High-quality PD includes active learning by the participants. Opfer and Pedder (2011) stated that few PD opportunities allow for active learning. In most PD, Teachers are passive learners who listen to experts but have little time for participation (McLeskey,

2011). Teachers must be involved and engaged during the learning process (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). For PD to be effective, teachers cannot be passive recipients to learning (Beavers, 2009; Mizell et al., 2011). Teachers who are actively engaged in PD are more likely to change teaching practices (Hochberg & Desimone, 2010). Hochberg and Desimone (2010) stated that PD that is active has a positive effect on improving teachers' acquisition of skills. Therefore, I specifically included opportunities for active participation throughout the sessions for the proposed PD.

High-quality PD must include coaching and modeling. Teachers interviewed for this project study identified GR modeling as a professional need (Table 4, Column 3). Studies show that most primary teachers differentiate reading instruction through GR instruction (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). Montanari (2013) describes research focused on a successful literacy-coaching model as one method to improve instructional practice within a professional learning community, which provides evidence of improved student reading achievement due to the utilization of literacy coaches. Peer modeling or coaching was found to be effective in helping teachers become more effective at differentiation (Latz et al., 2009). GR is a way to differentiate reading instruction to meet the needs of the students in the classroom. Differentiating instruction requires a shift in teacher beliefs, and peer coaching increases teacher's ability to buy-in to differentiation (Kise, 2006; Wormeli, 2006). Modeling teaching practices are essential for supporting changes in teaching practices (Blachowicz, Buhle, Ogle, Frost, Correa, & Kinner, 2010; Pegg, Schmoock, & Gummer, 2010). Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) stated that, without support, teachers do not apply new teaching practices. Instead they feel

unequipped to teach the material and revert to previous practices. Modeling provides opportunities for teachers to see ways to incorporate new teaching strategies into their practice (Elder & Padover, 2011). I included modeling GR practices and conducting assessments into the session to provide opportunities for the teachers to see what these practices look like when they are ideally implemented.

Modeling and peer coaching also provide opportunities for teachers to practice what they learned (Gibson & Brooks, 2012). According to Gibson and Brooks (2012) teachers will struggle with the implementation of new strategies without the opportunity to practice the strategies. Coaching can increase the use of new strategies and the opportunities for practices to be transferred to the classroom (McLeskey, 2011). Both new teachers and veteran teachers can benefit from peer coaching (Spelman & Rohlwmg, 2013). In each session of the 3-day PD sessions, I included a period of instruction in which GR strategies will be modeled, and then attendees will receive instructor support as they develop their GR activities during the collaboration time. Patton, Parker, and Pratt (2013) stated that the basis of teacher development is allowing teachers the freedom and voice to set their own PD goals, determine what they need to reach those goals, and providing them with the space to work together to achieve success. Based on the results of the study the teachers stated that they needed more PD on assessments, GR, its components, and how to implement it effectively. I created a three-day PD to address these needs.

As in section 2, for this review of literature I used multiple databases, including Education Research Complete, Google Scholar, and ERIC. Specific search terms



included *workshop, professional development, effective, and professional learning*.

Additional search terms resulted from the following combinations of terms: (a) *guided reading and professional development*, (b) *modeling, mentoring, and professional development* (c) *peer coaching and professional development*.

### **Implementation**

The following sections include an outline of the implementation of the project, the resources and supports required to make the workshop successful, barriers that would hinder implementation, a proposed timetable for the project, the roles and responsibilities of the student and others, the project's evaluation, and potential implications for social change.

The project includes a 3-day PD workshop for which attendees could select sessions they are interested in based on need (Appendix A). The project includes (a) an outline of all six sessions, (b) instructor notes to assist the facilitator in the presentation of the material, (c) an agenda for each period of instruction, (d) a PowerPoint presentation of each session with instructor notes, and (e) session handouts that includes an evaluation of the session. When those who are knowledgeable on the topic facilitate a PD, it is effective (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). Therefore, I would present the workshops with other teachers or the instructional coach who are specifically trained in GR using a combination of lecture, modeling, and collaboration of attendees with others in their grade level. Throughout the presentation, attendees will be afforded the opportunity to reflect on and discuss their ideas about the information on GR.

### **Potential Resources and Existing Supports**

The district would need to provide the site for the workshop as well as a method for attendees to sign up for sections. The district would also need to authorize the use of the district's instructional coach to provide trained leadership in the content area of reading. The resource team members would also need compensation for their time either through a stipend or by awarding these teachers PD hours. The attendees would require the use of computers to work on designing their own strategies, a need that could be met through a bring-your-own-device approach.

### **Potential Barriers**

The complexities associated with the implementation of GR require continued PD and support, which can be difficult to provide when educational budgets are dwindling (Tomlinson, 2000a). The budget for PD is limited. The district may not have the funding to support a 3-day workshop. Additionally, the district's current focus is on using technology in the classroom. Having just spent thousands of dollars on purchasing iPads and Promethean Boards, the school system may not be inclined to spend money on guided reading (J. Urbanczyk, personal communication, October 14, 2015). The project would also require the use of the district's instructional coaches, and these employees may not be able to commit to conducting the workshops (M. Schroller, personal communication, November 4, 2015).

### **Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

I could implement the workshop, (Day 1 and 2), over a 2-day period during the summer. The third day would be a follow-up training that would occur 2-3 months later.

Before the beginning of school, the district provides voluntary PD training. The best time for training is a summer workshop because teachers do not want to leave their classroom for PD (Gibson & Brooks, 2012). The workshop would most likely occur before the start of the school year based on previous years. The morning session of Day 1 would include an introduction of GR. This session would be for those teachers who do not have a clear understanding of GR or those that have not been previously trained. The afternoon session of Day 1 would focus on how to administer assessments and how to use them. This session would be open to all elementary teachers in the district. The morning session of Day 2 would address the first and second step in GR, the before- and during-reading activities. In this session, the teachers would learn about Step 1 and Step 2, have the opportunity to see these steps modeled, collaborate with other teachers, and create a list of before- and during-reading activities.

The first part of the afternoon session of Day 2 would address Step 3 in GR, the after-reading activities. In this session, teachers would learn about the third step and would have the opportunity to collaborate and create a list of after-reading activities. The second part of the afternoon session of Day 2 will provide opportunities for the teachers to collaborate with their peers and create an effective GR lesson plan. I would facilitate each session, supported by the instructional coaches as well as by teachers who have also received training in conducting GR.

The morning session of Day 3 would be a follow-up training for the kindergarten teachers. I would facilitate a session of discussion-collaboration, more modeling, and sharing of successes, challenges, and GR lesson plans. The afternoon session of Day 3

would be a time for conferences with the kindergarten teachers. I would facilitate one-to-one conferences for more assistance with the implementation of GR. This session would also allow the teachers more time for collaboration and time to plan more appropriate GR lessons.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others**

My primary role would be as the presenter for the workshops. I would secure approval to conduct the workshop by sending an email to the curriculum director asking for sessions on GR to be added to the list of PD activities. Another of my responsibilities would be to share the presentation with other members of the GR resource team so they could provide their suggestions for improving the presentation. I would also need assistance from the GR resource team as co-presenters in the sessions. These teachers received training in leading PD in GR. I believe it is essential to have teachers who are masters in the area of reading, GR, and differentiating instruction. Teachers previously trained in GR could provide the content-specific support requested by interviewed teachers.

### **Project Evaluation**

The workshop evaluation is a formative assessment that all attendees will complete. The attendees will receive the evaluation at the end of each session. The evaluation will give attendees the opportunity to rate the usefulness of the presentation and make suggestions on how to improve future presentations. The use of formative assessment is justified as I would be looking for ways to improve the future sessions on

PD. The goals of the formative assessment would be (a) to evaluate the speed of the session, too long or too short, (b) to evaluate the amount of content, too much or too little, (c) to evaluate the effectiveness of the modeling, effective, somewhat effective, not effective, (d) to evaluate the usefulness of the time to collaborate, very useful, somewhat useful, not useful at all, and (e) to provide suggestions for future workshops. Each question would also contain an area where participants could add comments or suggestions. I will share the evaluations with other co-presenters as well as the district curriculum director.

### **Implications Including Social Change**

#### **Local Community**

The project could promote social change by providing teachers the knowledge and skills to implement GR effectively as a daily part of their teaching practice. The goal of GR is to help readers become independent, to use strategies appropriate to their reading abilities, and to question and construct meaning from the text (Mooney, 1990, Fountas & Pinnell, 2012).

Interviewed teachers stated that GR increased student engagement, self-efficacy, achievement, and success (Table 3). Similarly, Santangelo and Tomlinson (2009) stated that differentiated instruction creates a learning environment that meets the needs of individual students and improves student achievement. Therefore, improving teachers' knowledge and skills in GR would empower these teachers to help close the district's current achievement gap in reading. Schools are successful when their students are

successful. Positive effects spread among classrooms and schools when teachers are engaged in effective PD (Killion & Hirsh, 2011). Balanced literacy and a closed achievement gap in reading are goals for the district. Empowering teachers to meet the reading needs of students benefits the whole district, which is important to district stakeholders.

### **Far-Reaching**

I could present the project at the state and national level as well. For example, I could submit proposals to present at the National Council of Teachers of English conference, the National Boards for Professional Teaching Standards conference, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development conference or other similar conferences. Exposing more teachers to an effective instructional approach of GR could increase the achievement of students nationally.

### **Conclusion**

The goal of my project is to increase the skills and abilities of district teachers. According to NSDC (2011) there is a direct, positive correlation between quality professional development and student achievement. Alton-Lee (2011) stated that professional development makes transformational differences to student learning. Student achievement increases as teachers learn new knowledge and skills (Odden, 2011). By providing district teachers with the knowledge and skills to implement GR appropriately, I would be helping to improve the reading skills of all the students in the district.

Section 4 will contain my final reflections and conclusions of the project study.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

The problem in this study was lack of understanding of kindergarten teachers' thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, and challenges when implementing GR. The project's focus was to determine teacher perceptions and design a PD opportunity to help teachers overcome their challenges. Knowing the basics of GR is not enough for teachers to effectively make GR a part of their routine teaching practice. This project will give teachers opportunities to develop knowledge and the expertise they need to change teaching practice (NSDC, 2011). The project allows for the attainment of knowledge and skills in a supportive and engaging environment and provides a tool that can be used on an ongoing basis to provide new teachers initial training.

### **Project Strengths and Limitations**

#### **Strengths**

I developed the project by taking into account the PD needs voiced by interviewed teachers. The workshop sessions allow teachers to improve knowledge and skills, they provide opportunities for modeling and collaboration, and they give teachers time to plan GR lesson plans. One strength of the project is that it incorporates what I learned by interviewing the kindergarten teachers. The basis for this project is not what I would want or need in a PD activity. Instead, the PD project was created based on needs expressed by the participants, as well as existing research about conducting effective workshops. Too often, teachers are required to attend workshops that do not meet their

needs. To address the concerns of the kindergarten teachers, I have created six sessions that will help them overcome the challenges of implementing GR.

Through this project, teachers will develop the knowledge and skills they need to implement GR on a daily basis to meet the reading needs of their students. According to NSDC (2011), increasing teachers' knowledge and skills makes them better teachers. As teacher quality improves, student outcomes improve (NSDC, 2011). Thus, the project has the potential to raise the reading level of students in the district through empowering reading teachers in the district to implement GR effectively and consistently. Another strength of this project is that it will provide opportunities for modeling, collaboration, and planning. Teachers need to understand and see ways to implement GR. By modeling examples of the three steps of GR, the project will make the task of developing a GR lesson plan more manageable for participants. Also, giving teachers the chance to collaborate and develop GR lesson plans with teachers at their same grade level allows teachers to practice skills in a supportive environment.

The interviewed teachers complained they did not have enough examples of the before-, during-, and after-reading activities, nor did they have examples of how to form reading groups using the assessment data collected. Each workshop provides the teachers with examples of assessments, forming reading groups, and before-, during-, and after-reading activities. For a workshop to be successful, Lutrick and Szabo (2012) stated that teachers must have the opportunity to transfer strategies learned in their classroom. The teachers will leave the workshop with examples of the GR lesson they created, thus increasing the likelihood of teachers to make GR a daily part of their teaching practice.



**Limitations**

One limitation of the project may be that it is short in duration and includes only limited opportunity for follow-up. Each session is a half day, with a total of 6 sessions in 3 days. Condensing so much information into such a short time period could make it difficult for some teachers to become adequately knowledgeable and comfortable with implementing GR. Due to the limited contact hours, some teachers may still find it difficult to integrate GR in their daily reading instruction. Guskey and Yoon (2009) stated that teachers must meet to discuss challenges and concerns often to sustain learning. Without long-term support, efforts to change teaching practices fail (Killion & Hirsh, 2011). Although the project exposes teachers to multiple examples and strategies, they may need additional training on an ongoing basis as well. Many teachers may revert to past teaching practices due to the lack of having continued support.

**Recommendations for Alternative Approaches**

Although this project focuses on providing intense training on GR over a 3-day period for teachers, other ways to address this problem exist. For example, teachers could be provided a variety of resources on GR to study on their own, to provide teacher with mentoring, and to provide monthly support sessions after school. Sanchez (2012) stated that summer institutes do not always provide the long-term support some teachers need to make GR a daily part of their teaching practice.

One alternative to assist the teachers would be to create a library of resources, activities, and strategies for GR on the district website. The library would be ongoing, so

when teachers develop their activities they can share them with others by adding their activities to the library.

Although the interviewed teachers did not mention having a peer mentor, the project could be addressed by developing a mentoring program, where master teachers, individuals skilled in the use of GR, could be paired with a teacher not as skilled in GR. The mentor and mentee could work together for a whole school year. The mentor could visit the mentee's classroom to observe the GR portion of the day and then offer suggestions on how to make the GR session better. The mentee could also visit the mentor's classroom to see how GR instruction looks in action. The reason that I did not choose this approach for my project was because of the cost and logistics of providing this type of long-term support (Latz et al., 2009). It would be difficult to secure funding to provide pay for substitutes to cover the release time of the mentee teachers. Another challenge would be that there are very few teachers implementing GR appropriately, which would make it difficult to find enough mentors.

A final alternative is to schedule monthly sessions or a discussion board to keep the teachers updated on GR strategies and the teachers could interact with me, the instructor, as well as with peers through message boards. Having this opportunity would motivate teachers to share their ideas and would decrease isolationism (Trust, 2012). I did not consider this alternative because I do not have the time in my schedule and nor the technology proficiency needed to lead an online environment.

As teachers' GR skills are enhanced, having participated in the PD training created for this project, some of the alternatives described above could be implemented as well. For example as more teachers are appropriately implementing GR, having attended training, teachers will have lesson plans they could share through a GR library. With more teachers having greater skill in implementing GR, there will be more teachers who could serve as mentors. Finally, as teachers gain more skills, someone with adequate knowledge and time might be able to host a discussion board. I designed a project that will address the problem expediently, but these alternative approaches can be used in the future to continue to support teachers in implementing GR.

### **Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change**

#### **Scholarship**

I learned that research is important when developing a project. Research findings help in determining the best path for developing a project. Through this project, I was able to make all decisions based on my research. Before this project, I would have used my assumptions to determine the needs of the kindergarten teachers. Each kindergarten student enters kindergarten with different skills, attitudes, and abilities. Like students, teachers are also individuals who have different skills, talents, concerns, and teaching styles. When teachers' needs are not met, it makes it difficult for them to embrace GR as a teaching philosophy. Change, according to Tohill (2009) is difficult for teachers. Easton (2008) stated that pedagogy can change only when teachers' concerns are addressed.

Through the development of this project, I learned how to use a case study to help inform the decision making process to promote change in the way teachers implement GR. Relying on data from the kindergarten teachers' interviews and lesson plans guided choices I made for what aspects to include in the workshop. When I began planning and creating the workshops, I did not allow time for reflection and collaboration. After reading some professional literature on PD, I learned that allowing time for reflection and collaboration are key components to an effective professional learning.

Teachers, according to Tohill (2009), need time for reflection and collaboration so that they can mesh new thinking with past beliefs. Driscoll et al., (2009) stated that collaboration allows teachers to combine their strengths, share their concerns, and overcome barriers that prevent the adoption of new strategies. By providing time for collaboration and reflection in my sessions, I have increased the chances that teachers will change the way they view and implement GR. I would have designed a less effective workshop if I had not investigated the attributes of effective professional learning.

I also learned how to conduct face-to-face interviews. The first participant interview lasted for about 60 minutes. I did gain some usable data but felt like we got off subject. This probably happened because I was not proficient at asking probing questions. In my next participant interviews, I prompted the participants by asking them to tell me more about their experience. I also asked them to give me examples of what they were describing. Asking probing questions increased the quality of answers that I received as I continued conducting interviews for the study. As a result, the interviews yielded data that was useful in designing the project.

## **Project Development**

The most important aspect of project development is that it is research based. Additionally, quality PD must have clear goals, be active, and include periods of reflection and collaboration (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). When designing the 3-day workshop it was necessary to include these facets into each session. Most workshops are of poor quality (Hill, 2009). Therefore, I needed to ensure that my PD met the needs of the teachers and was of high quality. According to Guskey (2009) few PD activities gather evidence to show that the PD was effective. Evaluating the effectiveness of PD can inform future PD efforts (Guskey, 2009). For me to improve future professional development activities, it was important to ascertain the effectiveness of the training.

## **Reflective Analysis**

**Self as a Scholar.** Although I come from a family of educators, I never imagined myself as a scholar. My mother was the first person in her family to earn a degree. I was the second person in my family to graduate from high school and the first person to graduate from college. It was not until one of my younger brothers completed his masters and doctoral degree that I started thinking about pursuing a master's degree. The district I worked for teamed up with a private university to provide grants for teachers. So after working 19 years as an educator, the opportunity came about for me to obtain my master's degree. I completed my masters in 18 months. From that moment on my dream was to continue my education and pursue a doctoral degree. At that time, I started looking into the doctoral program but never thought I would apply and that they would accept me into the program. Once I was in the program, I was unsure that I would be

successful as the courses were challenging, but I completed them and moved on to the doctoral writing process. My toughest challenge through the process was getting my proposal accepted. Once my proposal was accepted the process started moving along quickly. Now my dream to become a doctoral student and earn my Doctor of Education in Teacher Leadership is almost a reality.

I had never completed any scholarly writing before entering the doctoral process. I read the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) because I had never heard of or used APA format for writing. I researched and read many dissertations to get a better understanding of scholarly writing. On several occasions, I used the Walden Writing Center to assist me. In the beginning, it took me a week to write a short paper because I wanted to make sure that I wrote it in a scholarly manner. Now I am not only able to read and review literature, but I can collect data, analyze it, report my findings, and design a project based on the findings. I feel confident that when I talk about GR, what I have to say is based on my own research and that of other scholars. I can carry on scholarly discussions with others and have considered writing for an educational journal to share my knowledge about GR with a broader community. I view myself not only as an educator but as a scholar who has something to offer to a wider educational community other than my school district. More than anything else I see myself as a positive and encouraging role model not only for my children but for all the children that I teach. Once I complete this doctoral process, I will be able to tell my children and my students with confidence that no dream is impossible to accomplish. I

can assure them that they too can be successful in college and beyond because I am living proof that with hard work, dedication, and perseverance dreams do come true.

**Self as Practitioner.** Going through this doctoral process confirmed that what I am doing in the classroom is effective. I first learned about GR in 2006. Since that time, I have worked to incorporate GR into my teaching practice on a daily basis. However, like many teachers, I work in isolation. Therefore, I was not always confident that I was implementing GR appropriately. I was able to validate my understanding and implementation of GR by conducting this research. As I completed the initial literature review, I found that I was doing all the things that research said were effective means of implementing GR.

The students' learning styles can be used to differentiate instruction. This differentiation will ensure that students are learning in an environment that best supports their learning (Tomlinson, 2000b). At the beginning of the year, I inventoried all my students' learning styles. I used this data to help me design lessons based on their individual strengths and needs. I also conducted FPB assessments on all my students. I used this data to form reading groups for those students with similar deficits in early literacy skills. I scaffold assignments to allow students to build on already acquired knowledge and skills. The activating of background knowledge helps the students gain a more in-depth understanding (Sheehy & Clemmons, 2012). I continually assess my students' learning through formative and summative assessments. According to Tomlinson, Brimijoin, and Navaez (2008), formative assessments are the means by which teachers determine how students are growing as learners. By conducting my study, I am

confident that the assessments, data, and GR approach I am using in my classroom are appropriate and effective means of meeting all my students' needs.

**Self as Project Developer.** Developing this project has helped me gain a more in-depth understanding of the components of an effective workshop and a better understanding of my role as an educator. As an educator who has attended many workshops, I did not realize how important collaboration and reflection time are to a workshop. The development of this project was challenging but interesting. It provided me the opportunity to research the components of an effective workshop, so I could develop an effective workshop for GR. Through the teachers' interviews and conducting the literature review, I learned that periods of reflection and collaboration are the most important components of any workshop. Teachers need time to collaborate with peers and practice new skills. Because of what I have learned, I hope that my project, as well as any future workshops, will contain opportunities for collaboration and reflection.

I was among the first kindergarten teachers to implement GR when the district opted to use it to assist those students coming into kindergarten with deficits in early literacy skills. I embraced the philosophy as a result of the PD training, support through observations, and follow-up meetings. There were some teachers that did not support the use of GR in kindergarten. Before conducting my research, I assumed that the teachers who did not support or implement GR were just bad teachers with a lack of vision and desire to do what was best for their students. My point of view changed after completing my research. Many teachers do not understand GR, its purpose, or its steps, and therefore, they do not implement it appropriately. As a project developer who has knowledge and



skills in the implementation of GR, I see my role not only as an advocate for GR but also as a mentor and or coach to new teachers. As a mentor and coach, I can help the teachers embrace the philosophy of GR and implement it appropriately on a daily basis.

### **Leadership and Change**

Leadership is what makes change possible. Most teachers do not support mandated changes. Teachers need to have a voice in what is being mandated and buy into the purpose for the change. At the beginning of this process, I did not understand why administrators would allow each kindergarten teacher to implement GR differently. Gibson and Brooks (2012) stated that leadership takes both pressure and support, something that I did not observe from the administrators. Killion and Hirsh (2011) stated that teachers can be asked to implement GR, but without support, the teachers will revert to their common practices. When school systems and policy makers support PD it is more effective (Odden, 2011). The district had not been supporting the needs of the teachers; therefore, few teachers were implementing GR and those who did experienced difficulties because they do not have the skills, PD time, or collaboration time to make GR a successful practice. The voices of teachers needed to be heard and addressed for true change to occur. I developed this project in response to what they had to say.

### **Reflection on the Importance of the Work**

This project was important because it helped me gain an understanding of GR from alternate points of view. I learned that many teachers in my district are not implementing GR, or they are struggling to do so. Those teachers trying to make GR part of their classroom practice do not feel supported by the district, their campus

administration, peers, and are not provided time to collaborate and plan for GR. The interviews, as well as the work I completed, helped me gain a perspective of GR from their viewpoints. I understand that I need to be an advocate for GR by requesting permission to conduct PD activities in the district, promoting its use, and by mentoring other teachers.

The study is significant for classroom teachers, students, parents, and all the stakeholders at this rural southwestern elementary school, where there is a need for improvement in early literacy development within kindergarten classrooms. The results from this study could provide a valuable resource to schools seeking to improve, implement, and assess early literacy development especially among those students who are considered struggling readers through the use of GR.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

This project has the potential to change the way educators view GR providing them with training and support may encourage more teachers to embrace the GR approach.

The work of this study may apply to other school systems. I plan to collaborate with the other campus in the district and provide training for those teachers as well. A future direction of this study would be to determine the students' thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs, and challenges with GR. According to Ebert-May et al., (2011), a significant challenge that hindered implementation was the students' attitudes about new teaching strategies. For new strategies to be effective, Hochberg and Desimone (2010) state that

students must be receptive to new teaching ideas. Teachers could gain an understanding of the most effective strategies to use during a GR lesson and gain needed buy-in from students by approaching GR from the student's perspective.

### **Conclusion**

I have gained a large amount of knowledge and many skill by going through the process of completing this case study project. My knowledge about PD goes beyond what I learned as it pertains to GR. I learned that school districts implement programs but do not provide for continued training after the initial implementation, and then when the program is not working the way it should be, they often blame the program or the teachers, rather than the lack of training. This study and project could be the beginning of looking at the training needs of teachers and could be the catalyst for inspiring the school/district to provide ongoing training opportunities for all the programs it expects the teachers to implement, which would help students get a more consistent learning experience from classroom to classroom.

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## Appendix A: The Project

Session	Instructional Materials
<p>Day 1-Session 1 In this session, teachers will learn the purpose of Guided Reading.</p>	<p>Agenda PPT Presentation Chart paper/markers/tape Collaboration Time Session Handouts Evaluation</p>
<p>Day 1—Session 2 In this session, teachers will learn about formative and summative assessments, how to use the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark, analyze it, and learn how to use the data to group their students.</p>	<p>Agenda PPT Presentation Video Collaboration Time Session Handouts Evaluation</p>
<p>Day 2-Session 3- In this session, teachers will learn about the first and second component in GR-the Before- and During-Reading Activities.</p>	<p>Agenda PPT Presentation Modeling of Before- and During-Reading Activity Collaboration and Planning time Session Handouts Evaluation</p>
<p>Day 2-Session 4 In this session, teachers will learn about the third component in GR-the After-Reading Activities and will be given time to collaborate and write an effective GR lesson plan.</p>	<p>Agenda PPT Presentation Modeling of After-Reading Activity Collaboration and Planning Time Grade level materials for writing their lesson, Leveled GR books (A-D) Session Handouts Evaluation</p>
<p>Day 3-Session 5- Follow-Up Training In this session, teachers will have time to discuss successes as well as challenges with implementing GR in their classroom and their experience with using Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark, and model a GR lesson that they developed and have used in their classroom.</p>	<p>Agenda Open Discussion Participant Models a GR lesson they developed. Collaboration and feedback Share with large group Evaluation</p>

<p><b>Day 3- Session 6- Follow-Up Training</b> In this session, teachers will have time to meet with the instructor during one-to-one conferences for more assistance with the implementation of GR. The teachers will also have more time to collaborate and plan more GR lessons.</p>	<p><b>Agenda</b> One-to-one conferences Time to collaborate and plan Share with large group Evaluation</p>
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### **Project-Guided Reading 3-Day Professional Development**

The data collected, through the interviews and lesson plans, indicated a lack of GR training. This lack of training contributed to some of the following challenges the teachers faced when implementing GR. One challenge faced was the lack of understanding about guided reading. The second challenge was the lack of understanding the GR process because three of the teachers had never seen it modeled. The final challenge was the lack of time to collaborate with peers to create GR lesson plans.

This 3 day PD will provide educators with a basic understanding of GR, assessment and grouping, will model the use of GR, and provide time for teachers to collaborate with peers to create a GR lesson plan.

### **Instructions for Use of Professional Development Materials**

Each session is a stand-alone workshop that includes (a) an agenda for the timeline of the sessions, (b) a PowerPoint with instructor notes, and (c) session handouts for the participants.

### **Suggested Format for Workshops**

1. Welcome participants and pass out session handouts.
2. Begin the PowerPoint presentation by reviewing the purpose of the period of instruction, the goals of the workshop, and the agenda for the session. There are no scheduled breaks. Inform participants that they may step out at any time that they need to do so. Additionally, tell participants that they may ask questions at any time during the session.

3. Conduct opening activity provided in the PowerPoint. Use the presentation notes to guide the activity.
4. Follow the presenter notes to introduce guided reading to participants.
5. Throughout the presentation, refer participants to the examples provided in the handouts. After each step, give participants time to discuss how they could use they step in their GR lesson and allow participants the opportunity to share ideas.
6. Allow participants time to do conduct an assessment and collaboration time to analyze the data.
7. Conduct modeling activity with participants.
8. Allow participants to work with peer to develop their own GR activities.  
Following collaboration time, give the participants time to share the developed GR activities with the group.
9. Ask participants if they have any additional questions or comments about GR.
10. Conduct the evaluation provided in the handouts.

## Day 1-Session 1-Introduction to Guided Reading

Time	Activity
8:00- 8:15	Participants will participate in an Engage activity and will learn the definition of GR.
8:15-9:15	Participants will learn about GR. Participants will take part in a large group discussion on how GR can be implemented in the classroom.
9:15-10:00	Participants will participate in a Modeling of a GR lesson presented by the instructor. Participants will evaluate the lesson and share what GR components they observed or did not observe in the lesson and share their observations with the other participants.
10:00-11:15	Participants will collaborate and discuss what they observed during the modeling of the GR lesson. Participants will discuss with their group how GR can benefit their students and come up with a list of 2-4 benefits for implementing GR in their classroom. Be ready to share.
11:15-11:30	Participants will share the list of benefits they made with the rest of the participants. Participants will complete a formative evaluation of the session.

## Day 1: Session 1

## Introduction to Guided Reading (GR)

**Purpose**

- To provide educators with the definition and purpose of GR to help them implement GR instruction into their teaching practices.

- To model a GR session so that educators can see how to use the components of GR.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers.

### **Goals**

- Teachers will learn the definition and purpose of GR.
- Teachers will see GR modeled.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers to develop a list of benefits for using GR.

### Session 1-Guided Reading

The data collected, through the interviews, indicated a lack of GR training. This lack of training contributed to some of the challenges the teachers faced when implementing GR. This PD will provide educators with a basic understanding of GR.

At the beginning of the Session 1, review the purpose (Attachment A-Slide 1) and goals (Attachment A-Slide 2) for the first session. The session will begin with a power point presentation on GR. After going over the agenda (Attachment A-Slide 3), the teachers will participate in an “Engage” activity (Attachment A-Slide 4). In this activity the teachers are to read each of the four columns posted on the power point slide and then choose a column that most appeals to them. They can write or think silently and then be ready to share their selection and tell why. This activity will build or activate any background knowledge they have about GR.

Next we will discuss the definition of GR. GR is “an instructional context for supporting each reader’s development of effective strategies for processing novel texts at

increasingly challenging levels of difficulty” (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p. 25). The small group model allows children to be taught in a way that is intended to be more focused on their specific needs, accelerating their progress. The text is easy enough for students to read with the teacher’s skillful support. The text offers challenges and opportunities for problem solving, but is easy enough for students to read with some fluency.

In the first part of Session 1, the presenter will discuss the essential elements of GR. The principles of GR (Attachment B-Slide 1) are (1) teachers’ supports or scaffolds, (2) readers read from their own copies of books or texts, (3) teachers teach for strategies, (4) use small group format, and (5) use books at the instructional level. It is important that teachers understand that they are to scaffold instruction to support readers at their instructional reading level. They must also understand the importance of providing each student with their own copy of the book or text to be used during GR. It is during GR, small group instruction, the teacher is able to work with students who have similar reading levels, strategies, and needs.

The goals of GR (Attachment B-Slide 2) include the following: enjoyment, successful reading, and independent. Enjoyment is possible when the readers can enjoy the story, and are able to use problem-solving strategies to meet challenges. Successful reading is possible when the text is chosen at the appropriate level, and the reader has been provided with sufficient scaffolding. Independent use of flexible problem-solving strategies in order to (a) figure out words they don’t know, (b) deal with a tricky sentence structure, and (c) understands concepts or ideas that have not previously met in print.

Talk about why GR. GR is a research based approach. Research evidence-NRP (2000)

stated that the students with reading difficulties who are taught in small group learn more than students who are instructed as a whole class.

The participants will participate in a Table Top discussion with their group. The participants are to discuss what they think GR is based on the information they just heard. They will be given 2-5 minutes for discussion. They must be ready to share. They will be given 2 minutes to share with the rest of the participants.

In this next part of the session we will talk about when students are reading for GR (Attachment B-Slide-3). Children are ready when they are capable of the following reading tasks:

1. They must be able to develop an understanding of the next text-what's happening, what it's about.
2. They must have the basic "concepts of print."
3. They must be able to identify each word or most words. This requires a bank of words-a "reading vocabulary" already known.
4. They must be able to string words together with fluent language.

In summary, the students must be able to do all those tasks in a coordinated fashion because if they are not close to showing these capabilities, they are unlikely to show success. The students should continue to receive support through small group Shared Reading, in addition to participating in whole class Shared Reading.

The next item on the agenda is teacher preparation (Attachment B-Slide-4). It is during teacher preparation that the teacher gather's resources, pre-assesses readers, and



group children according to the assessment data. Take a look at the GR Resources handout (Attachment C). This handout gives a list of teacher resources on GR as well as a list of companies that sell the different leveled texts. It is important that teachers have multiple copies of leveled texts to meet the needs of each student in the classroom. Pre-assessment is important because we use the data to form groups with children who share similar reading levels, strategies, and needs. We use the data to guide our lesson planning and instruction. Point out to the teachers that groups should be flexible and change often.

The next topic on the agenda is how are GR lessons structured? The GR lesson is structured around 3 steps. The before-, during-, and after-reading activities. Each step has its purpose. Look at your handout titled Purposes of the 3 Steps of GR (Attachment D). The teachers use the before-reading activity to build or activate the student's background knowledge and to set the purpose for reading the text. Teachers use during-reading activities to listen to the students read. Teacher use after reading activity to assign a task completely related to the purpose and to provide feedback and or discussion. Ask questions like what makes you say that? How do you know? Why do you think so? It is at this time that the teacher can help students gain cognitive clarity so that they can be successful again or the next time.

Now let us take a look at the menu of reading strategies continuum for emergent, early, transitional, and fluent readers. Ask the participants to look at their handout on the Reading Strategies Continuum (Attachment E). Emergent readers think about the story, track print, note patterns, use pictures to predict story and words, attend to graphophonic/visual clues (beginning and ending letters), and look through the word to

the end. Early readers think about the story, note spelling patterns, monitor and self-correct, use meaning, structural, and visual cues together, put words together into phrases (fluency), and *skip* and *return*. Transitional readers think about the story, make a story map, use a *before* and *after* chart, retell chapters in writing, and reread to clarify meanings. Fluent readers preview and predict, use text features to aid comprehension, research, take notes, and makes data charts, writes to deepen understanding of stories, factual texts, and poetry, uses webs and charts (e.g., KWL), and uses the strategy “Retell, Relate, Reflect” orally and in writing. The reading strategies are a good resource to help you understand what a child should be doing at each stage of reading.

At this time the presenter will model a GR lesson using the three steps. I would ask the participants to act as my students. After the GR lesson I would model the “Stopping to think” strategy. I would demonstrate with the whole audience using a picture book with natural “stopping points.” I would have the following questions posted on the wall for the students to refer to when stopping to think. What do I think is going to happen? (Prediction) Why do I think this is going to happen? (Inference) and prove it by going back to the story (using textual evidence to support your response).

The participants will now have some time to collaborate with their peers. At your table groups please discuss what you observed during the GR lesson that was modeled. Participants will discuss and collaborate with their group about what they observed during the lesson. Were they able to identify the three Steps of a GR lesson? The participants are also to discuss how they think GR can benefit their students. Tell the participants that as a group they are to come up with a list of 2-4 benefits of GR, write the

list on chart paper, post it on the wall, and then be ready to share it with the rest of the participants. Give the participants a few minutes to share the list of benefits their group posted on the wall.

The last two slides review the benefits of GR. Instruct the participants to see how many they came up with that are listed on the slides. Some of the benefits include a) strategy development that is flexible and self-extending, b) development of both individual and cooperative skills, c) students have the opportunity to re-read texts for pleasure, not for assessment, d) small group format creates a comfortable environment where reader's learning, reactions, and reactions are valued, and e) opportunities for the teacher to capitalize on teachable moments. I would like to end the session by reminding you to use the GR resources handout. I used many of these resources to develop this session. These resources can help you understand and implement GR appropriately in the classroom.

Ask participants if they have any additional questions or comments about GR. Answer any questions the participants may have.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation (Attachment F). You may place your evaluation in the basket on the desk by the door as you exit. The title of the Session is Guided Reading and my name is Mary Carrasco. Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop.

## Day 1-Session 2: Assessments

Time	Activity
1:00-1:20	Participants will engage in an introduction activity and will learn the definition of formative and summative assessments. (Only do the K and the W for now).
1:20-2:15	Participants will learn about formative and summative assessment. Participants will engage in the “Sorting it Out” activity. Read and discuss the descriptions and then sort the descriptions and place the descriptions under the heading Formative or Summative.
2:15-3:00	Participants will learn how to do a Running Record and analyze it. Video-Running Records Running Record Handout Participants will participate in the column activity.
3:00-4:15	Time to collaborate. Participants will collaborate with others to create a guided reading group based on data from formative assessments provided to them. Set of 4-5 F & P assessments for each table group.
4:15-4:30	Participants will review their KWL chart with their partner and be ready to share. Participants will complete a formative evaluation.

## Day 1-Session 2: Assessments

**Purpose**

- To provide educators with an understanding of the definition of formative and summative assessment.

- To provide educators with an understanding of how formative and summative assessments can work together.
- To model how to conduct, interpret, and use assessment to create reading groups and drive curriculum and instruction.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to consider ways to make formative assessment systematic and integrated with instruction.

### **Goals**

- Teachers will learn the definition of formative and summative assessment.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to learn about formative and summative assessments.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to conduct and analyze a running record using the FPB.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with peers to create reading groups using the set of assessment data provided.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to use data to guide planning and instruction.

### **Day 1-Session 2: Assessment**

The data collected, through the interviews, indicated a lack of GR training. This lack of training contributed to some of the challenges the teachers faced when implementing GR. This PD will provide educators with a basic understanding of

formative and summative assessment, how to conduct a running record, and how to create groups and drive curriculum and instruction with the data collected.

At the beginning of the Session 2, go over the purpose (Attachment G-Slide 1) and goals (Attachment G-Slide 2) of this session. Then go over the agenda (Attachment G-Slide 3). The session would begin with an Ice Breaker activity (Attachment G-Slide 4). Give each participant a KWL handout (Attachment H). Invite the participants to write down what they know about formative and summative assessment under the K column. Then ask the participants to write down what they want to know about formative and summative assessment under the W. This activity will build and activate background knowledge about formative assessment. Give the participants time to share their K and W with their neighbor.

In the first part of Session 1, the presenter will discuss the definition of formative and summative assessments. Assessment in education is the process of *gathering, interpreting, recording, and using* information about pupil's responses to an educational task (Harlen, Gipps, Broadfoot, & Nuttal, 1992). Why discuss assessments? Educators need to understand how to give and analyze data and how to use that data effectively to drive curriculum and instruction. Many times data is collected and never used. In GR we use the data collected from the FPB to help form our reading groups and to guide our planning and instruction.

Formative and summative assessment are interconnected. They seldom stand alone in construction or effect. The vast majority of genuine formative assessment is

informal, with interactive and timely feedback and response. It is widely and empirically argued that formative assessment has the greatest impact on learning and achievement.

Tell the participants that formative assessment is assessment for learning. It can be taken at varying intervals throughout a course to provide information and feedback that will help improve the following: the quality of student learning and the quality of the course itself. Formative assessment provides information on what an individual student needs to practice, have re-taught, and to learn next. Ask the participants to look at the handout titled A Sampling of Types of Formative Assessments (Attachment I). This handout provides types of formative assessment, an explanation of the assessment, examples and suggestions, and additional information on that assessment.

Now explain summative assessment. Summative assessment is an assessment of learning. Generally it is taken by students at the end of a unit or semester to demonstrate the “sum” of what they have or have not learned, summative assessment methods are the most traditional way of evaluating student work, and “good summative assessments (tests and other graded evaluations) must be demonstrably reliable, valid, and free of bias” (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Ask the participants to look at the handout titled Summative Assessments Definition of Types (Attachment J). This handout provides a list of the different types of summative assessments and the definition of each type. Ask the participants to look over the list to see how many of these summative assessments they have used. Give the participants 2 minutes to review the list and the 2-4 minutes to share out.

It is now time to play the “Sorting it Out” activity (Attachment K). The participants will be given an envelope with a set of descriptions. The participants will read and discuss each description and then decide as a table group whether the description is describing a formative or summative assessment. Participants will create a T-Chart and label the left side formative and the right side summative. The participants will place the description under the appropriate heading on the T-Chart. When the participants are finished they are to hang up their T-Chart on the wall. We will read and discuss each description. Participants may check to see if they placed their descriptions under the correct heading.

Display the slide with the Garden Analogy (Appendix L-Slide 1) and ask a volunteer to read it. If we think of our children as plants... *Summative assessment* of the plants is the process of simple measuring them. It might be interesting to compare and analyze measurements but, in themselves, these do not affect the growth of the plants. *Formative assessment*, on the other hand, is the equivalent of feeding and watering the plants appropriate to their needs-directly affecting their growth. Then as a whole group discuss the analogy. Ask, how does this analogy help you understand the difference between a formative and summative assessment? Give the participants 2-3 minutes to think and share their thoughts.

At this time you will be given the opportunity to conduct a running record. Provide each participant with a running record (Attachment M). The participants will watch a video of a teacher conducting a running record. The participants will be instructed to be filling out their running record on the same child that is reading in the



video. Once the story is over pause the video and allow the participants some time to review and analyze the running record. Once everyone is done analyzing the running record press play to continue on with the video. The educator conducting the running record will go over all the marks she made and what those marks signify. Once the video is finished, have the participants engage in a discussion, at their tables, about the running record they conducted and analyzed. Allow the participants to share how they felt during the time they were conducting the running record and then how they felt afterwards. The participants can also discuss how they analyzed the running record and if their running record was close to the way the educator on the video analyzed it or were they off on their analyzing.

It is time for an activity to reflect on assessments (Attachment L-Slide 2). At this time you will read the 4 columns and then choose the column that most appeals to you. Write or think silently and be ready to share. Give the participants 2-3 minutes to think or write down their response. Then give them 2-3 minutes to share out with the rest of the participants. Continue with the next slide on assessment. Discuss the use of observations for tracking students, how the use of a notebook and Post-It notes can serve as their documentation, and how running records provide a quick assessment of fluency.

This next part of the session is collaboration time (Attachment L-Slide 3), you will inform the participants that at this time they will be using the data provided to form reading groups. Each group will be given a set of FPB data to review and then form groups based on the data from the FPB. When the participants have completed this activity they are to share why and how they formed their GR groups with the rest of the

participants. They will also discuss how they can use formative assessments within their planning and instruction for GR.

Tell the participants that they will now review with their partner their KWL Chart (Attachment L-Slide 4). Explain that they are to review with their partner what you know (K) about formative and summative assessment, what you wanted (W) to learn about formative assessment, and then discuss what you Learned (L) about formative and summative assessment. Tell the participants to put a star or check mark on under the second column of “What I want to know?” if any of them had their questions answered.

Ask participants if they have any additional questions about formative and summative assessments. Answer any questions the participants may have.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation (Attachment N). You may place your evaluation in the basket on the desk by the door as you exit. The title of the Session is Formative and Summative Assessment and my name is Mary Carrasco. Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop.

#### Day 2 Session 3: The Before and During Reading Activity: Steps 1 and 2

Time	Activity
8:00- 8:15	Participants will engage in an introduction activity called “Sticky Situation” and learn the definition of before and during.
8:15-9:15	Participants will learn about Step 1 and 2, Before-and During-Reading Activities.

9:15-10:00	Modeling: The presenter will conduct a Before- and During-Reading of a pre-selected text.
10:00-11:15	Collaboration and Planning Time: Participants will collaborate as a group and write a Before- and During-Reading Part of a Lesson using the books provided, share it, and post it on the wall.
11:15-11:30	Participants will share their lesson and complete a formative evaluation of the session.

### Day 2: Session 3

#### The Before- and During-Reading Activity: Step 1 and 2

##### **Purpose**

- To provide educators with an understanding of the purpose of the before- and during-reading activity during a GR lesson.
- To provide educators with an understanding of how the before- and during-reading activities can work together.
- To model how to conduct before- and during-reading activities.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to plan and write a lesson that includes before- and during-activities.

##### **Goals**

- Teachers will learn the purpose of before- and during-reading activities.

- Teachers will have the opportunity to see before- and during-reading activities modeled.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with peers to discuss different types of before- and during-reading activities and their purposes.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to create a lesson that includes the before- and during-reading activities.

#### Day 2-Session 3- The Before- and During-Reading Activity: Step 1 and 2

The data collected, through the interviews, indicated a lack of GR training. This lack of training contributed to some of the challenges the teachers faced when implementing GR. This PD will provide educators with a basic understanding of step 1 and 2 of GR, which are the before- and during-reading activities, an opportunity to see the before and during reading activities modeled, and an opportunity to collaborate with peers to plan and write a lesson plan that includes the before- and during-reading activities.

At the beginning of Session 3, review the purpose (Attachment O-Slide 1) and goals (Attachment O-Slide 2) for the third session. The session would begin with the “Sticky Situation” activity (Attachment O-Slide 3). At this time you will instruct the participants to take a sticky note or Post-It note and write down 1-2 things they know about small group instruction. At their table group they are to discuss the list they made. If someone wrote down something similar to what they wrote they can exchange sticky

notes and continue to discuss the lists. They may agree or disagree with what is on the lists but tell why they agree or disagree. Give them about 5-10 minutes to do this activity.

After the activity is done, you will proceed with the power point presentation and review the agenda (Attachment O-Slide 4) for this session. In this part of the session we will be discussing the initial framework for every classroom using GR. During this time you will discuss group size, length of lessons, how to determine appropriate levels of groups, and that each child needs their own text. It is important that you use your data to form your reading groups. The reading groups should be small groups, ideally 4-6 students per group. Lessons should run about 15-20 minutes per group. I must stress to you that it is very important that each child have their own copy of the text to be used during the GR lesson. Next we are going to discuss what small group instruction looks like. During small group instruction the teacher is working with 4-6 students and is using a text that is at the students reading level. The teacher introduces the text to the small group. As the text is read aloud or silently, the teacher briefly works with students; each child reads the whole text. It is while the teacher is observing each student that the teacher may select one or two teaching points to address. The students resume reading and apply the teaching points presented by the teacher.

At this time review teacher preparation and when students are ready for GR. It is important to stress that the students be able to understand the text, have basic concepts about print, be able to identify each word or most words, and be able to string words together. If they are not close to showing these capabilities, they will be unlikely to show success. It is time for Turn and Talk. At this time the participants will turn to their partner

and discuss the 3 steps of a GR lesson. Tell the participants to be ready to share what they have discussed with the other participants in this session. Give the participants 2-3 minutes to discuss and then 2-4 minutes to share out.

Continue with the power point presentation. Discuss the three steps of a GR lesson, the purpose of before-reading activities, what the teachers does in before-reading activities, and what prereading activities the student does in the before-reading activity. The 3 structures or steps of GR include before-, during-, and after-reading activity. The before-reading activity sets the purpose for reading, introducing vocabulary, making predictions, and talks about the strategies that good readers use. The during-reading activity guides students as they read, provides wait time, gives prompts or clues as needed by individual students, such as “Try that again. Does that make sense? Look at how the word begins.” Take a look at the handout titled Teacher Prompts (Attachment P). This handout provides you with some examples of useful meaning, structural, and visual strategy prompts that you can use to assist the reader. The after-reading activity strengthens comprehension skills and provides praise for strategies used by students during the reading. Instruct the participants to look at their handout Before-, During-, and After-Reading Key Strategies (Attachment Q). This handout provides them with a list of activities they can do for each step.

Continue on with the presentation and talk about what the teacher does in the before-reading activity in a GR session and what the students do as well. The teacher introduces the text, keeping in mind the meaning, language structures, and visual information in the text, and the knowledge skills and experience of the readers. The

teacher scaffolds tricky words or structures leaving some “reading work:” questions and challenges for the reader. The teacher also activates or builds background knowledge of the reader, makes predictions, and sets purposes for reading. The teacher may also model a targeted strategy (i.e., “I’m going to re-read that to make sure it makes sense.”) This part of the lesson is very important because this is where you capture the student’s attention and engage the student in learning. Fountas and Pinnell (2007) suggest that the students participate in the following prereading activities: engage in a conversation about the story, raise questions, build expectations, and notice information in the text. Remind the participants that these prereading strategies are important for the student to be successful in learning how to read.

At this time the presenter will conduct a modeling of the before-reading activity of a pre-selected text. The participants will participate as students. After the reading the presenter will ask the participants to identify and share what they saw in the before-reading part of the lesson. It is important for the participants to actively engage in large and small group activities so that it gives them time to process and make meaning of what they are learning.

Continue with the power point presentation. Discuss the purpose of during-reading Activity, Key Reading Strategies for during-reading, and what Fountas and Pinnell say the teacher and student should be doing in Step 3 the during-reading activity. Inform the participants that during-reading strategies teach comprehension by making connections, generating questions, and determining importance by guiding the reader to use proficient reader strategies. Some Key Reading Strategies for during-reading include:

looking at pictures, titles, and bold words, use your word clues, use context to figure out words, reread, and skip the word if you have difficulty, and read the rest of the sentence. Tell the participants they can refer to their handout of Key Reading Strategies (Attachment Q) to see a full list of strategies they can use.

Fountas and Pinnell (2007) provide a list of what teachers do on Step 3-during-reading activities. The teacher should read 1-2 pages, work with children while they read, move from student to student, and taking running records when students read aloud. Teachers should also observe, listen, interact, confirm or suggest strategies to assist with problem-solving using prompts, not telling them. The teacher should make notes about the strategy use of individual readers. Fountas and Pinnell also suggest that students read the whole text or a unified part to themselves (softly or silently).

The presenter will conduct a modeling of the during-reading of a pre-selected text. The participants will participate as students. After the modeling the presenter will ask the participants to identify and share what they saw in the during-reading part of the lesson. The presenter will also ask the participants to identify and share what they saw in the before-reading part of the lesson modeled earlier in the session.

At this time the participants will participate in a Turn and Talk activity. This activity will allow the participants time to talk to their partner to discuss what they saw in the modeling of the before-, during-, and after-reading activities. The participants will also share one before- or during-reading activity that they are already using. For those



who have not used GR, they are to talk about one before- or during- reading activity that they would like to begin using in their classroom.

It is collaboration time. At this time tell the participants that as a group they will chose one of the GR books at their table and write a lesson plan that includes the before- and during-reading activities they would use with the book they have chosen. They can write the lesson plan on chart paper. Tell them that when they are finished writing the lesson plan, they should be ready to share it with the rest of the participants and then post it on the wall. If time permits, allow the participants to do a Gallery Walk around the room to view the other participant's lesson plans. This concludes today's session.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation (Attachment R). You may place your evaluation in the basket on the desk by the door as you exit. The title of the Session is Before- and During- Reading Activities: Step 1 and 2. My name is Mary Carrasco. Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop.

#### Day 2 Session 4: Step 3-After Reading Activity and Time to Plan

Time	Activity
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1:00-1:15	Agenda-Participants will participate in an introduction activity.
1:15-2:15	Step 3 of GR and Review of GR and its components.
2:15-3:00	Modeling: The presenter will conduct a During Reading of a pre-selected text.
3:00-4:15	Collaboration Time: Participants will collaborate as a group and write the After Reading Part of a Lesson using the books provided, share it, and post it on the wall. Participants will have time to collaborate with their grade level peers and to develop 1-2 GR lesson plans for their GR groups.
4:15-4:30	Participants will share their work/lessons and then complete the evaluation for this session.

#### Day 2 Session 4:

#### Step 3-After-Reading Activity and Time to Plan

#### **Purpose**

- To provide educators with an understanding of the purpose of the after-reading activity during a GR lesson.
- To provide educators with an understanding of how the after-reading activities can work together with the other steps of a GR lesson.
- To model how to conduct after-reading activities.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to plan and write a lesson that includes the after-reading activities.

- To provide an overview and summary of GR.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to plan and write a grade appropriate GR lesson.

### **Goals**

- Teachers will learn the purpose of after-reading activities.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to see after-reading activities modeled.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with peers to discuss different types of after-reading activities and their purposes.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to create a lesson that includes the after-reading activities.
- Teachers will review the purpose of GR and its components.
- Teachers will collaborate with grade level peers to plan and write a grade appropriate GR lesson that includes the 3 steps (Before-, During-, and After-Reading Activity).

#### Day 2 Session 4: Step 3-After-Reading Activity and Time to Plan

The data collected, through the interviews, indicated a lack of GR training. This lack of training contributed to some of the challenges the teachers faced when implementing GR. This PD will provide educators with a basic understanding of step 3 of GR, which is the after-reading activities, an opportunity to see the after-reading activities modeled, and an opportunity to collaborate with peers to plan and write a lesson plan that includes the before-, during-, and after-reading activities.

At the beginning of Session 4, review the purpose (Attachment S-Slide 1) and goals (Attachment S-Slide 2) for the fourth session. The session would begin with the “Think/Pair/Share” activity. At this time you will instruct the participants to think about the first two Steps of the GR lesson and the purpose of each step. Then pair up the participants with a different partner. Then instruct the partners to share what they know about the before- and during- reading activities. This activity will help get the participants retell or summarize what they learned from the previous session.

Give the participants a few minutes to discuss the two steps and their purpose. Then go over the agenda (Attachment S-Slide 4) for this period of instruction. Use the power point to review the three steps and their purposes. Mention that today we will focus the first half of the session on the third step which is the after-reading activity. Continue with the presentation and discuss the purpose of the after-reading activity in the GR lesson. After reading strategies connect the old and new knowledge and help students frame it in some way to their lives. At this time, tell the participants that they will have a couple of minutes to work with their table group to brainstorm at least 2-3 after reading activities. Give the participants 2-3 minutes to brainstorm. Tell them that they are to write the activities on chart paper and then post to the walls. You can call on a few groups to share the activities that they listed. Give the participants 2-4 minutes for this activity.

Continue with the presentation and discuss the After-Reading Key Strategies. Ask the participants to refer to their Before-, During-, and After-Reading Key Strategies handout (Attachment Q) that lists the key strategies for each step. Go over each strategy and give an example. Some of the key strategies include: identify the key concepts or the

main idea, summarize or sequence the events, point out details, ask specific questions, make connections (to self, text, world), compare/contrast/analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions. It is important that the participants see an example of each strategy so they grasp an understanding of that strategy. Some of the participants may not be aware that they are already using some of these strategies.

Now discuss what the teacher does in after-reading activity according to Fountas and Pinnell (1996). The teacher should do the following: talk about the story, invite personal responses, select 1 or 2 teaching points, assess children's understanding of the story, praise children, and engage students in word work or story extensions. Students need to be given the opportunity to read, discuss, and write about the story because this will help their comprehension.

What should the student be doing in the after reading activity? Fountas and Pinnell (1996) say the student should talk about the story because this will give the teacher some insight about whether or not the student understood what they read. The student should check their predictions and react personally to the story because this lets the teacher know if they were reading for a purpose to see if their predictions were correct. The students may revisit the text at points of problem-solving, reread the story to a partner or independently, engage in extension activities, and engage in a minute or two of word work. All these activities help the students comprehend or make meaning of what they are reading which is one of goals of GR.

At this time the presenter will conduct a modeling of the After-Reading activity of a pre-selected text. The participants will participate as students. Once the modeled lesson is finished ask the participants to write down 2-3 things they observed in Step 3 the After Reading Activity. Give the participants 2-3 minutes to write down what they observed. Then give the participants 2-4 minutes to share their observations with the rest of the participants.

Tell the participants that at this time they will be given some time to collaborate with their table group. As a group you will use the GR book your table selected earlier for the before- and during- reading activity and write the after-reading activity part to include in your lesson. Once you have written the after reading activity be ready to share it with the rest of the participants and then post it on the wall. The participants will be given some time to walk around the room to do a Gallery Walk to see the other participants Before-, During-, and After-Reading lesson plans.

The presenter will be a review GR and its components. Stress to the participants that GR is a strategy used to improve reading skill, strategies, and achievement. GR is done in small groups of 4-6 students who will all be working on the same skill and reading the same book. Remind them that the GR groups are flexible and use an open door policy. This means that as students master a skill they can move to another GR group. Discuss the importance of the GR lesson being approximately 15-20 minutes long and that all 3 steps of the GR lesson should be utilized during this time. The other students that are not working with the teacher should be quietly engaged in literacy

centers around the classroom. Go over what a GR lesson plan looks like and discuss the importance of each step in terms of the student.

1. Before-Reading Activity- used to preview the text before the students read it, fill in gaps in their background knowledge and vocabulary, and it helps prepare the students to make meaning from the text they are going to read.
2. During-Reading Activity- asking questions helps engage the student in reading, prompts the student in order to get them to delve into the heart of the story, and discussion helps them because when they can discuss the elements of fiction, they will know what to look for when they read so they can truly comprehend and appreciate fiction.
3. After-Reading Activity- discussion can improve recall and overall comprehension. Students will use important metacognitive strategies, such as questioning, paraphrasing, and retelling.

It is important to go over the Four Basic Cueing Systems for prompting which include: semantics, graphophonics, graphophonemics, and syntactics. The participants can refer to the handout: Language Prompts to Help Students Problem-Solve (Attachment T) and Meaning, Structure, and Visual (MSV) Teacher Prompts (Attachment U). These prompts are used by the teacher when she is listening to a student read. These prompts help the student take a closer look at what they read to make sure they are reading the words correctly. These are good problem-solving strategies can also be used by the students when they are reading independently.

At this time the participants will be given time to collaborate with their grade level peers to discuss GR, its components, and to plan a grade appropriate GR lesson for one of their reading groups. When you are finished writing your GR lesson be prepared to share it with the rest of the participants. Does anyone have any questions or comments at this time?

This concludes Day 2-Session 4. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation (Attachment V). You may place your evaluation in the basket on the desk by the door as you exit. The title of the Session is After-Reading Activities: Step 3 and Plan a Lesson. My name is Mary Carrasco. Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop.

#### Day 3 Session 5: Follow-Up Training (Part 1)

Time	Activity
8:00- 8:15	Participants will participate in an introduction activity.
8:15-9:15	Participants will take part in a large group discussion on their implementation of GR in the classroom.
9:15-10:00	Participants will be given time to model one of their or their grade levels GR lessons that they developed and used in the classroom.
10:00-11:15	Participants will collaborate to discuss the lessons they saw and provide feedback.
11:15-11:30	Participants will share Participants will complete a formative evaluation of the session.



### Day 3 Session 5:

#### Follow-Up Training (Part 1)

##### **Purpose**

- To provide educators with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of GR and its components.
- To provide educators an opportunity to model a GR lesson that they developed and used in the classroom.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to provide constructive feedback on the lessons that were conducted today by their colleagues.
- To provide a summary of GR.

##### **Goals**

- Teachers will learn the purpose of GR and its components.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to model one of their GR lessons that they developed and used in their classroom.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to provide feedback to their colleagues about the lessons they saw.
- Teachers will review the purpose of GR and its components.

Day 3 Session 5: Follow-Up Training (Part 1)

The data collected, through the interviews, indicated a lack of GR training. This lack of training contributed to some of the challenges the teachers faced when implementing GR. This PD will provide educators an opportunity to demonstrate what they learned about GR by modeling a GR lesson that they developed and taught in their classroom. This session will also provide them with the opportunity to collaborate with peers on how to improve their lesson if applicable.

At the beginning of Session 5, review the purpose (Attachment W-Slide 1) and goals (Attachment W-Slide 2) for the fifth session. The session would begin with the “Turn and Talk” activity (Attachment W-Slide 3). At this time you will instruct the participants to turn to a partner and talk about one success and one challenge they had with implementing GR in the classroom. After you have discussed your success and or challenge, please write them on a sticky note and post them to the T-Chart on the wall labeled “Successes” and “Challenges”. This activity will help give the participants an opportunity to share how they feel about their implementation of GR in a non-threatening environment. This will also let me, the presenter, know what aspects of GR I need to focus on and or reteach. After this activity is done, you will continue with the power point presentation and go over the agenda (Appendix W-Slide 4) for today’s session.

The next part of the session we will have an open discussion about the challenges that some of the participants had implementing GR. We will make a list of each challenge and then when it is time to collaborate we will discuss ways to improve the lesson and how to overcome that challenge. For the next part of the session, the presenter will call on volunteers to come up and model one of the GR lessons that they developed and have

taught in the classroom. This will give the presenter as well as the other participants an opportunity to view not only the lesson but the way it is presented. Prior to attending this session, the participants were asked to bring at least 1 GR lesson plan that they had developed by themselves or with their grade level team.

After the participants have had a chance to model their GR lesson they will have time to collaborate with their peers to discuss the modeled lessons. Remind them to provide constructive criticism and or positive feedback. Ask the groups to be ready to share their feedback with the large group. Once everyone has had a chance to provide feedback to one or more colleagues ask them to please write their suggestions on a sticky note and place it next to the challenge on the list of challenges we posted on the wall. Are there any other questions or comments at this time?

This concludes Day 3-Session 5. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation (Attachment X). You may place your evaluation in the basket on the desk by the door as you exit. The title of the Session is Follow-Up Training (Part 1). My name is Mary Carrasco. Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. Have a great lunch.

#### Day 3 Session 6: Follow-Up Training (Part 2)

Time	Activity
1:00- 1:15	Participants will participate in an introduction activity.
1:15-2:15	Participants will take part in a one-to-one conference with the instructor for further assistance on implementing GR in the classroom.

2:15-3:15	Participants will be given time to collaborate and develop more grade level appropriate GR lesson plans for one or more of their reading groups.
3:15-4:15	Participants will be given time share their GR lesson plans and receive feedback from their peers.
4:15-4:30	Participants will be given time to ask any questions and or make comments. Participants will complete a formative evaluation of the session.

### Day 3 Session 6:

#### Follow-Up Training (Part 2)

#### **Purpose**

- To provide educators with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of GR and its components.
- To provide educators an opportunity to conference one-to-one with the instructor for further assistance on implementing GR.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to develop, share, and provide constructive feedback on the lessons that were created today by their colleagues.
- To provide a summary of GR.

#### **Goals**

- Teachers will learn the purpose of GR and its components.

- Teachers will have the opportunity to conference one-to-one with the instructor to discuss concerns or issues they are having implementing GR.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to write an effective GR lesson plan.
- Teachers will share the lessons they have created and listen to feedback from their colleagues about the lessons shared.
- Teachers will review the purpose of GR and its components.

#### Day 3 Session 6: Follow-Up Training (Part 1)

The data collected, through the interviews, indicated a lack of GR training. This lack of training contributed to some of the challenges the teachers faced when implementing GR. This PD will provide educators an opportunity to demonstrate what they learned about GR by modeling a GR lesson that they developed and taught in their classroom. This session will also provide them with the opportunity to collaborate with peers on how to improve their lesson if applicable.

At the beginning of session 6, review the purpose (Attachment Y-Slide 1) and goals (Attachment Y-Slide 2) for the sixth session. The session would begin with the introduction activity (Attachment Y-Slide 3). At this time you will instruct the participants to look at the activity displayed on the power point presentation. Instruct the participants to read each column and then choose the column that most appeals to them. Tell the participants to write or think silently about their response. Remind them that they should be ready to share their response. Allow the participants 2-3 minutes to think and respond and 2-4 minutes to share their responses with the other participants.

The next part of the session we will be a one-to-one conference time with those participants who are still struggling with the implementation of GR. The instructor will use this time to focus on the issues or challenges the participant is having and prepare a plan with the participant to address the issue. The conference will provide the participants time to share their thoughts and feelings in a private setting. I want the participant to know that I am here to help them in any way I can. I want to work closely with those that are still having trouble writing GR lesson plans, assessing and forming reading groups, and implementing the before-, during-, and after-reading activities during their GR sessions. It is important for the participants to feel that they are not working in isolation. They need to feel that they have someone to go to when they have concerns or questions about GR.

For the next part of the session, the participants will be give some time to collaborate with their peers and work on developing more appropriate grade level GR lesson plans for one or more of their reading groups. This is a good time to use the knowledge and experience of your peers in this room to assist you in writing effective GR lesson plans. This is also a good time for those of you who feel comfortable with GR to share your experiences and knowledge with those who are just beginning to use the GR approach in their classroom.

After the participants are finished writing their GR lessons the presenter will ask for volunteers to come up and share one of the GR lessons that they developed with the rest of the participants. Remind the participants to listen and to provide constructive criticism and or positive feedback on the lessons shared by their peers. Make sure

everyone has had a chance to provide feedback to one or more colleagues. Are there any other questions or comments at this time?

This concludes Day 3-Session 6. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation (Attachment Z). You may place your evaluation in the basket on the desk by the door as you exit. The title of the Session is Follow-Up Training (Part 2). My name is Mary Carrasco. Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop.

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## Attachment A: Session 1: Slides 1-4

**Session 1 - Introduction to Guided Reading.****Purpose**

- To provide educators with the purpose and benefits of GR to help them implement Gr instruction into their teaching practices.
- To model a GR session so that educators can see how to use the components of GR.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers.

A-Slide 1

**Session 1 - Introduction to Guided Reading.****Agenda**

- 8:00-8:15-Introduction Activity and definition of GR.
- 8:15-9:15- Overview of the purpose, goals, components, and benefits of GR.
- 9:15-10:00-Modeling of a GR session
- 10:00-11:15- Time to collaborate
- 11:15-11:30- Share time and Evaluation

A-Slide 3

**Session 1 - Introduction to Guided Reading.****Engage Activity**

- Read each column. Choose the column that most appeals to you.
- Write or think silently.
- Be ready to share.

A-Slide 4

A	B	C	D
What are your feelings now after implementing GR?	What skills do you feel you already possess that helped make implementing GR a positive experience?	How do you think the organization and planning process of your lessons have changed in regards to GR?	What other understandings do you want to develop to improve your GR lessons?

A-Slide 4

Attachment B: Session 1-Slides 1-4

**Session 1-Introduction to Guided Reading.**

**Definition of GR**

- GR is 'small group reading instruction designed to provide differentiated teaching that supports students in developing reading proficiency (Fountas & Pinell, 1996)

B-Slide 1

**Session 1-Introduction to Guided Reading.  
Principles and Goals of GR**

- Teacher's supports or scaffolds.
- Readers read from their own copies of books or texts.
- Teachers teach for strategies
- Use small group format
- Use books at the instructional level
- Goals: enjoyment, successful reading, and independent use of flexible problem-solving strategies.

B-Slide 2

**Session 1-Introduction to Guided Reading.**

**When are students ready for GR?**

- Understand the text
- Concepts of print
- Identify each word or most words
- Strings words together

B-Slide 3

**Session 1-Introduction to Guided Reading.**

**Teacher Preparation**

- Gather resources
- Pre-assesses
- Groups children

B-Slide 4

## Attachment C: Guided Reading Resources

**Guided Reading Resources**

Videos-You tube

What is Guided Reading?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yw6CyBjkPqw&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr\\_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=99](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yw6CyBjkPqw&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=99)

Kindergarten Guided Reading-Randi Timmons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MBUPYAiSE8>

Mrs. Moran-Before/During/After Reading Activities

[http://smoran.ednet.ns.ca/Reader'sworkshop/before\\_during\\_after\\_reading.htm](http://smoran.ednet.ns.ca/Reader'sworkshop/before_during_after_reading.htm)

Kindergarten Guided Reading-Mrs. Nelson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jq--ckDbjSY>

Guided Reading in a Third Grade Classroom-(before/during/after activities)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBy6Bgo7lv&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr\\_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBy6Bgo7lv&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=1)

Guided Reading Emergent Readers

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dC4tY3hj4NQ&index=12&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr\\_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dC4tY3hj4NQ&index=12&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6lcMRV9GRw&index=142&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr\\_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6lcMRV9GRw&index=142&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn)

Guided Reading K-2 Before-Reading

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8K68ItsR8&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr\\_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=55](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8K68ItsR8&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=55)

Guided Reading 3-5-After Reading

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAko73ilYIY&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr\\_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=94](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAko73ilYIY&list=PLHNhtapAJqPr_tCTIk5GZiYkf8TPBGoKn&index=94)

### Books

Fountas, I. C. & Pinnell, G. S. (1996). *Guided Reading: Good first teaching for all children*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH.

Fountas, I. C. & Pinnell, G. S. (2010). *The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades Pre-K-8*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH.

Richardson, J. (2009). *The Next Step in Guided Reading: Focused assessments and targeted lessons for helping every student become a better reader*. Scholastic.

### Companies

Scholastic

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/guidedreading/>

Scholastic Brochure

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/guidedreading/pdf/1.0\\_Homepage/6936.01\\_Scholastic\\_Guid\\_read\\_Brochure\\_II\\_Release\\_Low\\_Res\\_Single\\_Pages.pdf](http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/guidedreading/pdf/1.0_Homepage/6936.01_Scholastic_Guid_read_Brochure_II_Release_Low_Res_Single_Pages.pdf)

Crabtree Publishing Company

<http://www.crabtreebooks.com/resources/leveled-reading/guided-reading-levels>

Learning A-Z-This is a good one has several fiction and non-fiction books at each reading level. You can print them out in color or black and white.

<http://www.learninga-z.com/>

Pioneer Valley Books

<https://www.pioneervalleybooks.com/nonfiction/nonfiction-for-beginning-readers.html>

Some other companies include:

Rigby, Wright Company, National Geographic, National Geographic Kids, Wilbooks etc.

Attachment D: Purposes of the 3 Steps of Guided Reading

## **Purposes of the 3 Steps of GR**

### **Step 1: Before-Reading Activities**

#### **Purpose of Before-Reading Activities**

- Building/Accessing Prior Knowledge
- Connecting to personal experiences
- Developing vocabulary
- Taking a “picture walk”
- Making predictions
- Setting purposes for reading
- Graphic organizer:
  - Story map, story frame, story web,
  - Lotus, Fishbone, KWL chart

### **Step 2: During-Reading Activities**

#### **Purpose of During-Reading Activities**

- During reading strategies teach comprehension by
  - Making connections,
  - Generating questions,
  - Determining importance by guiding the reader to use proficient reader strategies.

### **Step 3: After-Reading Activities**

#### **Purpose of After-Reading Activities**

- After reading strategies
  - Connect the old and new knowledge and
  - Help students frame it in some way to their lives.

## Attachment E: Menu of Reading Strategies Continuum

## Menu of Reading Strategies Continuum

**Fluent Readers**

- Preview and predict
- Using text features to aid comprehension
- Researching; taking notes; making data charts
- Writing to deepen understanding of stories, factual texts, poetry
- Webbing and charting (e.g., KWL)
- Strategy recursively taught at all levels: "Retell, Relate, Reflect" orally and in writing.

**Early Readers**

- Thinking about the story
- Noting spelling patterns
- Monitoring and self-correcting
- Using meaning, structural, and visual cues together
- Putting words together into phrases (fluency)
- "Skip and return"

**Transitional Readers**

- Thinking about the story: use the strategy "Stopping to think."
- Making a story map
- Using a "before and after" chart
- Retelling chapters in writing
- Rereading to clarify meanings

**Fluent Readers**

- Preview and predict
- Using text features to aid comprehension
- Researching; taking notes; making data charts



- Writing to deepen understanding of stories, factual texts, poetry
- Webbing and charting (e.g., KWL)
- Strategy recursively taught at all levels: "Retell, Relate, Reflect"
- Strategy recursively taught at all levels: "Retell, Relate, Reflect" orally and in writing.

## Attachment F: Session 1-Evaluation

**Session 1-Evaluation**

**Thank you for attending this workshop. Please circle the answer that best describes your experiences.**

1. How would you describe the length of the session?

- A. The session was too short.
- B. The session was too long.
- C. The session was the right length.

Comments:

2. How would you describe the amount of content covered?

- A. The session did not have enough content.
- B. The session had too much content.
- C. The session had the right amount of content.

Comments:

3. How would you describe your opportunities to reflect on what you learned?

- A. Time to reflect was a somewhat useful part of this session.
- b. Time to reflect was a useful part of this session.
- C. The time to reflect was not a useful part of this session.

Comments:

4. How useful was the time to collaborate?

- A. The time to collaborate was very useful.
- B. The time to collaborate was somewhat useful.
- C. The time to collaborate was not useful.

Comments:

5. What are additional comments or suggestions you have about this workshop?

## Attachment G: Session 2-Slides 1-4

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 2- Assessments</b> Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide educators with an understanding of the definition of assessments.</li> <li>• To provide educators with an understanding of how formative and summative assessments can work together.</li> <li>• To model how to conduct, interpret, and use assessment to create reading groups and drive curriculum and instruction.</li> <li>• To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to consider ways to make formative assessment systematic and integrated with instruction.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">G-Slide 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 2- Assessments</b> Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will learn the definition of assessment.</li> <li>• Teachers will have the opportunity to learn about formative and summative assessments.</li> <li>• Teachers will have the opportunity to conduct and analyze a running record using the Fountas and Pinnell (F &amp; P) Benchmark.</li> <li>• Teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with peers to create reading groups using the set of assessment data provided.</li> <li>• Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to use data to guide planning and instruction.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">G-Slide 2</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 2- Assessments</b> Agenda</p> <p>1:00-1:20- Introduction activity and definition of assessment.</p> <p>1:20-2:15- Learn about formative and summative assessments.</p> <p>2:15-3:00- Participate in conducting a running record and then analyzing it.</p> <p>3:00-4:15- Time to collaborate</p> <p>4:15-4:30- Complete, Review, and share KWL chart. Complete Evaluation form.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">G-Slide 3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 2- Assessments</b> Ice Breaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>KWL activity:</b> Participants will engage in a KWL activity and will learn about the purpose and definition of formative assessment.</li> <li>• Provide each participant with a handout of KWL chart and invite participants to write down what they know about formative and summative assessments under the "K" column.</li> <li>• Once that is completed, invite the participants to write down what they want to learn about formative and or summative assessment under the "W" column.</li> <li>• Give the participants a few minutes to share with their partner what they wrote down.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">G-Slide 4</p>

## Attachment H: KWL Chart

# KWL Chart

What I Already <b>KNOW</b>	What I <b>WANT</b> to Know	What I <b>LEARNED</b>

## Attachment I: A Sampling of Types of Formative Assessments

### A Sampling of Types of Formative Assessment

**Formative Assessment:** *Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. (CCSSO)*

Type	Explanation	Examples / Suggestions	Additional information
Conferencing/ individual/small group	The teacher meets with students to discuss a specific targeted skill. The teacher can record the student's progress toward the standard and what is the next step for them.	Video example: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pad1eAcsHho">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pad1eAcsHho</a> Good feedback video also!	
Discussion	The teacher asks targeted questions and records informally student responses. This can be done whole group, small group. Later this information can be transferred to the student's grade pages	Propose an alternate ending to the book. Defend your change with information from the book and what you know about the characters.	Bloom question stems
Exit slip/admit slip	When students enter or begin the lesson, they are presented with the goal for the lesson. At the conclusion, they complete a brief simple assessment that the teacher can use to assess their skill level on the goal and what they need to do next.	Name as many geologic periods as you can. Extension: Put them in the correct order Struggling : Provide the first letters or other hints	<a href="http://wblrd.sk.ca/~bestpractice/exit/resources.html">http://wblrd.sk.ca/~bestpractice/exit/resources.html</a>
Four corners	Corners are labeled: Strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Present a controversial statement and have students go to the corner that best fits their opinion. Students then pair up to discuss why they feel as they do. Teacher circulates and records comments. Next there can be a whole group discussion, where opinions are defended and or students can return to their desks to write a brief defense of their opinion.	As a class, study the available information on Global Warming. Next present the following question: The planet Earth is getting warmer and we must make immediate changes in our behavior to prevent disaster. Have students select their corner and work to create a presentation with support data	<a href="http://debbiedespirt.suite101.com/four-corners-activities-a170020">http://debbiedespirt.suite101.com/four-corners-activities-a170020</a>
Games	As students play the game, the teacher circulates with a clip board and records individual observations on student skills. This information will drive later small group lessons.	As students play Contig , the teacher circulates around the room, recording on a clipboard at what skill level students are playing the game. Are they just using addition, or are they using multiple steps.	Mathwire.com has the game board and explanation of the game. <a href="http://mathwire.com">http://mathwire.com</a>

Type	Explanation	Examples / Suggestions	Additional information
Graphic organizers	The teacher presents a variety of graphic organizers and allows students to choose from a sample to demonstrate their knowledge on a given standard. As they work, the teacher can circulate around the room and discuss choices with the students. This information, along with the final product can drive further learning.	Students use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the books <i>Polar Express</i> and <i>Silver Packages</i> .	<a href="http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/venn.pdf">http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/venn.pdf</a>
Individual white boards	Students record their answer to a given question on their white boards. On the teacher's signal, the students raise their boards so the teacher can see if they arrived at a reasonable answer. This would drive later small group work.	The teacher posts a question, such as how many cups in 2-1/2 quarts. Students record their response, and when requested, show their answer. Teacher notes students who are having difficulty.	Alternate white boards can be cardboard in a clear page sleeve or shower board.
Kinesthetic assessment	This assessment requires students to incorporate movement to demonstrate their understanding. The teacher can make notes on their understanding for further learning.	Math: Create a graph on the classroom floor, in the hall or in the gym and have students locate coordinates by moving to them. Begin with small groups or pairs.	<a href="http://www.ehow.com/list_7793126_ideas-learning-through-movement-classroom.html">http://www.ehow.com/list_7793126_ideas-learning-through-movement-classroom.html</a>
Laundry Day	This is a student self-assessment where they select a group with which to study for a summative assessment. Previous class work can also be used as criteria.	There are 4 groups : Tide(Those who feel they are drowning in information); Gain(understand basics but missing some key parts; Bold(fairly confident, just some missing details)Cheer (sure of success , looking for enrichment)	<a href="http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/LaundryDay.html">http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/LaundryDay.html</a>
Learning/ Response logs	Students maintain a log where they record their learning, or respond to a lesson regarding their understanding.	The teacher collects all or some of the logs after students have completed a task. Students will comment on their level of comfort with the information, as well as what was learned and what questions they may still have.	<a href="http://www.busyteacherSAFE.com/literacy/readers_response.html">http://www.busyteacherSAFE.com/literacy/readers_response.html</a>
Observations	The teacher walks around the room as students are engaged in an activity. There is a specific skill that is being addressed and the teacher will record what she/he sees on informal notes to be transferred to the student's grade pages to drive further instruction.	Students are working on a math challenge requiring using manipulatives to determine various equivalent fractions. The teacher will walk around and record what is observed, who demonstrates mastery and who needs more support. Suggestion: Create a sheet with student names down the left and open slots at	<a href="http://www.nycomprehensivcenter.org/docs/form_assess/FormAssessObsLessonPlanTool.pdf">http://www.nycomprehensivcenter.org/docs/form_assess/FormAssessObsLessonPlanTool.pdf</a>

Type	Explanation	Examples / Suggestions	Additional information
		the top. List the standards being addressed with a given activity, then use a system to record those having difficulty and those who need more of a challenge. Those not marked show mastery. Transfer data to student record sheets later. Create the next day plan from the results.	
Practice presentation	Students practice a presentation model, with peer feedback. They are working on verbal work as well as presentation skills and demonstrating knowledge on the subject matter.	Create a standards based rubric that students see before they prepare and as they peer evaluate.	<a href="http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/printouts/30700_rubric.pdf">http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/printouts/30700_rubric.pdf</a>
Projects	Students demonstrate knowledge on a specific set of standards by presenting information to the entire group. A rubric is given prior to the creation of the presentation and the student/group is evaluated via this document. Further small group lessons will be created as a result of this information	Create a standards based rubric that students see before they prepare and as they peer evaluate.	Example rubrics <a href="http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/">http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/</a>
Questions	Challenge students to demonstrate higher level thinking by asking challenging questions such as asking them to explain, justify, imagine or defend.		Bloom question stems <a href="http://tpri.wikispaces.com/file/view/05-2Bloom-16-17+Stems+for+Instruction.pdf">http://tpri.wikispaces.com/file/view/05-2Bloom-16-17+Stems+for+Instruction.pdf</a>
Self/peer assessment	Students reflect on their learning, and assess where they are in the continuum. Students can also be used a peer evaluators, explaining how they feel a product reflects what was expected. ( NOTE: Students must be extensively taught this skill!)	<i>As I See it</i> Determine the number of rows you would like on the template. Create and enter in the sentence stems on the template.  1. Examples of types of sentence stems a. Personal Statements o When I read this, I imagine that... o I was most impacted by...	

Type	Explanation	Examples / Suggestions	Additional information
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Explanatory Statements               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The angle changes because...</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Prediction Statements               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Based on the data, I predict...</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. Confusion Declarations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o After today, I am still confused about...</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Make and distribute enough copies for each student.</li> <li>3. Ask students to express their knowledge or opinions using the stems.</li> <li>4. Discuss what students have discovered about their own opinions or levels of knowledge.</li> </ol>	
Short quizzes	Students respond to a prompt or a few targeted questions. They receive feedback promptly with directions for what they will do as a result of the outcome.	For multiple choice quizzes, have a double answer key (vertical fold) and have them record them twice. Students turn in 1 copy and keep the other for discussion as you go over the answers immediately after they have finished.	
Think – pair-share	The teacher presents a question (higher level, standard targeted). Students have 20 -30 seconds to think on their own. On a signal, they turn to a partner and discuss their thoughts for approx. 1 minute, and finally they share with the class for discussion.	Hand signals, perhaps with a quiet sound signal, can be useful for this activity. A closed fist for think, crossed fingers for pair, and an open palm up for share.	<a href="http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/PD/instr/strats/think/">http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/PD/instr/strats/think/</a>
Visual assessment	Students use visuals, such as drawings, diagrams, photos, maps or 3 D creations to demonstrate understanding of a standard. This may be an ongoing sort of assessment where the teacher may question the student for further definition.	Students create a “Doodle Art” as they watch an educational video. They are to write important vocabulary and draw visuals to help demonstrate what they learned. They can share their Doodle Art with a partner as the teacher circulates around the room, recording	

Type	Explanation	Examples / Suggestions	Additional information
		information. After polishing up, they can turn them in.	
Writer’s notebook	Students have a 3 ring binder where they keep all their writing, informal and final drafts. The teacher periodically reviews select writing and has a discussion of strengths and weaknesses.	In the back there is a two column response page. The teacher can indicate what the student needs to work on and then the student indicates in future writing where this is demonstrated.	Student may use this notebook for personal writing as well. Consider allowing the student to keep at the conclusion of the year.

## Attachment J: Summative Assessment Definition of Types

**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT DEFINITION OF TYPES**

-- **Summative assessment** is a process that concerns final evaluation to ask if the project or program met its goals. Typically the summative evaluation concentrates on learner outcomes rather than only the program of instruction. It is a means to determine a student's mastery and understanding of information, skills, concepts, or processes. Summative assessments occur at the end of a formal learning/instructional experience, either a class or a program and may include a variety of activities, e.g., tests, demonstrations, portfolios, internships, clinicals, and capstone projects.

--**Summative assessment...**

- Should reflect formative assessments that precede it.
- Should match material taught.
- May determine student's exit achievement.
- May be tied to a final decision, grade or report.
- Should align with instructional/curricular outcomes.
- May be a form of alternative assessment.

**TYPES OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT**

Summative assessments should be selected, developed, and used on the basis of their ability to assess the mastery of the program outcomes and core abilities and learning that occurred in both General Education and support courses related to the program.

<b>Clinical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Off-campus, occupationally related experience that requires demonstration of skills and knowledge under the supervision of both an on-site clinician and an FVTC instructor.</li> </ul>
<b>Portfolio</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection of artifacts that shows skill development over a period of time (the duration of the program).</li> </ul>
<b>Internship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to work in an occupationally related work setting under the direction of a supervisor from the occupation.</li> </ul>
<b>Summative Testing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-term and final examinations (traditional and/or performance based) that are used to evaluate performance at the conclusion of a course or program.</li> </ul>
<b>Capstone Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A concluding project that verifies the knowledge and skills learned in a program.</li> </ul>
<b>Licensure/Certification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A process through which a license or certification is earned based upon meeting standardized criteria and/or passing an examination, usually nationally or regionally normed.</li> </ul>
<b>Demonstration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A performance-based display of skills and knowledge learned throughout the course and/or program.</li> </ul>



**Fox Valley  
Technical  
COLLEGE**

Langan/Center for Instructional Development & Delivery  
Visit the FVTC Web site: <http://its.fvtc.edu/assessment/assessment.htm>

1/24/2007



**Checklist for Creating and Evaluating Summative Assessment Tools**

*Adapted from NTC's "Criteria for Exit Assessment" (2001)*

Criterion	Yes	No
<b>Tool/activity includes:</b>		
• performance-type assessment of each program outcome.		
• performance-type assessment of each core ability.		
• performance-type assessment of General Education requirements (where not already included in program outcomes).		
• performance-type assessment of support course requirements (where not already included in program outcomes).		
• has been collaboratively developed and validated by all program instructors, with input from General Education instructors, as appropriate.		
• assessment performance criteria for each program outcome.		
• assessment performance criteria for each core ability.		
• student self-assessment (with criteria).		
An agreed-upon scoring guide for the summative assessment tool/activity has been collaboratively developed by program instructors with input from external resources as appropriate.		
Tool/activity is validated by program faculty with input from advisory committee members and/or other external resources.		
Information guides have been prepared for and discussed with students at the beginning of the program and during the final semester before the summative assessment is administered.		



## Attachment K: Descriptions for “Sorting it Out” Activity

1. **‘... often means no more than that the assessment is carried out frequently and is planned at the same time as teaching.’ (Black and William, 1998)**
  
2. **‘...assessment (that) has increasingly been used to sum up learning...’(Black and Wiliam, 1998)**
  
3. **‘... provides feedback which leads to students recognizing the (learning) gap and closing it ... it is forward looking ...’ (Harlen, 1998)**
  
4. **‘... looks at past achievements ... adds procedures or tests to existing work ... involves only marking and feedback grades to student ... is separated from teaching ... is carried out at intervals when achievement has to be summarized and reported.’ (Harlen, 1998)**
  
5. **‘ ... includes both feedback and self-monitoring.’ (Sadler, 1989)**
  
6. **‘... is used essentially to feed back into the teaching and learning process.’ (Tunstall and Gipps, 1996)**

## Attachment L: Session 2-Slides 1-4

**Session 2-Assessments****Garden Analogy**

If we think of our children as plants...

**Summative assessment** of the plants is the process of simply measuring them. It might be interesting to compare and analyze measurements but, in themselves, these do not affect the growth of the plant.

**Formative assessment**, on the other hand, is the equivalent of feeding and watering the plants appropriate to their needs-directly affecting their growth.

L-Slide 1

**Session 2-Assessments****Reflection Activity**

- Read each column. Choose the column that most appeals to you.
- Write or think silently.
- Be ready to share.

L-Slide 2

**Session 2-Assessments****Time to Collaborate**

Forming Groups Activity

- Participants will collaborate with their peers to create GR groups using the data from the set of formative assessments provided to them.
- Set of 4-5 F & P assessments for each table group.
- Participants will share why and how they formed their GR groups with the rest of the participants.

L-Slide 3

A	B	C	D
What are your feelings about doing assessments?	What skills do you feel you already possess that help make conducting assessments a positive experience?	How do you think the organization and planning process of your lessons have changed in regards to assessments?	What other understandings do you want to develop before conducting an assessment of any type?

L-Slide 2

**Session 2 - Assessments**  
**Review KWL Chart Activity**

- Participants will collaborate with a partner and review what you know (K) about formative assessment, What you wanted (W) to learn about formative assessment and then discuss what you learned (L) about formative assessment with your partner.
- Be ready to share your KWL Chart with the other participants.

L-Slide 4

## Attachment M: Running Record

## Running Record

I remember very well the day you were born.

Mom went into the hospital. I was only eight years old and I wasn't allowed in the hospital room. So I sent mom a necklace and a note. I bought the necklace from the school store. It was a heart charm with a flower in the middle and a note that read

Dear Mom,

I hope you are ok. I hope you like the gift I got you.

I hope the baby is a girl.

Love Maria

Mom did like the present. And she was ok. And you were a girl.

Mom and dad named you Margo, but we called you Maggie.

Sometimes, when no one could hear, I called you brownie because your eyes were

dark brown like chocolate.

I wanted to have a special name for you that only you and I know about because I

knew we had a special relationship.

I got to hold you right away once mom and dad brought you home. You were so warm

and soft.

I loved you immediately. And sometimes I pretended that you were my very own little

baby.

Sometimes I did funny things to make you laugh. I did them over and over again to

keep hearing you laugh.

Sometimes you shouted and threw temper tantrums. I was glad at those times that you

were mom's baby.

Because all of that screaming drove me crazy but I loved you anyway.

Sometimes when my friends called me I told them I didn't want to play with them

because I wanted to stay home with you.

My friends didn't understand because they didn't have a sister like you.

I am glad that you are my sister. You will always belong to me.

## Attachment N: Session 2-Evaluation

**Session 2-Evaluation**

**Thank you for attending this workshop. Please circle the answer that best describes your experiences.**

1. How would you describe the length of the session?

- A. The session was too long.
- B. The session was too short.
- C. The session was the right length.

Comments:

2. How would you describe the amount of content covered?

- A. The session had too much content.
- B. The session did not have enough content.
- C. The session has the right amount of content.

Comments:

3. How would you describe your opportunities to reflect on what you learned?

- A. Time to reflect was a useful part of this session.
- b. Time to reflect was a somewhat useful part of this session.
- C. The time to reflect was not a useful part of this session.

Comments:

4. How effective was the modeling portion of the session?

- A. The modeling was effective.
- B. The modeling was somewhat effective.
- C. The modeling was not effective.

Comments:

5. How useful was the time to collaborate?

- A. The time to collaborate was very useful.
- B. The time to collaborate was somewhat useful.
- C. The time to collaborate was not useful.

Comments:

6. What are additional comments or suggestions you have about this workshop?

## Attachment O: Session 3-Slides 1-4

### Session 3-Before and During Reading Activities

#### Purpose

- To provide educators with an understanding of the purpose of the before- and during-reading activity during a GR lesson.
- To provide educators with an understanding of how the before-and during-reading activities can work together.
- To model how to conduct before- and during-reading activities.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to plan and write a lesson that includes before-and during-reading activities.

O-Slide 1

### Session 3-Before and During Reading Activities

#### Goals

- Teachers will learn the purpose of before-and during-reading activities.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to see before-and during-reading activities modeled.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with peers to discuss different types of before- and during-reading activities and their purposes.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to create a lesson that includes the before- and during-reading activities.

O-Slide 2

### Session 3-Before and During Reading Activities

#### "Sticky Situation"

- Participants will take a Post-It note and write down 1-2 things they know about small group instruction.
- At their table group they are to discuss the things listed on their sticky notes.
- If someone at their groups writes down something similar to what they wrote, they may exchange sticky notes and continue.
- They may choose to agree or disagree with what is listed on the sticky notes but tell why they agree or disagree.

O-Slide 3

### Session 3-Before and During Reading Activities

#### Agenda

- 8:00-8:15- Introduction Activity.
- 8:15-9:15- Before-and During-Reading Activity Presentation
- 9:15-10:00-Modeling of Before-and During-Reading Activities
- 10:00-11:15- Time to collaborate and plan.
- 11:15-11:30- Sharing and Evaluation

O-Slide 4



## Attachment P: Teacher Prompts

**TEACHER PROMPTS FOR:**

<p><b>1:1 POINTING</b> (Levels A - C; Students stop pointing at level D.)</p>	<p>Read it with your finger. Did that match? Were there enough words? Did you run out?</p>
<p><b>MEANING</b></p>	<p>Try that again. Skip it and read on. Reread Did that make sense? You said _____. Does that make sense? Look at the picture. What might happen next in the story? What would make sense?</p>
<p><b>STRUCTURE</b></p>	<p>Does that sound right? What would sound right? Can you say it that way?</p>

<b>VISUAL</b>	<p>Does it look right?  Get your mouth ready (to say the beginning sound). . .  Look across the word. . .  Look in the word (multisyllabic words). . .  Do you know a word like that?  What does it start with? Can you say more than that?  What do you know that might help?  Do you know a part of the word? (Chunk the word)</p>
<b>CHECKING ON ONESELF</b>	<p>Was that OK?  Why did you stop?  What did you notice?  Were you right? How do you know?  It could be _____, but look at _____.</p>
<b>INDEPENDENCE</b>	<p>What could you try?  You made a mistake on that page. Can you find it?</p>

## Attachment Q: Before-, During- and After-Reading Key Strategies

**Before, During and After Guided Reading: Key Strategies****Before:**

- Set the context and purpose for the reading.
- Highlight main ideas and key points.
- Activate prior knowledge.
- Discuss the title, cover, pictures, author, and illustrator.
- Make connections (to self, text, world).
- Predict what the story might be about. Use titles and pictures or put words on board.

**During:**

- **Demonstrate key reading strategies:**
  - looking at pictures, titles, and bold words
  - use your word clues
  - look at the subtitles, chapter headings and italics
  - use context to figure out words; reread
  - break down by sentences; figure out the big picture and main ideas
  - skip the word if you have difficulty, and read the rest of the sentence
  - reread the sentence
- Stop at intervals and discuss key points, vocabulary, meaning and details.
- Make connections (to self, text, world)
- Ask and answer questions.
- Predict what will happen next, infer, determine importance.

**After:**

- Identify the key concepts or the main idea.
- Summarize or sequence the events.
- Point out details or describe significant parts.
- Ask specific questions.
- Make connections (to self, text, world).
- Compare/contrast/analyse
- Make inferences
- State opinions/point of view.
- Draw conclusions
- Share insights and understandings

## Attachment R: Session 3-Evaluation

**Session 3-Evaluation**

**Thank you for attending this workshop. Please circle the answer that best describes your experiences.**

1. How would you describe the length of the session?

- A. The session was too long.
- B. The session was too short.
- C. The session was the right length.

Comments:

2. How would you describe the amount of content covered?

- A. The session had too much content.
- B. The session did not have enough content.
- C. The session has the right amount of content.

Comments:

3. How would you describe your opportunities to reflect on what you learned?

- A. Time to reflect was a useful part of this session.
- b. Time to reflect was a somewhat useful part of this session.
- C. The time to reflect was not a useful part of this session.

Comments:

4. How effective was the modeling portion of the session?

- A. The modeling was effective.
- B. The modeling was somewhat effective.
- C. The modeling was not effective.

Comments:

5. How useful was the time to collaborate?

- A. The time to collaborate was very useful.
- B. The time to collaborate was somewhat useful.
- C. The time to collaborate was not useful.

Comments:

6. What are additional comments or suggestions you have about this workshop?

## Attachment S: Session 4-Slides 1-4

**Session 4-After-Reading Activities****Purpose**

- To provide educators with an understanding of the purpose of the after-reading activity during a GR lesson.
- To provide educators with an understanding of how the after reading activities can work together with the other steps of a GR lesson.
- To model how to conduct after-reading activities.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to plan and write a lesson that includes the after reading activities.
- To provide an overview and summary of GR.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with grade level peer to plan and write a grade appropriate GR lesson that includes the 3 steps of GR (Before-, During-, and After-Reading Activities).

S-Slide 1

**Session 4-After-Reading Activities****Goals**

- Teachers will learn the purpose of after-reading activities.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to see after reading activities modeled.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with peers to discuss different types of after-reading activities and their purpose.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to create a lesson that includes the after-reading activities.
- Teachers will review the purpose of GR and its components.
- Teachers will collaborate with grade level peers to plan and write a grade appropriate GR lesson that includes the 3 Steps (Before-, During-, and After-Reading Activity).

S-Slide 2

**Session 4-After-Reading Activities****Turn and Talk Activity**

- Turn to a partner and talk about the 3 Steps of a GR lesson..
- Discuss what the purpose is of each step.
- Be ready to share with the other participants.

S-Slide 3

**Session 4-After-Reading Activities****Agenda**

- 1:00-1:15- Introduction Activity  
 1:15-2:15- Presentation of After-Reading Activity.  
 2:15-3:00-Modeling After-Reading Activity.  
 3:00-4:15- Time for collaborations and planning  
 4:15-4:30- Sharing and Evaluation

S-Slide 4

## Attachment T: Language Prompts to Help Students Problem-Solve

**Language Prompts to Help Students Problem-Solve**

## When They Ignore Meaning or Semantic Cues

- You said, \_\_\_\_\_. Does that make sense?
- What word would make sense there?
- Look at the picture. What's happening?

## When Students Do Not Use Syntactic or Grammatical Structures

- You said, \_\_\_\_\_. Does that sound right?
- Go back and reread and think about what sounds right and looks right.

## When Students Do Not Use Graphophonic or Visual Cues

- Does \_\_\_\_\_ look right?
- Look at the first letter. Get your mouth ready.
- It could be \_\_\_\_\_, but look at \_\_\_\_\_. Check to make sure that what you read looks right and makes sense.
- Is there something about that word you know can help you?
- Try that again.
- What can you do to help yourself there?

## Language to Link Reading and Writing

- How would you start that word if you were writing it?
- Say the word slowly. What sounds can you hear?
- Can you find the word that has those letters?

## Language to Praise or Validate Appropriate Literacy Behaviors

- I like the way that you made each word match with your finger.
- You went back and fixed the tricky part, didn't you? Good checking!
- You were really thinking when you let the word \_\_\_\_\_, which you know, help you with the word \_\_\_\_\_. Great job! That's what good readers do.

- See more at: <http://www.benchmarkeducation.com/best-practices-library/read-about-best-practices-in-small-group-instruction.html#sthash.5B0dcVUs.dpuf>

## Attachment U: MSV Teacher Prompts

**Useful Meaning (Semantic) Strategy****Prompts:**

**\*Look at the illustrations.**

**\*What do you think it might be?**

**\*Do you think that makes sense?**

**\*Could you reread that?**

**What happened in the story when. . . ?**

**Useful Structure (Syntactic) Strategy****Prompts:**

**\*Can you reread that?**

**\*Did that sound right?**

**\*What is a different word that might fit there?**

**\*Could you say that another way?**

**Useful Visual (Graphophonic) Strategy****Prompts:**

**\*What sound/letter does the word start with?**



**\*Does it look right?**

**\*What would you expect to see at the beginning, middle, and end of the word?**

**\*Point to the words.**

**\*Did that match?**

**\*Can you point to \_\_\_\_\_?**

**\*Can you find \_\_\_\_\_?**

## Attachment V: Session 4-Evaluation

**Session 4-Evaluation**

**Thank you for attending this workshop. Please circle the answer that best describes your experiences.**

1. How would you describe the length of the session?

- A. The session was too long.
- B. The session was too short.
- C. The session was the right length.

Comments:

2. How would you describe the amount of content covered?

- A. The session had too much content.
- B. The session did not have enough content.
- C. The session has the right amount of content.

Comments:

3. How would you describe your opportunities to reflect on what you learned?

- A. Time to reflect was a useful part of this session.
- b. Time to reflect was a somewhat useful part of this session.
- C. The time to reflect was not a useful part of this session.

Comments:

4. How effective was the modeling portion of the session?

- A. The modeling was effective.
- B. The modeling was somewhat effective.
- C. The modeling was not effective.

Comments:

5. How useful was the time to collaborate?

- A. The time to collaborate was very useful.
- B. The time to collaborate was somewhat useful.
- C. The time to collaborate was not useful.

Comments:

6. What are additional comments or suggestions you have about this workshop?

## Attachment W: Session 5- Slides 1-4

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 1****Purpose**

- To provide educators with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of GR and its components.
- To provide educators an opportunity to model a GR lesson that they developed and have used in the classroom.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to provide constructive feedback on the lesson that were modeled by their peers today.
- To provide a summary of GR.

W-Slide 1

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 1****Goals**

- Teachers will learn the purpose of GR and its components.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to model one of their GR lessons that they developed and used in their classroom.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to provide feedback to their peers about the lessons that were modeled today.
- Teachers will review the purpose of GR and its components.

W-Slide 2

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 1****Introduction Activity**

- Please take a few minutes to turn and talk to your partner about 1 success and or 1 challenge you had implementing GR.
- Please write down your success or challenge on a sticky note and post it on the T-Chart on the wall.
- Be ready to share one of your responses with the rest of the participants.

W-Slide 3

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 1****Agenda**

8:00-8:15- Introduction Activity  
 8:15-9:15- Open forum for discussion of successes and or challenges with implementing GR  
 9:15-10:00-Participants will model a GR lesson they wrote and conducted in their classroom.  
 10:00-11:15- Time for collaborations and planning  
 11:15-11:30- Sharing and Evaluation

W-Slide 4

## Attachment X: Session 5-Evaluation

**Session 5-Evaluation**

**Thank you for attending this workshop. Please circle the answer that best describes your experiences.**

1. How would you describe the length of the session?

- A. The session was too long.
- B. The session was too short.
- C. The session was the right length.

Comments:

2. How would you describe the amount of content covered?

- A. The session had too much content.
- B. The session did not have enough content.
- C. The session has the right amount of content.

Comments:

3. How would you describe your opportunities to reflect on what you learned?

- A. Time to reflect was a useful part of this session.
- b. Time to reflect was a somewhat useful part of this session.
- C. The time to reflect was not a useful part of this session.

Comments:

4. How effective was the modeling portion of the session?

- A. The modeling was effective.
- B. The modeling was somewhat effective.
- C. The modeling was not effective.

Comments:

5. How useful was the time to collaborate?

- A. The time to collaborate was very useful.
- B. The time to collaborate was somewhat useful.
- C. The time to collaborate was not useful.

Comments:

6. What are additional comments or suggestions you have about this workshop?

Attachment Y: Session 6-Slides 1-4

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 2**  
**Purpose**

- To provide educators with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of GR and its components.
- To provide educators a one-to-one conference time to discuss issues or concerns with the implementation of GR.
- To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate with peers to provide constructive feedback on the lessons that were modeled today by their peers.
- To provide a summary of GR.

Y-Slide 1

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 2**  
**Goals**

- Teachers will learn the purpose of GR and its components.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to conference one-to-one with the instructor.
- Teachers will have the opportunity to model one of the GR lessons they developed and used in their classroom.
- Teachers will collaborate with peers on how to provide feedback to their peers about the lesson they modeled.
- Teachers will review the purpose of GR, components of GR, and the benefits of GR.

Y-Slide 2

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 2**  
**Introduction Activity**

- Read each column. Choose the column that most appeals to you.
- Write or think silently.
- Be ready to share.

Y-Slide 3

A	B	C	D
What are your feelings now after implementing GR?	What skills do you feel you possess now that help make implementing GR a positive experience?	How do you think the organization and planning process of your lessons have changed in regards to GR?	What other understandings do you want to develop to improve your GR lessons?

Y-Slide 3

**Session 5-Follow-Up Training Part 2****Agenda**

1:00-1:15- Introduction Activity

1:15-2:15- One-on-one Conferences

2:15-3:15-Participants will model a lesson they developed

3:15-4:15- Collaboration and planning time

4:15-4:30-Share and complete evaluation

Y-Slide 4

## Attachment Z: Session 6-Evaluation

**Session 6-Evaluation**

**Thank you for attending this workshop. Please circle the answer that best describes your experiences.**

1. How would you describe the length of the session?

- A. The session was too short.
- B. The session was too long.
- C. The session was the right length.

Comments:

2. How would you describe the amount of content covered?

- A. The session did not have enough content.
- B. The session had too much content.
- C. The session had the right amount of content.

Comments:

3. How would you describe your opportunities to reflect on what you learned?

- A. Time to reflect was a somewhat useful part of this session.
- b. Time to reflect was a useful part of this session.
- C. The time to reflect was not a useful part of this session.

Comments:

4. How useful was the time to conference?

- A. The time to conference was very useful.
- B. The time to conference was somewhat useful.
- C. The time to conference was not useful.

5. How useful was the time to collaborate?

- A. The time to collaborate was very useful.
- B. The time to collaborate was somewhat useful.
- C. The time to collaborate was not useful.

Comments:

6. What are additional comments or suggestions you have about this workshop?

## Appendix B: Letter to Conduct Research from the District

Superintendent  
FISD

Dear Dr. S. B,

I am currently a student working on obtaining my Educational Doctorate Degree with a Specialization in Teacher Leadership at Walden University. The case study is entitled “Kindergarten Teacher’s Perspective on Guided Reading.” I would like your permission to have the kindergarten teachers participate in my study. The purpose of this study is to examine educators’ perceptions regarding their understanding of guided reading and its implementation. The answers from the research questions will help to determine a project needed to expand the teachers’ knowledge about guided reading and its implementation to improve students’ early literacy and reading skills. Individuals’ participation will be voluntary, confidential, and at their own discretion. Interviews will be conducted after school.

Participation will include:

Participation in 1 interview with the researcher (audio recorded and 30-60 minutes each).

- The interview will be conducted in the conference room after school.
- Allow me to view your teacher lesson plans.
- Participate in member checking the data to validate the findings (1 week to look over all data materials.).

Your permission will allow me to obtain a Letter of Cooperation from the Principal, a Letter of Invitation to Participate in a Research Project Study, and a Letter of consent from each participant who agrees to participate in the study. Teachers’ participation in the study is voluntary and may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time.

Sincerely,  
Mary Carrasco



## Appendix C: Letter to Conduct Research on Campus (Principal)

Principal  
F Elementary

Dear Mr. S,

I am currently a student working on obtaining my Educational Doctorate Degree with a Specialization in Teacher Leadership at Walden University. The case study is entitled “Kindergarten Teacher’s Perspective on Guided Reading.” I would like your permission to conduct a meeting after school to invite the kindergarten teachers on your campus to participate in my study. The purpose of this study is to examine educators’ perceptions regarding their understanding of guided reading and its implementation. The answers from the research questions will help to determine a project needed to expand the teachers’ knowledge about guided reading and its implementation to improve students’ early literacy and reading skills. Individuals’ participation will be voluntary, confidential, and at their own discretion.

Participation will include:

- Attending the meeting where I will discuss the purpose of the study and obtain Consent Forms from those teachers wanting to participate.
- Participation in 1 interview with the researcher (audio recorded and 45-60 minutes each).
- The interviews will be conducted in the conference room after school.
- Allow me to view your teacher lesson plans.
- Participate in checking the data to validate the findings (1 week to look over all data materials.).

Your permission will allow me to obtain a Letter of Invitation to Participate in a Research Project Study, and a Letter of consent from each participant who agrees to participate in the study. Teachers’ participation in the study is voluntary and may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time.

Sincerely,

Mary Carrasco

Appendix D: Letter of Cooperation from Principal

January 25, 2015

Dear Institutional Review Board:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that as principal of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I have given Mary Carrasco permission to conduct her research on our school campus. I have spoken with Mrs. Carrasco and understand the scope of her research and will be of assistance in any way I can.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

*Michael Schroller*

Michael Schroller

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Michael Schroller, Principal  
[REDACTED]

## APPENDIX E: Letter of Invitation to Participate in a Research Study

Date:

Dear Teacher,

I have obtained the principal's support and permission to collect data for my research project entitled "Kindergarten Teacher's Perspectives on Guided Reading."

If you agree to be part of this research project, I would ask that you agree to one 45-60 minute interview answering questions after school regarding your perceptions of guided reading instruction at the local school; however, the time may last longer depending upon any additional comments, or information you may be willing to contribute regarding answers to questions.

If you prefer not to be involved in this study, that is not a problem. If circumstances change, please contact me via \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for your consideration. I would be pleased to share the results of this study with you if you are interested.

Sincerely,

Mary Carrasco

## APPENDIX F: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study regarding educators' perceptions on guided reading and its implementation. You were chosen for the study because of your experience working with students at the kindergarten level and using guided reading to improve their early literacy and reading skills. Please read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be part of the study.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Mary Carrasco, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. Some of you may know me in my professional role as a first grade teacher; however, this research has nothing to do with that role.

### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to examine educators' perceptions regarding guided reading and its implementation.

### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in one audio recorded interview, which will also be transcribed by the me, the researcher
- The interview should take about 45-60 minutes to complete; however, the time may last longer depending upon any additional comments, or information you may be willing to contribute regarding answers to questions.
- The interviews will take place after school in the privacy of the conference room.
- Provide feedback of the study's preliminary analysis through a process called member checking which is used to validate the findings.
- Once the interviews are completed, you can receive a copy of the transcription.
- Provide a copy of your guided reading lesson plans for document review.

### **Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. No one at the study site will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. If you feel stressed during the study, you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions that you feel are too personal.

### **Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

There is always a minimal risk of loss of confidentiality when conducting interviews. Additionally, there is a minimal risk of experiencing psychological stress. If participants should experience any psychological stress, they have the option to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

The benefit of this study is that it has the potential to provide participants with a better understanding of the guided reading process, its components, and how to implement it

appropriately, which may result in an improved reading program, higher student performance, and acquisition of information to influence others to improve reading programs.

**Compensation:**

There is no compensation for participating in the study.

**Confidentiality:**

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside this research project. In addition, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in any reports of the study.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher's name is Mary Carrasco. You may ask any questions you have now, or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**Statement of Consent:**

\_\_I have read the above information. I have received answers to any questions I have at this time. I am 18 years or older, and I consent to participate in the study.

---

Researcher's Written or Electronic signature

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically.

### Appendix G: Interview Guide for Teachers

Interviewer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview location: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview time: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Research Questions

1. What do kindergarten teachers understand about the present instructional approaches to guided reading? (Vygotsky's Sociocultural Learning Theory)
2. How do kindergarten teachers implement guided reading in their classrooms? (ZPD Theory)
3. What do kindergarten teachers, who implement guided reading, see as their biggest challenge? (Sociocultural Learning Theory and Constructivism)

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

1. Tell me about your experience working with guided reading? (RQ 1)  
Probe: Take me through the experience.
2. How do you decide what to teach in a Guided Reading group? (RQ 2)  
Probe: Tell me about it. What influences your decision on what to teach in a Guided Reading group?
3. How do you choose the books you use in Guided Reading groups? (RQ 2)  
Probe: Would you explain that? What contributes to how you choose the books?
4. Do you have the freedom to choose each book, or are there school/district parameters or guidelines you must follow? (RQ 3)

Probe: Tell me about it. What contributes to the leveling of the books?

5. What number of students do you feel should be the maximum in a Guided Reading group? (RQ 1)

Probe: Give me an example. Why do you feel this number is a good cut-off?

6. What determines how/when student membership changes within each Guided Reading group? (RQ 3)

Probe: Tell me about it. How often might this happen?

7. While you observe your students in Guided Reading groups, what do you look for during your observations? (RQ 2)

Probe: Take me through the experience. How do you record your observations?

8. Describe the types of student participation you look for during Guided Reading groups? (RQ 1)

Probe: Give me an example. How is this participation the same/different than what you look for in whole group reading instruction?

9. What do you do when students are not actively participating in Guided Reading groups? (RQ 3)

Probe: Would you explain that? How do you get them to "open up?"

10. How do you give feedback to students on their involvement in Guided Reading groups? (RQ 1)

Probe: Give me an example. When do you give the feedback to the students? (Individually/in front of their peers during Guided Reading groups?)

11. Is there anything else about Guided Reading group instruction you would like to mention?

Probe: Tell me about it. What influenced you to mention this?

Thank you for participating in this interview. I appreciate your time and cooperation.

Your participation will remain confidential. Once the interview has been transcribed, you will be provided with a copy of the interview to verify accuracy.



Appendix H: Document Analysis

Form for Teacher Lesson Plans

Teacher Name:

Date:

Format of plans (daily, weekly, grouping, assessment,)

<p>STATE STANDARD(S) TO BE TAUGHT:</p>   <p>LESSON CONTENT:</p>   <p>TEACHING STRATEGIES USED:</p>   <p>RESOURCES USED:</p>
<p>LIST OF BEFORE READING ACTIVITIES:</p>

LIST OF DURING READING ACTIVITIES:

LIST OF AFTER READING ACTIVITIES:

GENERAL NOTES:

## Appendix I: Member Checking Form

Participant Number \_\_\_\_\_

All data collected pertaining to you the participant has been returned to you for verification to ensure the information collected during the interview was interpreted accurately and completely.

## Member Checking Instructions:

1. First, read the interview transcript. If you feel the interview is correct, sign your number below. If you feel the interview has been incorrectly interpreted, do not sign your number. Please mark, "I wish to speak to the researcher about the interview transcript."
2. Please return all data to the researcher in the envelope by next week.

By signing my number, I agree that I have read the protocol for member checking.

Participant Number (PN) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The interview transcript is accurate. \_\_\_\_\_ (PN)

Or

I wish to speak with the researcher about the interview transcript. \_\_\_\_\_  
(PN)

Thank you for your time!

