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READING ENGAGEMENT: THE IMPACT ON STUDENT IDENTITIES AND ACHIEVEMENT

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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DEDICATION

In Loving Memory of

My father, Joseph Stephenson and my grandparents, Ernie and Evelyn Shieck,

I cherish our memories and feel honored to have been loved, supported, and influenced by every action and interaction we shared. Each one of them loved unconditionally, worked hard, and lived a beautiful life. They believed the best in everyone they met. I am thankful that they always believed in me and showed it. It brings me joy to know they are with me in spirit until we meet again.

To

My husband and best friend Howie; you supported me every step of the way despite the sacrifices— family time, home-cooked meals, and a tidy house. You've earned a Ph.D. in caregiving for always stepping up and going above and beyond, even when you didn't feel like it.

To

My kind-hearted, beautiful, intelligent, hardworking, mini-me, daughter Madison; I love you with all my heart! You made sacrifices too— some of which you are aware and others you may not yet realize— and I appreciate it. I know you were not sure you would ever have a mom who was not in school, but thankfully, that time has come.

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I am truly thankful and filled with gratitude to many more family members, friends, co-workers, colleagues, students, and parents than fit within this one page. To Kelly Still, thank you for sharing your talents, passion, kids, and time with me. I am forever grateful for your friendship, trust, and willingness to collaboratively embrace and navigate our Productive Struggles.

My deepest thanks to God for His hand in orchestrating timing, events, relationships, and learning. He made everything work together for His good.

ABSTRACT

Across one school year, in which I coached a fourth-grade teacher, she and I took an inquiry stance investigating how we could come to understand the reading identities kids held relative to Stephens' (2013) list of characteristics of effective and efficient readers. We also sought to understand how we could help kids develop, sustain, or extend their reading identities and how those identities relate to a generative theory of reading. What impact would our actions have on the kids? What shift, if any, would there be in their ability to comprehend grade level text?

There were 11 students in the focal group for whom I had longitudinal data spanning four years. I conducted explanatory case study as a participant-observer using Glaser and Stauss' (1967) constant comparative method to generate theory. Data collection consisted of text level reading assessments, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, interest inventories, anecdotal records, running records, expanded field notes, voice recordings of planning and debrief sessions with the teacher, video recordings of reading instruction of whole class, small group, and one-on-one reading conferences, transcriptions of video and voice recordings and standardized test data.

Findings showed that these 11 focal participants: made gains toward reading grade level text, took on a more aesthetic stance, increased in reading for pleasure, and chose to read more often. A comparison of third-grade state test scores to fourth-grade scores showed that 8 out of 11 students increased by at least one performance level.

According to the district data, 73% of the 11 participants ended fourth grade at or above the norm compared to 55% at the beginning of the year.

Implications suggest that when teachers engage kids in conversations that consistently revolve around what they did, said, and felt in the midst of reading text, they can better understand their kids' reading identities and help them refine their understanding of text. Acting and interacting to understand in this way simultaneously sends messages to kids that who they are is equally important as how they are. This contributes to relationship building and seamlessly weaves together teaching and learning about texts and one another.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Background

Across my 20 years teaching, I had the privilege of being a classroom teacher for students in kindergarten through second grade for 10 years (1997-2007) and a reading interventionist for students in kindergarten through fifth grade for six years (2007-2013) before officially being named a reading coach and response to intervention (RtI) specialist in 2014. During my time as a classroom teacher, I discovered my passion for teaching readers. When I made the difficult decision to leave the classroom setting in 2007 to accept a position as a reading interventionist, I had no idea how much this decision would profoundly impact my professional life. The journey afforded me the opportunity to deepen my knowledge base and construct new learning as a part of a three-year professional development cohort and paved a foundation for my doctoral studies.

In 2007, to help those of us hired into the newly created position of reading interventionist, the district partnered with a local university and provided us with 27 graduate hours in reading over a three-year period. We also had mentors who visited us one morning a month. Within our courses and in our jobs, we took an inquiry stance of investigating *what matters* for struggling readers (Stephens, 1990). Over the three years, we continuously revised the list based on our experiences, studies, and inquiries and named it "*A Theory of What Matters for Readers*" (WM) (See Stephens et al., 2012 for our 2011 version). We believed that students should:

1. Understand that reading is a meaning-making process (Smith, 2004, 2005; Goodman, 1965).
2. Believe in their ability to make sense of texts (Johnston, 2004).
3. Consider reading a pleasurable event (Rosenblatt, 1978).
4. Self-monitor spontaneously and consistently.
5. Have a variety of skills and strategies for problem-solving meaning.
6. Use those skills and strategies flexibly.
7. Use those skills and strategies independently.
8. Use those skills and strategies across increasingly complex text.

When students had the first three characteristics on the list, we referred to them as having a *generative theory* (Stephens et al., 2012) because they were positioned to progress as readers. We found that readers who had a generative theory spontaneously self-monitored for meaning and consequently had a need to use/acquire skills and strategies to problem-solve. We used the data from assessment of the items on the list to guide instruction.

During our three years of graduate study, the other interventionists and I were continually making decisions and reflecting on our practice. As we studied together, we reviewed the literature, juxtaposed what we read with our experiences with students, and began to name the theories that students had about reading. We researched this and realized that most of the students we worked with in intervention did not yet hold a generative theory of reading (Stephens et al., 2012).

Soon after I concluded the course work with my cohort, I began my doctoral program and entered my fourth year as an interventionist. I continued to observe and reflect on the students with whom I worked, and began revising my ideas about our What Matters list. Based on my subsequent reflections, I came to believe that the first three characteristics are constructed simultaneously during reading engagements and it is the reader's perception of the purpose and functions (Halliday, 1975) of reading that help them develop a generative theory; students then spontaneously self-monitor. My thinking about the last four characteristics also changed. I believed that when teachers help students develop, sustain or extend their generative theory (WM1, WM2, WM3) the reader learns about problem-solving with flexibility across increasingly complex text when, as part of focused instructional conversations (in Stephens, Harste, Clyde (Eds.) in print), the teacher uses a gradual release of responsibility approach which scaffolds them to independence (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). I started to think more methodically about specific reading observations demonstrated by readers of various ages spanning kindergarten through fifth grade; I began creating a list of observable behaviors that warranted further investigation. I subsequently referred to this list as Yellow Flags and the descriptors get my attention and guide my thinking as I theorize what a reader believes about reading, their ability to read, and the function reading serves for them across multiple contexts. I investigate the descriptor(s) that get my attention by using the Hypothesis Test process (Stephens, 1990; Stephens & Story, 1999; Stephens, Story, Aihara, Hisatake, Ito & Kawamoto, 1996) to problem-solve how to help all students grow as readers. The purpose of listening for Yellow Flags is to get my attention so that I inquire further, not so that I make quick judgments. For example, it is a Yellow Flag

when a student reports that reading is boring. Noticing this prompts me to inquire more about what the student believes about the function of reading (Halliday, 1975) and its relationship between choosing to read and pleasure.

During my doctoral program, I also began reading the literature about reading identity, which I defined as the theory the reader holds about the function of reading (Halliday, 1975; Rosenblatt 1978), their agency/self-efficacy as a reader (Johnston, 2004), and the ways they engage within the literacy event. Our sense of belonging and the way the world and people in it respond to us positions us to construct certain kinds of identities. These identities are factors that educators must acknowledge because they, "shape[s] the way in which many [we] understand [our] worlds and how the world shapes [our] understanding of [ourselves]" (Howard, 2010, p. 121). As teachers, these "interpretive frames… influence [our] ways of attending and responding to others within the social activities of the classroom" (Dyson, 2005, p. 12). I recognize that the work I choose to do and the stance I am taking as a literacy researcher and teacher educator are grounded in my experiences, relationships, and beliefs about teaching and learning. I believe that every action and word spoken by teachers and students are taken in by the readers, transact with the theory they are "holding" in that moment about reading (Rosenblatt, 1978; Stephens et al., 2012) and, if negotiated intentionally and explicitly, have the potential to result in new knowledge/new ways of knowing (Peirce, 1955).

Thinking about my own reading identity, reading process, teaching and learning fueled my interest in seeking to understand more about in the identities of the students with whom I worked. For example, with students who do not yet take initiative and demonstrate how and/or why they engage thoughtfully as they read, I often ask them to

"Tell me what you have to say." Often times their responses are predictions or retellings, which I classify as a potential Yellow Flag. Therefore, next I say something like, "Yes, that prediction/retelling helps you to check on your understanding so far and creates interest, but tell me what *you think* about that." Then I scaffold them further by asking them to support the thinking they shared by requesting that they identify, "the part of the text that makes them think that." In this way, I am creating the conditions necessary for students to engage in literacy events in ways that explicitly support my understanding of what it means to read for meaning, which includes extending the reader to think beyond the text. I bring ideas, theories, and ways of acting like a reader into students' awareness in hopes of creating space for them to reflect on their reading identity— their beliefs about themselves as a reader connected to reading relative to the various functions it can serve. I hope to illustrate why the ways we engage with literacy matters for both teachers and students.

In my reading of the literature on reading identity, I expected to find numerous studies that explored the relationship between the beliefs that readers held (e.g., WM1, WM2, and WM3) and their reading achievement. I also expected to find longitudinal studies about this relationship. However, I found neither short nor long-term studies that connected readers' beliefs and their achievement. Therefore, I sought to conduct research to better understand the long-term relationship between identity and reading achievement. Specifically I asked:

1. How could I come to understand the reading identities kids hold relative to the What Matters List (Stephens et al., 2012)?

2. In what ways can the teacher and I help kids develop, sustain, or extend reading identities relative to a generative theory of reading —the What Matters List (Stephens et al., 2012)?
3. What impact will our actions have on the kids? What shift, if any, will there be in their ability to comprehend grade level text?

Literature Review

Theories about identity have shifted over time from ideas of being static and singular to a current view of identity as a multidimensional and ever-evolving process created by social and cultural settings. Through reading, the research on identity, many factors come to light and illuminate the complexity of this topic. For example, in their review of this literature, Moje et al. (2009) argued that there are assumptions that cut across the research and impact the findings: identities are social, pluralistic, and reorganized by others, and what we think of literacy shapes how we see identities working in people's literate practices or learning.

Several researchers have investigated the relationship between identity and reading and/or how students negotiate and maintain their literate identities. I organized the reading identity studies into two groups: student beliefs, and identities made available.

Student Beliefs. I found five studies which provided information on students' beliefs about reading and/or themselves as readers. In Long's (1985) study, she conducted semi-structured interviews with 68 students identified as "poor" and "good" first grade students to find out whether they held the same views about how they learned to read, what they and others did as they read, their reading ability, and why people read.

Reading ability was determined by using the comprehension scores from The Classroom Reading Inventory (Silvoroli, 1984). The students were from seven different classrooms. Long asked them 13 questions that she adapted from The Burke Reading Inventory (1977) to investigate children's perceptions about how they learned to read, what they did as they read, their reading ability, and why people read. The responses of the kids noted as high readers showed more similarity in their responses compared to the low readers. Long found that in general both groups of readers talked about reading as a process of saying words and sounding out words as a strategy they would use to say a word.

Filby and Barnett (1982) argued that it is important to understand the ways students conceptualize and interpret what occurs in their classrooms, to examine student perceptions regarding which students are "better readers" in classrooms and how their perceptions are affected by differences in classroom organization, student age, and student ability. They collected, coded, and analyzed detailed information about whether or not 102 second and fifth grade students were able to put books in order of difficulty and about what criteria students used when describing good reading/readers. The classes operated on a staggered schedule which involved bringing half the class to school early in the morning for reading, while the other half stayed late for reading. The two lower groups met in the morning and the two higher groups met in the afternoon. Groups not meeting with the teacher were engaged in seatwork. Eighty percent of the second grade staggered-group students were able to order books correctly, while only 62% of the fifth grade staggered-group students were able to do so. At least 75% of the time, all of the students were able to accurately select the "better readers." Ninety percent of the students in the whole-class instruction setting agreed on who was a better reader. There

was less agreement among the staggered-grouped classes where an ability-group trend was found. Filby and Barnett found that the organization of the classroom clearly influenced the meaning that students make of the term "better readers."

Freppon (1991) conducted a quasi-experimental study using interviews and Running Records (Clay, 1993) to investigate children's concepts of the nature and purpose of reading in different instructional settings. She was interested in the influence of instruction in a skill-based versus a literature-based classroom and in the developmental stage of learning to read (identified as ability) on the reading concepts of 24 randomly selected first grade students. Freppon used open-ended interview questions designed to tap understandings about reading strategies, beliefs about characteristics of themselves and other good readers, and metacognitive understandings. She found that the two groups of students both demonstrated high interest in learning and knowing words and in phonics or decoding. The two groups were different in their metacognitive understandings, their view of reading as a meaning-making, language-like process and their knowledge and use of varied reading strategies. The literature group more frequently rejected incomprehensible print as not reading, defined reading as meaning-making and more often employed a balanced-cue use system during oral reading. The literature group used sounding out as a strategy less often than the skill-based group but had a higher rate of success using sounds than the skill group. The students from the skills based classroom attempted to decode nonsense words, believed that reading was saying the words right and tended to over-rely on graphophonic information.

Hall (2005) conducted a year-long descriptive, case study to examine how three middle school students transacted with the reading task demands of their specific content

area classroom. The students were from three different suburban districts outside of a medium sized, mid-western city. Each participant was studied in the context of one content area class (science, social studies, and math). All students were white, middle-class students who read 1.5 to 3 years below grade level according to state reading tests and scores on informal reading assessments. Hall's data consisted of bi-weekly field observations, questionnaires, interviews, student comprehension assessments, and collection of graded student work. On average, per classroom, Hall audio-taped 48 one-hour observations. She scheduled observations in order to observe students and teachers engaged in a wide variety of reading tasks, including when (a) teachers provided reading instruction, (b) texts were being read or discussed, and (c) text-based assignments were being completed or discussed. Each student was interviewed one-on-one in October, January, and May. In the interviews, she sought to understand the students' rationale for the decisions they made. Hall found that the ways the students approached text was heavily influenced by how the students saw themselves as readers using the descriptors "good" or "poor" reader. Students who believed in their ability to comprehend text were more willing to engage with texts than if they believed it was too difficult. However, she found that even when the student chose not to read, the students considered other ways to make sense of the content being presented. Hall concluded that the results of her study suggest that there is more to working with struggling readers than considering the type of instruction they need. Findings suggest that teachers and researchers need to find ways to identify and be responsive to the role of identity in the classroom.

Knoester (2009) interviewed 10 fifth, sixth and seventh grade urban students, their parents, and current teachers to investigate the connections among interest and

engagement, peer relationships, and identity development. Knoester asked questions pertaining to reading interests and habits both inside and outside of school; material the students chose or did not choose to read; interests outside of reading; where they accessed reading material; when and where and what they read; their perceptions about friendships and how they are formed; and their perceptions of themselves as readers and their feelings about reading. He also asked questions related to motivation to read, what counts as reading, and how this related to future goals. He used Gee's acquisition of secondary Discourses (2008, 2010, 2012) as a theoretical frame to analyze themes in the data. Knoester then used the themes to develop case studies. He concluded that reading was a social practice in which motivation to read was related to ability, parent support, identity, and to interest in the development of peer and adult relationships. Knoester concluded that the "data suggest identity development may have an impact on the independent reading habits and interests of the adolescents in focus" (p. 682).

Identities Made Available. I found six studies on the reading identities made available to students. Dahl and Freppon (1995) conducted a cross-curricular comparison of kindergarten and first grade inner-city children's interpretations of reading and writing instruction in the early grades in skills-based and whole language classrooms. They aimed to shed light on how children from eight classrooms in two Midwest cities made sense of and interpreted early reading instruction and how their interpretations differed based on their experiences across the two settings. Dahl and Freppon "investigated how children's opportunities, interactions, and processes of learning led to the construction of particular models of sense making" (p. 53). They investigated each curriculum separately and then conducted the overall comparison to explore the effects of curricula as

documented from the learner's perspective. The students were observed during literacy instruction twice a week over two years. The researchers took field notes, transcribed reading and writing classroom engagements, collected samples of student writing, and administered pre/post written language measures. They identified five prominent patterns of behavior they considered as indicators of learner hypotheses about reading and writing. Qualitative findings showed similarities in learner interest in accuracy and differences in children's fundamental understandings about literacy. They noted cross-curricular differences in application of phonics knowledge, responses to literature, coping strategies of learners experiencing difficulty, and learner perceptions of themselves as readers and writers. Quantitative findings suggested a significant difference on written narrative register favoring whole language learners. They reported, however that, "the greatest difference appeared to be not what was being taught, but what children were learning- about themselves, about reading and writing, about school" (71).

Sacks and Mergendoller (1997) argued that reading takes place within the influences of a social environment that immerses children in a range of literacy activities and so examined the relationship between kindergarten teachers' theoretical orientation toward reading and student outcomes in kindergarten children with different initial reading abilities. They conducted an observational study of 132 kindergarten students across 11 classrooms in California to determine "whether the reading achievement of students who entered the kindergarten year with relatively limited reading skills would increase more with teachers favoring whole language or phonics-oriented approaches to reading instruction" (724). Teachers' theoretical orientations were assessed using the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) (DeFord, 1985). Student reading

ability was assessed using a norm-referenced Test of Early Reading Ability-2 (TERA-2) (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989). The Kindergarten Activities Coding Instrument (KACI) (Sacks, Clement-Glass, & Mergendoller, 1993) was created to make classroom observations that captured seven classroom context variables, six areas of subject area learning, three types of student literacy behaviors and assessments of student affect and task involvement. Sacks and Mergendoller found the reading achievement of lower scoring children improved the most in whole language-oriented classrooms compared to higher scoring children in the two different theoretical settings. Additionally, lower scoring children in the phonics-oriented classroom demonstrated lesser gains. Teacher emphasis on different literacy tasks across the two theoretical different settings varied in time spent on certain activities. Students in whole language-oriented classes spent a greater proportion of class time attending to non-book print, using invented spelling, and dictating stories. Children in phonics-oriented classes spent a greater proportion of time looking through books on their own; copying letters, words, and sentences; and completing worksheets. Findings indicated that the lower scoring students demonstrated higher levels of engagement in whole language-oriented classrooms than in phonics-oriented classrooms. Sacks and Mergendoller found that the ways in which instructional opportunities were taken advantage of depended on the theoretical orientation of the teacher. They cautioned against generalizing the results of their study as meaning that whole language-influenced instruction was more effective. They called for further research to investigate the relationships of literacy tasks, instructional beliefs and strategies, and students' opportunities and requirements to do them.

Arya (2003) conducted a study of nine second grade proficient and less proficient readers to investigate the influences of their direct reading group experiences on their perceptions of reading concepts and their understanding of themselves as readers, specifically their literate identities. During the first part of the school year, the researcher visited the classroom four days a week for 2-3 hours per day for 12 weeks during language arts instruction. He collected field notes during observations of large and small group reading settings, artifacts of teacher assignments and students' work. Additionally Arya administered the Burke Reading Inventory (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987) and asked four additional questions to investigate students' attitudes and beliefs about reading and being a reader. The four additional questions were: Which reading group do you belong to? How do you feel about being in your reading group? What kinds of reading activities do you do every day? What do you think about students in the other group? Arya found major differences between the high and low reading groups in terms of the kinds of reading experiences made available and views students had of reading and of themselves as readers. Instruction for the lower reading group focused on oral reading and decoding. This group reported being aware of their need to improve reading and described major characteristics of reading to be "reading a lot" "spelling long and hard words", and "reading fast and fluently." Instruction for the high reading group engaged students in extracting meaning more often than in decoding. Over 10 weeks, these students used worksheets only three times compared to every day for the lower reading groups. Additionally, instruction in the higher group provided more opportunities for students to engage in talk that emphasized their ability to recall information, draw inferences, and relate stories to their personal experiences. Another significant finding

between the two reading groups' experiences was in the emphasis on reading aloud. The lower group read aloud more frequently than the higher group, which also had opportunities to read both silently and aloud. Arya concluded that the students' reading group experiences appear to be aligned with their group membership in terms of emphasis of instruction and influenced their self-perceptions. Students in the lower group were aware of their need to improve their reading and emphasized reading a lot, spelling long and hard words, and reading fast and fluently as the major characteristics of a proficient reader. They did not mention comprehension whereas, students in the proficient reading group emphasized meaning making as the strategy to help students having difficulty learning to read. The students in the lower reading group suggested that the strategy of sounding out was most important to improve one's reading.

Skerrett (2012) conducted a case study of a 15-year-old, ninth-grade Latina girl, Angelica to understand the development of reading identity. Based on standardized test results, Angelica had been placed in reading classes for seven years and taken on an institutional positional identity of struggling reader. Skerrett looked at Angelica's literacy experiences in school and out of school contexts that positioned her as a struggling reader and examined Angelica's efforts to contest this identity. Skerett collected data for a year: she conducted and recorded three semi-structured in-depth interviews, made and audio-taped two classroom observations every week, collected documents and artifacts related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and either took notes on or kept copies of conversations/interviews with and emails from the classroom teacher regarding curriculum and instruction. Skerrett also made home visits and attended a soccer game. She made reflective notes across all contexts. Skerett

developed “case bound propositions about how Angelica transacted with reading identities over time across multiple contexts of literacy practice” (66) and analyzed the pedagogical practices of Angelica’s teacher, Molly. Molly emphasized that one’s reading identity could change from moment to moment and offered a range of reflective invitations in the forms of class activities, discussions, writing prompts, and homework assignments to help students recognize and claim their already-existing identities as readers. She created and maintained a literacy environment that exposed her students to a broad range of texts, helped them increase their agency by allowing them to read in their areas of interest, and taught them strategies for successfully and critically reading texts. These instructional moves created transactional opportunities for her students to claim strong academic identities; Angelica was able to reconstruct her reading identity and become agentive and successful in her literate life.

Hall (2009) conducted a year-long case study using theories of identity to examine the transactions between a sixth-grade social studies teacher and a struggling reader. She argued that little research has focused on the role of identity and reading, particularly as it related to struggling readers. Hall asked, “How does a sixth-grade social studies teacher engage in transactions with a struggling reader in relation to the reading tasks of the classroom?” and “How does a middle school struggling reader engage in transactions with the reading task demands of a sixth-grade social studies class?” She found that the student was influenced by a cognitive, print-centric view of reading and the identity the teacher created for the student based on that view of reading. Hall suggested that teachers and researchers needed to find ways to identify and be responsive to the role of identity in the classroom.

While these 11 studies provided some insights into students' beliefs and the identities made available, I could not find any studies which looked at the relationship between identities and achievement. Predictably, because I was part of a small community which developed the concept of a generative theory (Stephens, et al., 2012) there were also no studies which looked at identity as including what readers believe about reading, what they believe about their ability to make sense of text, and their engagement in reading. I conducted this study to fill this gap in the literature.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

I believe that reading and learning are semiotic, constructive, socio-psycholinguistic processes. My beliefs have been influenced by scholars such as Cambourne (1984), Dewey (1938), Gee (2011, 2012), Goodman (1965), Halliday (1975), Johnston (2004), Peirce (1955), Rosenblatt (1967), Schön (1983,1991), Smith (2004, 2005), Stephens (1986, 2000, 2012), and Vygotsky (1962). Collectively, these individuals contributed to my belief that learning is constructive, sociocultural, political, and agentive with language and learning structures playing central roles. Specifically, I believe that: 1) Learning and reading are social processes, 2) Each reader socially constructs personal reading theories, and 3) It is the responsibility of educators to be professional practitioners who work to ensure that all students become proficient readers.

The beliefs and ideas represented by the What Matters list (see Chapter 1), Peircean semiotics, and social constructivism have shaped me as a teacher and researcher. In addition, my personal, professional, and academic experiences work together continually shaping and are shaped by all interactions that occur amongst them. Each experience influences and is influenced by the flux of my identities.

Peircean Semiotics

Two Peircean ideas that have specifically influenced my thinking are his concepts of Fixation of Beliefs (Buchler, 1940/1955; Peirce, 1877) and Naming as Triadic (Buchler, 1940/1955; Peirce, 1887).

Fixation of beliefs. Peirce (1800s) suggested four ways to explain how people come to fixate beliefs: people believe what they want to believe, because someone told them it is true, it is what they have always believed or it is what they have inquired into. Peirce argued that only inquiry generates knowledge. It is fueled by, and leads to the resolution of, doubt. Peirce maintained that it is our beliefs that guide and shape our actions. Fixating beliefs is a transactive process; new meanings are constructed and those ideas reposition the way one thinks. This semiotic stance allows us to explore the meaning making process by paying attention to the roles that people play, their culture, what they consider reality, and how that reality was determined.

The fixation of beliefs begins at least at birth and at some point in their preschool years, students begin to develop beliefs about reading and themselves as readers. Some of those beliefs serve them well as readers and others do not. When I engage in literacy conversations with students, when we read aloud during whole group, small group, and one-on-one reading engagements, I am conducting an inquiry into their beliefs. My responses encourage them to re-examine beliefs that they hold and take an inquiry stance. The conversations may appear to sound informal to some teachers as the talk centers around the "thinking" we do as we read. However, the conversations are both my inquiry and theirs as I help them fixate beliefs that serve them well as readers.

Naming as triadic. A second idea of Peirce that is central to his work and guides my thinking is the process of naming concepts, relationships, and objects. Peirce (in Buchler, 1940/1955) developed a triadic model to represent the meaning-making process involving what he called Firstness (concepts that exist), Secondness (signs/objects trigger the first to come into our awareness), and Thirdness (the negotiated new meaning that

was constructed). This model was subsequently adapted by Rosenblatt (1978) in her description of the reader, the text and the poem. Within this model, people can fixate belief with or without logic. However, by using logic (inductive, deductive and abductive) via this transactive process, doubt can be resolved and new meanings can be constructed. As I interact with students in literacy engagements, I name actions I observe them doing to provide explicit opportunities for them to make connections that support the construction of new understandings.

My transactive process. Through my past participation as a member of the reading intervention cohort and through my current continued educational experiences in the doctorate program, I have inquired into my beliefs about teaching and learning of reading. The teachings of Peirce enable me to understand that my beliefs guide my desires and shape my actions; this has considerable implications for teaching and learning. Any decision I make as a teacher influences the way things are constructed in the minds of my students. They depend on me to name things and I play a major role in what students' construct as their reality. Because of my role as teacher, my students fixate beliefs based on authority even though I prefer they fixate beliefs through inquiry. This is a tension we all face because there are things that we all consider not to be negotiable. For example, I believe that all students can learn and that is not negotiable. It is not "okay" with me if students leave my classroom believing they are not capable or somehow "broken." It is also not okay if they believe that reading is a rote process requiring no thought. I therefore use language in a gentle way to engage students in thoughtful literacy conversations in which they experience success. It is my intent to use

language in a way to bring ideas, theories, and ways of acting like a reader into their awareness in hopes of helping them develop, sustain or extend a generative theory.

Leland and Harste (2001) suggest that:

> Responses to reading are semiotic in at least three ways. First, an initial response triggers a further response and sets the process of unlimited semiosis in motion. Second, when supported through instructional practices like Sketch to Stretch', responses are multimodal and involve more sign systems than just language. Third, sign systems mediate our world and affect the stance that we take to other people and to the issue at hand. (p. 217)

This semiotic perspective facilitates my ability to look closely at how I support students as readers. When I reflect on the experiences that students *live* in my setting, I see that I provide opportunities for the construction of new meanings, for semiosis, across varied mediums such as conversations, written responses, and drawings that students have and create *around* text. The varied mediums allow children to deepen their understanding of what it means to make meaning and provide children with opportunities to experience success in making meaning. This, simultaneously, contributes to their confidence in their ability to make sense and with these successes comes pleasure. As Leland and Harste (2001) noted:

> A semiotic view of literacy creates space for students to consider the issue of what kind of literate beings they wish to become. For teachers, a semiotic view of literacy creates a window for seeing how our instructional efforts influence the development of our students as certain kinds of literate beings. (p. 217)

From a semiotic perspective, beliefs of both teachers and students matter. As Mills eloquently articulated (Mills, H. & Donnelly, A. (2001); in Glover & Keene (Eds.), 2015):

> Beliefs really do matter. They matter to teachers and learners, tall and small. They shape our perceptions of ourselves, the nature of knowledge, the learning process, our relationship to others, and the world. If we truly believe in education for democracy, we will strive to grow and enact new beliefs ourselves while living the process alongside our students. When planning, we will ask questions like, "What are the beliefs we want to nurture about content, the learning process, and students' identities and sense of agency?" and "What are the beliefs we might foster as we teach children in ways that change their hearts, minds, and actions?" In other words, how might we position ourselves and our students as *creators* of knowledge who access new learning to imagine and evaluate new ways of being—whether as readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, or, most important, citizens of the world? (p. 46)

Social Constructivism

While all semioticians are constructivists, not all constructivists are semioticians; the beliefs I have constructed have been influenced by both groups. The theory of social constructivism places an emphasis on how meanings and understandings grow out of social encounters (Vygotsky, 1962). This perspective enables me to understand that learning is shaped by engaging in authentic experiences that take place within a social setting. The significance of language and environments in regard to children's learning

has been studied for decades. In 1978, Vygotsky wrote about the significance of language and environments arguing that, "children grow into the intellectual environment around them" (p. 88). Furthermore, he explained that signs give humans the power to reflect on behavior and learning and enhance the human ability to remember and construct meaning. Johnston (2005) pointed out that in the process of children becoming literate they "are being apprenticed into ways of living with people as much as with symbols" (p. 256). I believe that the language we use with students creates a specific kind of social learning context, that which embraces Cambourne's (1984) conditions for learning. My language functions as a tool that works to create and support his seven conditions for learning: immersion, demonstration, expectation, responsibility, value approximations, employment, and feedback. In those settings, readers construct/reconstruct their theories of reading through "language used in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies, and distinctive ways of thinking, valuing, feeling, and believing" (Gee, 2008).

Smith (2006) explained that, **"**According to the dictionary *reading* is defined as "interpreting"- making sense of something, predicting, or anticipating" (p. 1). "Making sense" of the world and the things in it, is what people do as they go about their daily lives. Therefore, reading can be viewed as "striving to understand everything in the world around us in which we are particularly interested and involved" (Smith, 2006, p. 1). I believe that students' have varied theories about reading and theorize that students' theories about themselves as readers play a vital role in their ability to make meaning from text and the kind of meaning they make. They bring these beliefs to instructional settings. I believe that when readers (1) understand that reading is meaningful, (2)

believe in their ability to make sense of text, and (3) consider reading a pleasurable event and therefore choose to engage with literacy, their theory of reading is "generative" (Stephens, et al., 2012). I believe that what the child brings to the literacy engagements matters (Rosenblatt, 1976), as do the conditions under which children construct knowledge about literacy while immersed in literacy (Cambourne, 1988). Teachers must first seek to understand how it is that readers view reading and themselves as readers before instructional decisions are made. It seems reasonable to conclude that the context in which children are taught to read positions them to understand that reading is about making sense of text or about decoding- getting words correct. Homeroom classrooms, reading intervention (RI), Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), and Reading Recovery (RR) present social encounters for developing readers to construct, reconstruct and/or modify their theory of reading. The engagements, conversations, and enacted identities within the specific context of classrooms, RI, LLI, and RR intervention settings are working either explicitly or implicitly to build a readers' theory of reading. Meaning is derived from and maintained by social interactions. As Gee (2012) points out:

> Texts and the various ways of reading them do not flow full-blown out of the individual soul. They are social and historical inventions of various groups of people. One always and only learns to interpret texts of a certain type in certain ways through having access to, and ample experience in, social settings where texts of that type are read in those ways. One is socialized or enculturated into certain social practice. (p. 45)

My social constructivist process. To understand a child's theory of reading, I use Stephens' Hypothesis Test process (HT) (1990). This is a process used to gain a

deeper understanding about a reader's strengths, needs and beliefs, and helps me understand more about the way a particular reader sees the world. This process involves making observations over time and under various conditions. It is vital to explore *under what conditions* (Stephens, et al., 2012) students are able to enact understandings positioning them to transact with experiences which result in learning. Salient patterns emerge from the observations over time and five or more interpretations (could it be's) are formed to explain each observation. Patterns in interpretations become hypotheses, which are tested. Confirmed hypotheses inform instruction. This requires probing, clarifying, and listening. Schön's (1991) idea of reflection-in-action helps me to understand this process. There is a knowing-in-action necessary to make appropriate moves along the way. Through the HT process and through reflection-in-action, I developed the

> … capacity to see unfamiliar situations as familiar ones and to do it in the former as [I] have done in the latter that enables [me] to bring [my] past experiences to bear on the unique case. It is our capacity to see-as and do-as that allows us to have a feel for problems that do not fit existing rules (Schön, 1983, 1991, p. 140).

Furthermore, each experience affords a new way of seeing and developing expertise as reflected in Schön's statement that "Each new reflection-in-action enriches his repertoire" (p. 140).

I consider myself an avid kid-watcher (Goodman, 1978) and sought to know and care for my students personally as people, learners, and readers. Across all interactions, I wanted kids to know that I genuinely enjoyed reading, talking, and learning with and from them. I facilitated conversations thoughtfully and carefully to navigate personal and

instructional interactions— getting to know kids and building relationships. For example, I focused on building relationships, getting to know one another using the guise of looking for kids their age to hang out with and to learn more about what they think about reading and what they do when they read. Then, I began inquiring generally at first, to gain an overall first impression of their reading engagement. I stayed committed to guiding our interactions in ways that aimed to make our time together feel friendly and social, all the while noting observations and engaging in responsive cycles observing carefully, interacting thoughtfully, assessing, and responding authentically, and genuinely, enjoying reading and talking together. I facilitated conversations inquiring into their likes, dislikes, interests, and feelings about reading text. I related to them reader-to-reader and responded genuinely in conversation. Then, within the same introductory session in which we got to know one another, I observed their book selection process and what they did, said, and felt while reading the text. More specifically, I noted observations of reading behaviors regarding their miscues and the skills and strategies they appeared to take as well as actions they appeared to not try juxtaposed with my perception of their disposition about the act of reading and in response to reading. Beginning this way supported my entry into understanding what kids thought and felt about what reading is and does (Halliday, 1975) and about themselves as readers represented by the statements in the What Matters list (Stephens et al., 2012 for our 2011 version).

I took an inquiry stance observing and responding to kids, looking for patterns, and forming hypotheses about what they thought and believed in terms of the concepts represented in the What Matters list. Does the student understand that reading is a

meaning-making process? Does the student believe in their ability to make sense of text? Does the student choose to read and seem to experience pleasure doing so? What are the results of skills and strategies the reader shows evidence of trying? What skills and strategies does the reader appear to not try? Does the reader's disposition exhibit signs of shifts in attitude, interest, and/or motivation to read as we negotiate changing the conditions of our context? I structured and guided our interactions working to create a context that felt friendly, social, and yet productively instructional. All the while, I noted observations and engaged in responsive cycles of assessment and instruction. As a result, I constructed an understanding of how the student engaged with reading, talked about reading, and seemed to feel about reading.

I believed that any contributions kids made attempting to engage socially, emotionally, and/or intellectually or not, exposed them to possibilities of vulnerability and have to be handled with respect and critical care. There are typical interactions with students that occur daily within classrooms and position kids to experience feelings of vulnerability. For example, when I confer with a reader I often ask them to read a little bit out loud to me and that creates space for kids to become vulnerable. When in response to my request s/he replies, "I read better in my head" or "I don't like reading out loud" I have a professional obligation to respond in ways that acknowledge, care for, and show respect for his/her assertions. Otherwise, I risk causing the reader to experience negative emotions such as resentment, embarrassment, or even shame. Brown defines shame as the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging— that something we've experienced, done, or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection. I acknowledge that it is hard to know for

sure what kids feel. However, I argue that understanding the feelings that could be experienced privately in readers' minds during instances of Yellow Flag observations, makes it seem reasonable to interpret that kids could in fact experience feelings of shame, embarrassment, or think they are somehow broken, or do not belong. I believe that my study makes a case for using reading engagement as an invitation for teachers to conduct inquires into understanding what lies at the foundation of their kids' reading interests, attitudes, and motivations as instructional material worthy of direct instruction. To accomplish this, I sought to understand more about kids' cognitive and affective aspects about reading and themselves as readers.

After three years of using the Hypothesis-Test (Stephens, 1986, 1999, 2006) approach routinely, engaging in responsive cycles of assessment and instruction, I started noticing patterns in my work with kids. While I worked systematically identifying salient observations, planning, and engaging in responsive cycles of assessment and instruction, I named three general patterns conceptualizing Yellow Flags. I named Gisty Meaning-Making, Strategy-Calling, and paid attention to how kids appeared to feel about the act of reading and when they engaged with text before, during, and after reading. Therefore, Yellow Flags are based on my experiences naming salient observations of readers and supporting them with developing, sustaining, or extending a generative theory of reading. In my experiences, I found that inquiring into instances of Yellow Flags informed teaching and learning about readers and reading that was efficient, effective, pleasurable, and therefore successful experiences for both my students and me.

In summary, I paid attention to how kids appeared to feel during our time together. I felt a professional obligation to consistently create conditions in which kids

consistently experienced reading success and therefore experienced positive emotions related to reading. In my reading time with kids, I hoped to communicate my passion for teaching, reading, and learning together. I believed that all readers were doing the best that they currently knew and could make progress learning growing as a reader. Furthermore, I believed that if they did not already report that they chose to read for fun, they would soon come to realize that that possibility could exist for them. Consequently, I believed that every move I made, verbally, nonverbally, in planning, instructing, talking, and managing kids mattered and was critical. I believed that every interaction worked implicitly and explicitly communicating messages about attitudes, interests, motivations, expectations, and beliefs about teaching, learning, reading, and readers. Therefore, I approached my time with kids from an inquiry standpoint, seeking to understand whether kids read for meaning; how they felt about the act of reading, juxtaposed with how they felt about it while reading; their beliefs about their abilities to read and make sense of text; and the conditions under which they chose to read and resulted as a pleasurable event. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I believed that I had a professional responsibility to understand and demonstrate care, concern, and instructional support responding to nurture kids' social and emotional needs, across all our interactions, and within reading instruction.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Context and Background to the Study

In my school, 57 teachers serve 903 students in pre-K through fifth grade. Approximately 25 % of the student population qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch and 4.3 % of the students are considered to have a disability. Reading Intervention (RI) is provided to children in kindergarten through fourth grade who are identified as needing significant or additional reading instruction to reach grade level expectations. Reading intervention can be implemented through small group instruction or one-on-one both as either a push-in or pull-out model. The intervention setting is collaborative; there are teacher and peer-led discussions. Conversations about reading, texts, and readers are a large part of the RI setting. They provide opportunities for students to develop, sustain, or extend identities, beliefs, and understandings, all of which I use to define a reader's theory of reading.

During the last year of the cohort, as a reading interventionist, my curiosity was piqued when I noticed that most of the children I taught in RI had previously received Reading Recovery (RR) services in first grade and/or RR literacy group instruction in first and/or second grade. RR (Clay, 1993) is a well-researched and well-known one-on-one pull out intervention for first graders considered to be at risk. It is a widely accepted and widely used reading intervention for at-risk first grade students. The goal is to provide 12-20 weeks of daily individual reading instruction to support the lowest

performing students to raise their reading to the average level of their peers. This program was developed by Marie Clay in the 1970s and has been used in the U.S. since 1984. The students qualified for RI services according to the *Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress* (MAP, 2011), *Dominie Reading and Writing Assessment Portfolio* Dominie/DeFord (2004, 2014), and classroom teacher referrals. I wondered why they continued to qualify for needing significant or additional intervention post-Reading Recovery. Based on my observations, they seemed to believe that reading was about reading words fast and accurately. I wondered if perhaps they did not yet hold a generative theory of reading (Stephens et al., 2012).

I collected data using anecdotal records of observations of the students when they read independently, of miscue-analyses I did of text level readings, and of interviews/conversations I had with them about reading. I continued to wonder about these observations during my third year teaching as an interventionist at my elementary school and started to name patterns in the data; I subsequently referred to them as Yellow Flags. For example, I noticed that these students usually got the gist of a story but struggled with authentic responsive talk and with deeper level comprehension, and typically did not believe in their ability to make sense of text or choose to read for pleasure. This led me to think more about the relationship among these factors and the function (Halliday, 1975) reading served for the students. I also noticed that post-Reading Recovery students often skipped unknown words and/or substituted nonsense words or real words that did not make sense within the context of their reading.

In order to investigate further and support my school's administrative team in understanding more about our literacy needs school-wide, I expanded my inquiry outside

of RI students to learn more about reading identity (Moje et al., 2009; Hall, 2007, 2010; Brown, 2011; Alvermann et al., 1996; Barden, 2009; Compton-Lily, 2009; Skerrett, 2012). In the 2011-2012 school year, I developed a parent survey (See Appendix A) to collect data about parent perceptions of their child's values, attitudes, beliefs, and engagement relative to reading and being a reader across varied contexts and purposes. I believe that how we are recognized by others matters in the construction and flux of reading identities. I gathered open-ended survey data from the parents of kindergarten, first, and second grade students across the 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 school years, and collected field notes of observations during structured engagements. Sixty-two of the 126 surveys were returned. I also interviewed students and took notes on reading engagement, and reading behaviors. The patterns in this data suggested that kids who did not hold a generative theory of reading did not like or choose to read.

During the summer prior to the start of the 2015-2016 school year, Kacee Smith, a reading interventionist who had been my colleague, returned to the classroom for the first time in four years and requested that we collaborate across the year. She and I shared a knowledge base; she had previously completed graduate coursework similar to my reading intervention cohort and earned a Reading Teacher endorsement from South Carolina. Kacee's invitation to collaborate presented an opportunity to continue inquiring into understanding more about the students I had first studied as kindergartners. I agreed to help in part because I wanted to understand the relationship between reading identity (Moje et al., 2009; Hall, 2007, 2010; Brown, 2011; Alvermann et al., 1996; Barden, 2009; Compton-Lily, 2009; Skerrett, 2012) and student achievement. I could do that by studying the 11 fourth grade students in her classroom for whom I had historical

data (See Table 3.1). One of the 11 students did not attend kindergarten at our school however, she entered at the beginning of first grade and received RR in first grade. Therefore, I had historical data for her from first grade on. I compiled Fall MAP data from first grade to present, ACT Aspire end of third grade state test data, and text level reading data from the beginning of third grade. According to their kindergarten teacher, three of the students had been in the top half of their class and two of those students had gotten some literacy support during first and second grade. Seven of the 10 students had been in the bottom half of their kindergarten class. Six of those same seven students got literacy support which included Reading Recovery-like intervention, Reading Intervention, and private tutoring (See Appendix B).

Table 3.1

Demographics of Class

Demographic	**Whole Class**	**Participants**
Enrollment	21	11
Female	11	5
Male	10	6
Ethnicity		
White	16	8
African American	3	2
Mexican	1	1
Other	1	0
Free or Reduced - Price Lunch	4	2

Data Collection

In this study, I collected data unofficially in the fall of 2015 and officially in the spring of 2016 (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

Data Collection

Across 33 weeks in Fall & Spring	Frequency Averages reflect Spring data
Text Level Reading Assessments	On-going
Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires	Beginning of year & Mid-year
Interest Inventories	Beginning of year
Anecdotal Records	Daily
Running Records	Average of 3 times a week
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Universal Screener	Beginning of school year, Mid-year, & End of school year
Text Level Reading Assessments	Beginning of year, Mid-year, & End of school year
SC Pass State Test	End of 3rd grade
SC Ready State Test	End of 4th grade
Detailed Field Notes	Daily
Expanded Field Notes	Weekly
Voice Recordings of Debrief Sessions with the classroom teacher	Average of 5 minutes, 3 times a week
Voice Recordings of Planning Sessions with the classroom teacher	Average of 1 hour, 3 times a week
Video Recordings of whole class read aloud and shared reading	Average of 2 times a week
Video Recordings of 2 small (20 minute) group reading sessions	40 minutes, Average of 3 times a week
Video Recordings of independent reading conferences	Average of 1 time a week
Transcriptions of voice and video recordings	Weekly

During this time, I collected detailed field notes, Kacee's anecdotal records, running records, text level reading assessments, voice recordings of debrief conversations with students and Kacee, and audio-recordings of planning sessions with the classroom teacher. She and I discussed her perceptions of the students informally at the beginning of the year and continued these conversations throughout fall and spring. I also made video recordings an average of three times a week for one hour of reading engagements. I defined these as reading events which occurred in varied settings, facilitated by the classroom teacher and myself — whole class read aloud, shared reading, small group sessions (book clubs), independent reading, and one-on-one reading conferences. In addition, I conducted semi-structured interviews, gave out and collected questionnaires and interest inventories; and documented state and district standardized tests results Every week, I watched the videos and listened to voice/audio recordings, taking notes as I did so. I also expanded my field notes. When I did so, I noted questions and wonderings. Additionally, I referenced field notes and watched the video-recordings to recall and recreate my in-action thought processes. Kacee and I discussed this data and used it, along with her observations of students to inform instruction.

During informal data collections, I spent 14 weeks interacting with the students in Kacee's fourth grade class an average of four hours a week. However, due to an unexpected medical leave, Kacee missed 7 out of 14 weeks. Across the seven weeks she worked, we planned together once or twice a week during her 50-minute planning period and/or an hour and a half after school. Kacee shared her perceptions of the 11 participants relative to the first three statements on the What Matters list (Stephens, et al.,

2012). Together, we decided that I would administer and collect the district mandated beginning of year text level readings from the 11 students for consistency in administration. She collected anecdotal data as she observed the students in whole group, small group, and one-on-one settings. I also observed the students so that I could bring my observations to our planning meetings. Because I administered the text level reading assessments, observed, interacted with the whole class, small-groups, and one-on-one to build relationships, I became a familiar teacher within the classroom.

Classroom routines and structures were established early in the fall and continued throughout the spring. They were shaped from my interactions with students and Kacee. For example, when Kacee noticed that 2 of the 11 participants, Nico and Slater frequently abandoned chapter books, she asked me to inquire and then think with her to create a plan to help her understand their strengths and needs relative to the beliefs and statements represented by the WM 1, 2, and 3. I collected the majority of the data acting as a participant with students during their regular ELA routines and structures. The day I began inquiring with the boys I planned to observe from a distance at first, therefore I arrived in the midst of independent reading to get a snapshot of them already the action of the reading event. I recorded notes before joining them, during our time one-on-one, and in small group. Nico and Slater both had a copy of the novel, *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005). I invited them to sit and chat with me and that led to reading the book together. Then, I expanded my field notes afterwards. Additionally, I started video recording my sessions with the boys several times a week. I looked for opportunities to enter into their current ways of reading to get to know them and understand them as readers. I recorded observational notes capturing as much detail as possible noting

everything the boys did, said, and appeared to feel before reading, during reading, after reading and about the act of reading and being a reader. I continued to follow their lead and we ended up reading the entire book together during independent reading and, later on, during small group reading times concluding in mid-December, right before Winter Break.

As a result of transcribing and analyzing the informal data collection from working closely with Nico and Slater in the fall, Kacee and I made changes in the spring. She and I decided that meeting in small group book clubs should become part of the regular reading routines. This afforded me opportunities to continue building rapport and to learn more about individual readers' reading identities and instructional needs. Kacee and I worked collaboratively to form the small groups and used multiple data points: text reading level, interests, gender, and patterns noted in engagement such as suggested habits of abandoning books, fake reading and not yet self-correcting miscues that were not meaningful. I facilitated two small reading group sessions, 20 minutes a day, 3-4 times a week with 7 of the 11 participants in the study and Kacee met with the other 4 participants (and the rest of her class). Recording with the video camera become part of the regular classroom procedures— students initiated assisting with turning on the camera and microphone. During and/or after spending time in the classroom each day, I expanded my field notes. Because we wanted to be responsive to the needs and interests of students, we expected some of the group memberships might change fluidly, however surprisingly, that did not occur.

Study Design

In my daily work as a reading interventionist, RtI specialist, and as a reading coach, I focus on understanding how my students see themselves as readers, what they believe about reading and about the function it serves. I approach creating the design of my work as an interventionist and coach by taking an inquiry stance investigating what matters (WM) for struggling readers (Stephens, 2000; Stephens et al., 2012; Stephens (Ed.), 2013). In this way, I am continually making decisions and reflecting on my practice. I understand a generative theory to be an active process through which readers reach beneath the surface to greater emotional, affective, and visual involvement with the text (Tierney 1990). Many factors work together to contribute toward the development of reading identities (Moje et al., 2009; Hall, 2007, 2010; Brown, 2011; Alvermann et al., 1996; Barden, 2009; Compton-Lily, 2009; Skerrett, 2012): language (Vygotsky, 1962; Gee 2012) including: interpretations of experiences that we bring to texts (Rosenblatt, 1978; Dyson, 2005), and cultural, historical, and economic privileges (Delpit, 2012; Howard, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Palmer writes, "we teach who we are" (1998). Thus, validating students for who they are, the knowledge and expertise they possess, and the potential they hold (Gay, 2010; Blackburn, 2012) is key in the construction of their reading identity.

In this study, I conducted explanatory case study as a participant-observer (Spradley, 1980) to understand more about the relationship between reading identity (Moje et al., 2009; Hall, 2007, 2010; Brown, 2011; Alvermann et al., 1996; Barden, 2009; Compton-Lily, 2009; Skerrett, 2012) and student achievement. Yin (2014) defines explanatory case study as a case study whose purpose is to explain how or why some

condition came to be. I studied 11 fourth grade students in my suburban elementary school and had data spanning four years— beginning in kindergarten to end of third grade— for ten of the participants. I had data spanning three years— beginning in first grade to the end of third grade— for one participant.

I conducted multiple case studies to more reliably develop assertions regarding the relationship between reading identity and student achievement (Yin, 2014). Each student is a case with the child being my unit of analysis. Yin defines the case as "the main subject of study in a case study-usually a concrete entity…" (p. 237). Specifically I asked:

1. In what ways can the teacher and I help kids develop, sustain, or extend reading identities relative to (a generative theory of reading) the What Matters List (Stephens et al., 2012)?
2. How could I come to understand the reading identities kids hold relative to the What Matters List (Stephens et al., 2012)?
3. What impact will our actions have on the kids? What shift, if any, will there be in their ability to comprehend grade level text?

Data Analysis

I used Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative method to generate theory. The purpose of the constant comparative method of joint coding and analysis is to generate theory systematically by using explicit coding and analytic procedures (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This process required repeated readings of the transcribed data to name patterns and conceptual categories. Each subsequent reread and viewing of the video recordings provided opportunities for clarification. I conducted member checking with

Kacee to help improve trustworthiness, accuracy, credibility, validity, and transferability. The overall goal of this process provided findings that are authentic, original and reliable. Triangulation allowed for the convergence of data collected from different sources, to determine the consistency of a finding (Guba, 1981).

CHAPTER 4

FALL

"Teachers at all levels should have the opportunity to observe the child's entrance into the world of the printed page" (Rosenblatt, 1995 p. 24).

In the fall, while I was not officially collecting data, I unofficially collected data and analyzed patterns. Fall consisted of three salient events:

1. Establishing Relationships
2. Reading a Novel with Slater and Nico
3. Learning with and from Slater and Nico

The events led to three Major Outcomes:

1. Using Yellow Flags to Understand Readers and their Emotions
2. Normalizing Yellow Flags and Making them Explicit
3. Re-conceptualizing Choosing to Read

These outcomes informed the transition from fall to spring

1. Kacee and I Reorient Preparing for Spring
2. Class Conversation about Abandoning Books

Establishing Relationships

At the beginning of the school year, Kacee and I set goals for our English Language Arts time together and decided on a fall and spring plan. In the fall, I would spend time in the classroom building relationships and learning regular classroom routines as well as co-creating and experiencing literacy engagements with the class. My

role of reading coach afforded me the opportunity to spend an average of one and a half hours a day, four days a week working in Kacee's classroom. I wanted the students to view my time with them as a typical part of their day.

In the early part of the school year, I spent time in Kacee's classroom observing, taking notes, and interacting with students weekly to coach (co-teach, demonstrate, and observe) both Kacee and her students during read aloud, shared reading, independent reading, reading conferences, and writing workshop. On average, Kacee and I met one and a half hours a week before and/or after school to plan and debrief. I interviewed her to understand her perceptions of the 10 students.

To ensure consistency in administration, Kacee and I decided that I would administer and collect the beginning of year text level readings from the 10 students. We each collected anecdotal records from student observations during whole group, small group, and one-on-one settings. Because I administered text level reading assessments, observed, interacted with the whole class, small-groups, and one-on-one to build relationships, I became a familiar teacher within the class.

One day in mid-October, during a planning conversation with Kacee, she shared an observation that suggested that Slater and Nico frequently abandoned books during independent reading and expressed her overall concern about their reading engagement. Kacee explained that in thinking about the What Matters List (Stephens, et al., 2012) she had concerns that Slater and Nico did not consider reading a pleasurable event. Furthermore, Kacee requested that I inquire further because she was busy preparing for a seven-week medical leave absence. I replied, "Absolutely, based on what I know about both boys' reading histories, it would be my pleasure to investigate. The boys have been

on my radar since first grade because their achievement scores continue to intrigue me although they've never qualified for reading intervention services."

I recounted how I met the boys three years ago, in Lizette and Mannie's first grade classrooms. First year teachers, Lizette and Mannie self-reported that they had a solid understanding of, and believed in, the What Matters list (Stephens et al., 2012) and its implications for teaching readers. They attributed their knowledge and insights to their graduate studies.

Slater's instructional history. I met Slater near the end of his first grade year when his teacher, Lizette, asked me for help because he was not yet reading on grade level. Her miscue analysis of his text level reading showed he relied heavily on using visual information. Lizette believed that meaning broke down very quickly for Slater because he over-focused on decoding, often times unsuccessfully and, even with prompting, he did not yet think about what made sense when he came to an unknown word. Lizette described Slater as a student who, "reads to get words right and puts in nonsense words while reading." She conferred with his mother, Laila, a homeroom mom and nurse who was taking time off to stay at home with her two boys. She did not like to read when she was kid, but enjoyed and chose to read as an adult. Laila discovered that the books she provided were too hard for Slater to read at home. She expressed her frustration and requested a conference with me.

I met with Laila and she concurred with Lizette's evaluation: "He hates reading. I have to make him read! It's like pulling teeth!" In the final few weeks of his first grade year, I spent time getting to know Slater as a reader, testing out different conditions to understand his needs, in order to provide instructional support ideas for both Lizette and

Laila. I agreed with Lizette's instructional focus, indeed, he needed to understand more about reading for meaning to learn more about how to access meaning when problem-solving. Consequently, we provided a variety of high interest books for him to choose from and read easily (approximately 98% accuracy) and which contributed to building confidence as he learned more about accessing meaning and integrating visual information more effectively and efficiently. At the end of Slater's first grade year, Laila asked me to tutor him over the summer, "hoping to help him catch up in meeting grade level expectations." I met with him six times for one-hour tutoring sessions that summer. He made significant progress in his ability to access meaning when problem-solving unknown words and appeared to enjoy reading during our sessions together. Second grade fall MAP scores confirmed his reading growth; he scored in the 74th percentile— a 45-point percentile increase from the end of first grade (29th percentile). I checked in with him in his classroom a few times during his second grade year and noted that: he self-selected chapter and nonfiction books, and while he could read most of the words accurately, he appeared to need support learning to navigate more sophisticated text demands. He reported that he did not like to read. His second grade teacher stated that she was not worried about him as a reader. Leila reported that he was doing much better during second grade and had observed glimmers of him enjoying reading independently at home.

Nico's instructional history. I met Nico during his first grade year when I worked as a reading interventionist. In my job, I administered, collected, analyzed, and triangulated multiple data points to identify students in need of intervention in grades, kindergarten through fifth grade. When I observed a discrepancy between two reading

data points; our school's universal screener, MAP data, and the classroom teacher's reported text level reading assessment, Dominie/DeFord (2004, 2014) I met with the students and conducted further inquiry. Nico scored in the 32nd percentile on the Reading MAP test at the end of first grade. Yet his teacher, Mannie, reported that he met criteria for end of first grade text level reading assessment expectations. I asked his classroom teacher to help me understand the discrepancy. She hypothesized that he rushed through the MAP test because he was not interested in taking it and she did not believe that his score was an accurate reflection of his reading achievement. With that, I spent a little time reading with Nico and in general agreed with his teachers' assessment. I observed that he read fast and accurately and constructed a gist understanding of the text, but that he did not have much to say while reading. I wondered if he liked reading. In a debrief session with Mannie, I expressed concern about Nico's theory of reading. She agreed and explained that he was not "super interested" in reading but read on grade level so, she did not worry. Trusting Mannie's expertise, I made a note to check Nico's fall reading MAP score at the beginning of his second grade and found that he scored in the 85th percentile.

In response to Kacee's October request, I started reading with Nico and Slater on a regular basis in November of their fourth grade year. After meeting with them the first few times, I video recorded our sessions so that Kacee could watch after she returned from medical leave. Video recording our reading sessions also helped establish recording as part of our regular classroom routines.

Reading a Novel with Slater and Nico

Initially, I planned to slide up beside Slater and Nico one at a time and engage in a conversation with them in their classroom. When I opened the door, and entered, I noted

independent reading had already started and students had settled into various spots around the room. Nico and Slater were sprawled out on the floor about five feet apart, one to the right of the classroom door entrance and the other to the left. I noticed they had the same chapter book— *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005). Intrigued, I invited Nico and Slater to slide together and we started chatting about how they came to have the same book. They explained that they had checked it out together from our school library. I inquired further attempting to find out more information about why they picked that particular book.

Slater said, "The title sounded good and the first sentence."

Nico stated, "The picture on the cover got me interested."

I thought their responses sounded vague and I noted them as yellow flags. So, I asked how much of the book they had read and found out they had not started it. I took a risk inviting them to begin reading it together and they accepted.

I sat in between Nico and Slater listening to them whisper read independently. I leaned in close tracking the print with my eyes, alternated side-to-side, jotted down observations, watched closely and resisted the urge to talk until they got close to finishing chapter one. I noted miscues such as hoping/hopping the speed, itchy/achy feeling in my chest, doppy/dopey acting, rEfUj/re-fudge/refuge, irresistible/irresponsible. I used Miscue Analysis (Goodman, Y., Watson, & Burke, 1987) *on the run* (Clay, 1993) to create a sense of the boys' cue use and noted 100% grapho-phonic/visual and 40% semantic/meaning cue use. I studied their body language, noted physical movements, watched for deep breaths, or any other observable behavior that might indicate confusion, or the need or desire to question something they read. After observing several instances

of miscues with no observable actions that indicated monitoring for meaning or attempting to problem-solve, I started a conversation. I genuinely wanted to know what the boys thought, wondered, and had to say. Attempting to help them feel at ease I jokingly explained that, "I really like to know what kids think and since no one has invented a device that lets me crawl inside your heads to hear your thoughts, I'd have to settle for chatting. You guys ok with that?" They giggled and then I asked Slater, "What are you thinking a skiff has to do with?"

He replied, "I don't know, a wetsuit?"

Then Nico said, "It was sad that the manatee was dead and that it got cut by an engine."

Slater accurately argued, "No, he cut it off. He turned it off."

Nico and Slater did not seem to have much to say in terms of an inner voice when they read but it seemed reasonable to consider that since the three of us had never read together like this before they might not have been comfortable with our context yet. However, they were almost at the end of the chapter and I did not want them to read much further without addressing their comprehension. Based on observations thus far, I was pretty sure that they only had a gist understanding. For example, I considered it a yellow flag when Slater's approximation explained that a skiff was a wetsuit. He knew that Skeet was driving a boat arguing, "He turned it off." Slater's guess was in the ballpark that demonstrated using general meaning of the context because a skiff is something used in water. It also showed that he accessed schema because he had a lot of experience participating in water sports and boating; he lived on a lake and spent a lot of time surfing in the ocean. However, he did not use context and schema effectively or

efficiently. Instead, his guess did not make any sense based on the specific actions of the character and events that he had read in this story. Nico's comments were also yellow flags; he put two snippets of texts together incorrectly explaining that an engine killed the manatee.

If we were going to have a chance of reading the entire novel and enjoying it, I knew I had to help clear some things up quickly or else risk abandoning the book. I asked Nico and Slater to whisper read a couple more pages while I periodically asked, "What do you have to say?" or "What are you thinking?" Their responses confirmed that at best, the boys had a gist understanding of the text as evidenced by the following observations: pausing while looking at me or one another then shrugging their shoulders; saying I don't know; silence; staring down at the pages in their book; repeating snippets of the text; or providing a vague retelling and/or prediction. Therefore, I quickly shifted the focus asking the boys, "Would you mind if we backed up so I can get some things straight?" In doing so, I positioned them to focus on helping me. I hoped to protect them from the possibility of experiencing embarrassment or shame while simultaneously demonstrating readerly actions to think about when beginning a new book. I explained, "It's typical for me to reread the first couple pages of a chapter book because there is often so much to get straight." Nico and Slater obliged and we reread, chatted, and cleared some things up.

When the session time ended, Slater looked at me, smiled, and said, "This was fun!"

I agreed and requested to continue reading and enjoying the book with them the next day and they accepted. I felt pleasantly surprised that they appeared to have

genuinely enjoyed our time reading together; given the boys' history of reporting that they did not like to read and Kacee's concern over her observations that they frequently abandoned books. Nico, Slater, and I had experienced ideal conditions; they chose the book independently, they engaged in whisper reading and talking-seemingly with ease, and reported that they had fun. I had no instructional focus, but rather attended to social interactions affording us opportunities get to know one another as readers using the guise of reading a book.

The next day, I joined Slater and Nico at the same time and continued inquiring into understanding more about their literate identities and the role of choice and pleasure in their reading life. After greeting one another and chatting briefly, we settled in at a table. I sat between them so that I could alternate back and forth listening as they whisper read. I told them that I could not wait to continue reading our book and said, "Before we jump back in remind me what we knew so far."

Nico offhandedly replied, "I can't remember. He went back out on the boat."

Slater added, "Something about being with his Dad's friend who's an officer."

That triggered Nico's memory and he responded, "Oh yeah! They were trying to solve the case."

I provided guidance through conversation, referencing specific parts of the text as we collectively constructed an accurate retelling that reignited Nico and Slater's interest, "There was a bullet hole, whoever shot the manatee dragged it away and tried to smooth the mud." It took longer to recap than I expected and required more support than I had anticipated. These observations provided new evidence of yellow flags to add to the ones I noted the day before. Consequently, in that moment, I decided to invest more time

prompting them to talk while reading to gain insight into what the boys thought and understood in action. Otherwise, I would not be making efficient use of our reading time and would perpetuate their current ways of engaging with text. I determined that intervening more consistently from a conversational stance had to start immediately for two reasons. First, doing so provided opportunities to informally assess specific aspects of their comprehension and figure out where they needed support with refining their understanding. Secondly, socially constructing the text with coaching feedback and prompts directly related to what they said while reading offered the boys opportunity to reflect on the meaning they made, clarify what they knew for sure, consider details they might not have thought about, and revise and/or extend their understanding all in-action.

I listened carefully and responded thoughtfully all the while seeking to clarify what Slater and Nico understood as they read. More specifically, I wondered if the boys understood who the characters were when, a few pages into reading chapter three, I heard evidence of a yellow flag related to Gisty Meaning-Making. It seemed that they were having difficulty keeping characters straight. Nico had used a snippet of text in which the narrator had literally stated that, "Dirty Dan was a friend of Earl's and Mac's." Furthermore, I considered it a Yellow Flag that neither Slater nor Nico had referred to the main character by name. I suspected that even with the conversational support I offered, they still had a limited and, gisty understanding. My questioning had to protect them from feeling incompetent and at the same time prompt reflection. Therefore, I probed further and asked, "What's the boy's name?"

Slater quickly responded, "We don't know his name yet." His confident delivery and mannerisms surprised me. I considered this a critical incident because this was the

moment I realized that he truly believed in his ability to make sense of text. Moreover, I had listened to both he and Nico accurately whisper read, "Nicknames run in our family…I was called Skeet, short for Skeeter, which was short for mosquito. That's what Mac claimed I looked like when I was born" (p. 20). Slater had misunderstood this yet appeared to believe in his ability to make sense of text, which incidentally led me to question number two of the What Matters (Stephens et al, 2012). Again, I worried that when we sorted his misconception out together he might experience embarrassment or shame because just moments before he had exuded confidence. I did not want him to feel badly therefore, I positioned myself as a learner and demonstrated tentativeness acting as if it was unclear to me, and suggested rereading.

Furthermore, I told them that figuring out who's talking and keeping characters straight are two common readerly actions that are especially helpful to sort out when starting a new chapter book. Then, I suggested that, "Sometimes even though we read the words correctly when we stop to think about what's going on, it might feel a little fuzzy or unclear because everything is new. After all, we are just getting to know characters and figure out what they are doing." I had assessed that Nico and Slater genuinely needed to refine what they knew about characters. Investigating the structure of dialogue provided an opportunity to learn more about how paragraphs and punctuation marks served an authentic meaning making function in that particular moment.

I specifically guided our conversation in ways that helped me explore their current understandings regarding sophisticated concepts of print within complex text. I asked them to locate specific parts of text they had mentioned while reading to intentionally talk back through their thought process and refine meaning. For example, I coached Nico

first saying, “Show me the part where you found out that Dirty Dan was a friend of Earl’s and Mac’s.” This particular section of text offered multiple conversation points to sort out confusions and create a clearer understanding as we socially reconstructed meaning. First, Nico’s snippet of text preceded a joke. However, I had noticed that neither boy had laughed or displayed even the slightest indication that they understood the humor. Second, it provided a chance for them to figure out that Skeet was the narrator. Third, rereading it positioned them to then figure out that we should indeed know the boy’s name. Finally after a lengthy conversation,

Slater conceded, “Oh, so not really mosquitos.”

After many more similar interactions, I became confident that Slater and Nico needed ample opportunities to generate and discuss their thoughts and weave together both efferent and aesthetic stances (Rosenblatt, 1978). Like Rosenblatt, I believe that making meaning exists on a continuum ranging from predominantly nonliterary to predominantly literary and occurs as the reader transacts with the signs (Pierce, 1867-1893) on the page taking both an efferent and an aesthetic stance. Efferent refers to a stance in which the reader’s primary focus centers on information to abstract from the text and are publicly verifiable. The aesthetic stance is a more private approach and requires the reader to broaden their attention focusing on experiencing the mood, scenes, and situation being created to live through it personally thereby affording opportunities for the reader to create personal and varied interpretations of the text. Rosenblatt helped me further understand that the stances are not opposites but rather require adopting an appropriate selective stance dependent on the purpose for reading (1978, 1995). Therefore, I took this understanding into my work with the boys. I focused simply on

avoiding conversational prompts that might imply "right or wrong" types of responses. Instead, I frequently used open-ended prompts encouraging them to activate and create aesthetic connections. For example, I asked, "What do you have to say about what the characters are doing and/or feeling?" Prompting in this way anchored efferent thinking and simultaneously provided a scaffold to access an aesthetic stance, opening up possibilities for individual interpretations. Often times, however, the boys' approximations did not reflect aesthetic connections but rather simply retold what a character was doing or feeling. Therefore, I frequently confirmed their accurate retelling and then immediately pushed them to think beyond the text prompting, "Now tell me what you think about that." It took a long time, patience, demonstration, immersion, conversation, and providing specific immediate feedback during reading before Nico and Slater independently and consistently engaged aesthetically.

Reading *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005) in its entirety within our small group afforded us the opportunity to access and apply efferent and aesthetic attitudes so that we really experienced meaning making fluidly. Navigating narrative text moment-to-moment with Slater and Nico afforded me opportunities to make observations and develop insights that otherwise would have gone unnoticed. For example, opening every session saying something like, "So fill me in on what's happening. Help get me back into the story." served a variety of other purposes. Navigating in this way simultaneously communicated expectations and beliefs that they understood prior reading, had a responsibility for determining important details, participated in socially constructing a summary, and that what they had to say was valued. Additionally, beginning every session in this open-ended way offered me an opportunity to informally assess

comprehension. Sometimes, through conversation, I identified new misconceptions missed during our previous session or remembered ones I had not yet chosen to address. More importantly, since the boys abandoned books frequently, I considered it especially important to help them develop efficient readerly habits, settle back into reading, and reignite their interest. Reading every chapter together provided the opportunity to explore the complexities of more sophisticated text and connect specifics to each preceding session. Once Nico and Slater demonstrated efficient and accurate summaries of characters' actions and feelings, I guided them to think more about the setting as another strategy to support their ability to recall scenes. For example, I demonstrated using short introductory and concluding statements providing guidance, "They are at the same restaurant; Mac and Mom split; Skeet is upset; There was the end of the scene with Mac; and that was the end of the Karaoke scene." The boys interjected details seamlessly. During these conversations, I noted interesting patterns of close but not clear understandings as well as true misconceptions. The boys spoke in ways that consistently demonstrated that they believed they understood everything they read.

Learning with and from Slater and Nico

I noted patterns in the ways Slater engaged with this narrative text and the way I responded. He believed in his ability to make sense of text, yet the sense he was making of the text was riddled with misconceptions, misunderstandings, and at best only a gist understanding. The kind of meaning he made interrupted his understanding, yet he did not seem to be aware of this. I named this False Confidence because he did not show signs of tentativeness and resisted revising understanding until lengthy conversations persuaded him. I theorized that text complexities often interrupted Slater's ability to

construct meaning and led to misconceptions, boredom, and abandoning books. Therefore, I created conditions that would provide the boys with the opportunity to authentically experience the need to construct and reconstruct their understanding of text demands such as keeping track of speakers, and noticing dialogue, narration, scene changes, and flashbacks. Engaging students in conversation while reading is one strategy I used to inquire into what might be going on in the student's mind while reading. When I initiated conversation (as you would if you were chatting with a friend about a movie) Slater frequently responded with predictions, conclusions, and misconception, instead of from a stance that allowed ideas to linger. Even with my best attempt to engage him in conversations from a social, generative stance, Slater continued talking about text from a stance that indicated he was thinking about the text more as a task to complete and the goal was to get answers correct. Furthermore, he resisted revising his ideas when other ways of thinking were presented by myself or Nico, or even when the text provided clear evidence to prompt revision.

Nico was extremely tentative when engaging with narrative text yet did not seek out ways to sort out his understanding or to construct an understanding that helped him to know for sure. I hypothesized that this way of 'living as a reader' was typical for him and he did not yet know how to navigate narrative text differently. Like Slater, text complexities often interrupted Nico's ability to construct meaning and led to misconceptions, boredom, and abandoning books. However, unlike Slater, Nico often used direct quotes from the text when he talked about the story or responded to my probing questions or comments. Furthermore, when he used snippets of text with his own words, it often sounded overly unsure and did not convey the genuine prosody of

taking a conversational stance. I concluded that like Slater, not yet knowing how to navigate more sophisticated text caused him to construct a limited and gist understanding of the story. After engaging the boys in a few conversations targeting instruction keeping track of speakers, dialogue, narration, scenes, and flashbacks within reading, *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005) text demands no longer presented a major obstacle in this particular book.

Slater, Nico and I continued reading and talking about *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005) within the classroom for six weeks. The boy's engagement and interest fluctuated as evidenced by responses such as, "If you weren't reading this with us we'd have put it back on the shelf." And "Why didn't they just write, they went to the restaurant, ate, and went home?" At different points in time, each of the boys expressed a desire to abandon the book. Furthermore, Slater's desire to stick with it and finish the book was very different from Nico's. They both experienced a dip in engagement and interest here and there but when Slater believed he solved the mystery, he more frequently requested to quit reading the book saying, "There's nothing else to figure out. I know Dan is the killer," whereas Nico expressed wanting to finish reading the entire book. Slater's answer to the mystery was inconsistent with the text and I navigated conversations carefully supporting him to hang in there with us to complete reading it. Then, at the conclusion of reading the book, both boys reported, "That's the best book we've read! Will you take a picture of us with it and send it to our moms before we return our books to the library?" I happily obliged.

The experience of reading the entire novel together was necessary to understand more about the boys' reading identities while simultaneously creating conditions that

allowed me to identify my instructional focus. I was not surprised that they needed customized instruction in learning how to navigate sophisticated text demands to support constructing and maintaining understanding and this was part of the reason they were losing interest and experiencing boredom. What surprised me were the instances of false confidence in which they misunderstood but were sure they understood. They believed in their ability to make sense of text, yet the sense they made of the text was riddled with misconceptions, misunderstandings, but, at best, they constructed a limited gist understanding of the text. My observations of their responses, miscues, intonation, and engagement while reading and talking indicated that the kind of meaning they made interrupted their understanding, yet they were seemingly unaware. I hypothesized that making this kind of meaning contributed to boredom and not yet liking to read. Therefore, I observed and interacted in thoughtful and responsive ways supporting their ability to actively take part in monitoring for understanding differently than they had been in the past. When I analyzed spring data, I named this Careful Navigation, the process of knowing kids and responding thoughtfully, communicating through language, structures, routines, tone of voice, attitudes, and dispositions that there was no right or wrong, that everything they said, did, and felt mattered and was acceptable.

Focused instructional conversations (Stephens, in print) describes the careful navigation that occurred intentionally and explicitly as I tested out hypotheses while simultaneously treading carefully to raise the students' awareness about reading and themselves as readers. After just a few sessions with the boys, I was pretty sure that they exhibited many yellow flags. Therefore, I carefully navigated focused instructional conversations; I hypothesized that ego, or the possible need to "be right" could be part of

the explanation causing them to resist revising their understanding. I handled these instances with extreme caution and care in hopes of supporting their ability to create, sustain, and refine a generative theory of reading and avoid saying something that might intentionally cause embarrassment or experience shame for not knowing or misunderstanding. For example, after spending several sessions together. I began to hand over the job of 'getting back into the story' to the boys with less prompting support from me. We were ready to begin chapter eight, but I observed the boys having difficulty retelling what happened when chapter seven came to an end, so to reignite their interest, I reminded them to skim and scan to trigger memories of what happened when we left off reading.

Slater responded, "I can't remember. We already read this."

I encouraged him, "So, finish. We are going to finish skimming so that we can finish the chapter and start the new one."

Slater continued, "Cause I remember reading making the scar wriggling/wriggle like a snake I don't know where we are."

I nudged a little more, "It's ok. Keep reading then, keep skimming and we will get to the end real quick then." They haphazardly flipped through pages and remained silent. I interpreted the silence to indicate they needed a clue to guide them to look for specific information that could support their ability to skim, recall details, and then continue reading the next chapter. Sensing Slater didn't understand why we were doing this, I made a strategic move to clarify what was clear in their understanding by asking, "Did they go fishing?"

Slater responded, "I don't know."

Then Nico chimed in, “I think they are fishing right now.”

But Slater quickly argued, “No they aren’t.”

Nico demonstrated false confidence in understanding, “Yes they are because it said on this page, check casting.”

Slater continued, “They were casting outside to practice.”

I prompted them to, “Find that part, where is it?”

Slater pointed to the top of page 73 and said, “I should have practiced up on my, I should have practiced more of my casting.” Then he flipped the page, unable to locate the text he quoted and said, “Somewhere over here.”

Nico located the part that Slater referred to and continued demonstrating false confidence as he attempted to prove that he was correct— that they were already fishing. He read, “What time should I be at the dock?” then realized, “Oh, to go meet him.” Nico cleared up his confusion and created a new and accurate understanding of the text.

At that point, all of us had our eyes on our text, and we simultaneously turned our pages, then Slater giggled as he read, “No problemo.”

I reminded them that they were skimming to find out how this chapter ended which also provided the opportunity for the boys to keep characters straight within dialogue.

In Slater’s search to figure out the setting at the end of the chapter he thought aloud and said, “He’s talking to Mac.” This was a slight misconception, Mac was in the scene, but Skeet was not talking to him. Skeet was talking to Dan. Slater continued skimming and read a detail within the text that helped him figure out a clue to the setting

and demonstrated creating a new understanding when he said, “Oh, so it’s late. He’s leaving.”

Then Nico added, “Yeah, and his mom said that if I get home late she’ll skin me alive and feed him to the sharks.”

I detected a slight misconception in Nico’s response too and decided to push his thinking by asking him to clarify by quoting his exact words, “His mom said that?”

Slater looked back in the text and exhibited false confidence of understanding when he replied, “Yes.”

Nico paused, then said, “Or” then looking back in the text repeated, “Or no, uh, Dan said that.”

Slater retorted, “Mac. Why would Dan say that? Cause he doesn’t live with him.” Then he pointed back in the text and read, “Skeet, you’d better get home now or your mama, your mama’ll skin me alive and feed me to the sharks. I went over to give Mac a hug and say goodnight to the other guys. Sleep tight, Skeeter, said Earl.” Slater laughed and said, “It had to be Mac.”

Nico agreed and trusting that they each had revised their thinking, I strategically kept the conversation moving forward in the text by reading the next line, *I didn’t think there was much chance of that* and asked, “Why does he say there’s not much chance of that?” In my experience with teaching struggling readers, I learned that those who do not yet have a generative theory of reading get lost in text and one-way meaning specifically breaks down when students are not yet transferring the meaning of what *that* is referring to when it is used as a definite article.

Slater responded, “Um, of mom saying yes to fishing.” This was a misconception; therefore, another depiction of false confidence. Instead of telling him he was wrong, I responded, “Ok, well, find the part where it says there isn’t much chance of that, find it in the book.”

Nico and Slater both quickly pointed to the dialogue. Then I asked, “Ok, so what’s that in response to? I realized that they did not understand so I nudged further and prompted them to “Look what comes right before that.”

Slater said, “Oh.”

Nico demonstrated revising his understanding by explaining, “Oh, he might not want to sleep because he is going to keep thinking about tarpoon/tarpon fishing.”

As we chatted informally, it became clear to me that the boys had moments of false confidence and did not understand everything they read, yet they were not aware of their misconceptions and break-down in meaning because they believed they understood. I composed my supportive responses in the moment as I carefully navigated my “way around” the conversation trying to get them to retell and to get back into reading where they left off while helping to unearth misconceptions and talk them through them in a pleasurable way to support their ability to reconstruct their understanding. I strategically created opportunities for them to reflect and initiate changing their thinking without me explicitly telling them they were wrong, or trying to convince them that they do not yet understand everything. Creating conditions for them to engage in the process of revising their understanding as a typical readerly action positioned them to reflect and come to the realization that they misinterpreted the text, allowing them to fix up their understanding

so that their comprehension of the text positioned them to continue reading on to chapter eight with a clearer understanding.

In the fall, my ideas of yellow flags went through a metamorphic process as I continued careful navigation to understand more about reading identities and the relationship of pleasure and choosing to read. As a result of my work with the boys, two other major things happened. First, I took my notion of yellow flags and made them explicit by listing specific descriptors of observable behaviors associated with them. I used these as starting points in a quest to understand whether or not the student held a generative theory of reading (Stephens et al., 2012). In doing so, I paid particular attention to Slater and Nico's engagement and interest levels throughout the reading of *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005) and eventually applied what I learned from them to wondering about other students in Kacee's class. Secondly, my work with the two boys also led me to re-conceptualize the third item on the What Matters List (Stephens et al., 2012)— choosing to read. Over the years, I knew it had never been quite right and therefore, kept seeking to understand the relationship between choice and pleasure. I interrogated this idea in such a way that I constructed a different understanding from what I, and others co-created five years prior. This caused a shift in my theoretical framework. I paid careful attention to understand more about the purpose and function of the reading engagement, seeking to make sense of the students' possible perceptions. Wilhelm argued that reading pleasure has many forms: play, work, inner work, intellectual, and social (2017). Furthermore, he defined play pleasure as the immersive pleasure one gets when lost in a book. I agreed and interpreted what he called play pleasure (Wilhelm, 2017) as reading that feels personally satisfying for the purpose of fun

and entertainment. Ideally, I wanted Slater and Nico to shift their report that they loved to read for the pure fun of it. Based on my experiences, I realized that it would take an enormous amount of time and support to help the boys realize and revalue the idea that reading could become something they chose to do for fun and entertainment. The boys maintained that they did not like to read. Therefore, they needed consistent and on-going opportunities reading, making sense of text, and support with revising while in the midst of creating their understanding to help ensure that they experienced success and pleasure resulting in efficient and effective meaning.

Using Yellow Flags to understand readers and their emotions. Prior to the fall semester, I would have described Slater and Nico as *word callers* because they consistently read at high rates of speed, mumbled through/skipped, and/or produced non-words with high visual similarity to the unknown word, and in conversations about the text their responses sounded gisty and contained misconceptions. However, during the fall, I realized that even though the meaning the boys made sounded fragmented, messy, and predominantly efferent based, they generally believed in their ability to make sense of text. However, I observed a distinct difference in their degree of certainty evident in their disposition when they maintained that they understood. Therefore, I sought to understand more about the function and purpose reading served for the boys and its relationship with choice and pleasure. Number three of the What Matters List never quite felt right to me. I knew purpose and function mattered and influenced the meaning the reader made. At school, independent reading is not a choice, but expectation. It is possible that even though the student self-selects the text, based on their interest, their main reason for reading is to follow school procedures. When kids read out of an act of

compliance, especially if they have not yet developed a generative theory of reading, activating the aesthetic stance while reading becomes difficult. It therefore seems reasonable that they do not stay engaged and choose to abandon the text or fake read.

When Slater and Nico exhibited Yellow Flag descriptors, it got my attention and guided my thinking as I inquired further to seek new understandings. Because I pushed myself to create new interpretations that explained my observations of the boys, I came to understand more about the boys' expectations of text. When their interest and engagement began to waiver, I realized that they understood the gist but took a stance that suggested they blamed the book for their loss of interest; it was the book's job to entertain them. This is consistent with the Yellow Flags I named Reading Aversion and Lackluster Engagement descriptors. This interpretation informed my curricular moves, teaching into the idea that readers have a responsibility to create and maintain their own interest. For example, during our reading of *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005), I listened and watched Nico and Slater carefully for evidence of Yellow Flag descriptors, made notes, and identified patterns. I noticed that the boy's responses were predominately efferent-based (Rosenblatt, 1978). I then theorized that they might not yet understand the potential that small details offered. This contributed to both their understanding and ability to connect aesthetically with the text. That interpretation informed my curricular moves as I employed careful navigation. I initiated a conversation to acknowledge their readerly feelings yet specifically named the idea that it's typical for interest levels to fluctuate while reading. In doing so, I raised their awareness by naming the reader's responsibility to notice and monitor for engagement thereby creating space for them to take specific actions to maintain their own interest and

not abandon the book. Based on our experiences of reading the novel, I was sure that both boys were not yet in the habit of reading and talking about narrative text in generative and authentic ways. That focus remained a priority as I worked responsively to create conditions that demonstrated and encouraged having things to say to transact with text— accessing both the aesthetic and efferent stances (Rosenblatt, 1978). I thought that it would help both Slater and Nico if we talked about how using small details/elaboration of text might help them engage with, rather than abandon, texts. I achieved doing so through Careful Navigation of our conversations, genuinely responded to what the boys said (which helped me monitor their understanding) and how they appeared to feel (their overall disposition) in response to the text and in response to the act of reading. In this way, I implicitly and simultaneously worked to help the boys to take actions. I prompted them to explain their understandings as they read, consider other ways to understand, and reflect and revise in action. These actions helped them build and maintain interest. I made a point to communicate to the boys that I valued, needed, and used explicit direct observations of their reading actions to guide our conversations and work together.

Normalizing Yellow Flags and making them explicit. When I begin working with students in order to understand them as readers, I focus on building relationships. I want students to feel comfortable with me so that they feel safe to let their guard down and are vulnerable. Once a relationship has been established, I seek to understand the students reading attitudes, motivations, choices, and observable actions while reading. I strive to understand how students feel about reading and themselves as a reader across a variety of conditions. Initially, I investigate what, when, why and how they chose books,

read, problem-solve, listen, and talk about reading and what they have to say as they read. I am vigilant about recording an all-inclusive list of observed behavior such as body language, breathing, movements, tone, and facial expressions. Ideally, when I start to get to know students, I provide them with free choice in making their book selections. I often check off interest as it is often first as one important "could it be" (Stephens, 1990) that I can or cannot eliminate as an explanation at the beginning of an inquiry. Next, I pay close attention to accuracy so that I am sure that the students are easily recognizing a high number of words (around 98%). In this way, I am positioned to understand more about their meaning-making process. Since Slater and Nico met these ideal scenarios from the start, I was positioned to interrogate their reading attitudes, motivations, choices, and actions while reading as they read an entire novel. It was during this time that I developed new insights into understanding more about the possible causes to explain why a reader might report that they don't like to read. Creating hypothesis required pushing past common acceptable explanations that came to mind quite easily and developing new possibilities that explained observations. For example, when I reflected on the language of our student and teacher talk during conversations about book selections, interest, and abandoning books, I realized that often implied that abandoning a book was the only logical action for students to take if they became bored. While I agreed that this was one reasonable action, I also thought it was problematic because interest alone was only one possible interpretation to explain why a student might become bored and then choose to abandon a book. I wanted to understand what might contribute to or cause the reader to become bored. By following this line of inquiry, I discovered several other possible explanations for what students considered "boring." For example, I discovered that some

readers did not yet understand that they could take specific actions to create and maintain their interest. The same holds true in thinking about the common occurrence of students' reporting that a book is too hard. Yes, it might be, but I sought to understand what aspects of the book were making it too hard and found again that some students did not yet understand there were actions they could take to make the book easier to understand. During the fall, I became better at articulating how to notice and teach responsively to the affective features of the complete reader (Layne, 2009) and as a part of this thinking I organized salient behaviors into seven Yellow Flag categories to seek better understanding of students' interactions making sense of text.

Table 4.1

Affective Aspects Inform Instruction

Yellow Flag	**Looks Like**	**Sounds Like**	**May not yet understand**
Reading Aversion	Multiple Reasons not to participate in independent reading (forgot their book, can't find a book they want to read, multiple trips to bathroom or to get water) Pretending to read Puts head down Counting number of pages left to read	Sighs, takes deep breaths while reading When prompted to engage in a conversation about the text they frequently do not have much to say, "I don't know" or frequently say, "So-and-so already said what I was going to say." Exclusive or rigid reading preferences	Reading is not something that other people have and they don't. Everyone is a developing reader. There are a variety of ways to experience reading (and they are related to the purpose reading is serving) The nonfiction genre encompasses a wide variety of text structures and organization whereby

Reading Aversion	Appears frustrated with many facets of living a readerly life: selecting books, having to read, monitoring for meaning, problem-solving for understanding, Blames the Book for not liking to read as observed by not finishing books frequently, or not starting a book after they have self-selected it to read	Claim to prefer nonfiction "I like reading about real things." "I only like reading nonfiction." Talk: "I hate reading, I don't like to read, I don't want to read." "I'm not a good reader, good readers know all the words." "I don't like chapter books. I don't like fiction." "How much do I have to read?" "How many more pages?" "I read better in my head."	authors weave meaning throughout the text in a variety of ways Nonfiction is text that is not exclusively informational text All readers can take actions to create and/or maintain their interest The current ways a reader feels about reading are not permanent and in fact, paying attention to how you feel while you read informs new reading moves to try out. Trying out new ways of thinking while reading require different intentional actions and hold the potential to result in experiencing new pleasurable feelings

Gist(y) Meaning Making	Miscue Analysis indicates high percentage of visual cue-use with low percentage of meaning cue-use Seemingly unaware of misconceptions in understanding Shows evidence of monitoring for meaning by saying, "That doesn't make sense, No, I forget that word, I read ahead and it didn't help" or mumbles through confusing or misconstrued parts of text Book selection: predominantly nonfiction and presented in informational structures that are easily read and understood as snippets of facts, does not have to be read in any particular order, does not include story elements	When prompted to engage in conversation about the text student says s/he can't remember, gives vague answers, uses exact snippets of text, appears to focus on giving a "right" answer, I forget. When students do engage, responses are limited to retell and predictions, retell is not accurate or strictly efferent-based (facts), predictions are not consistent with the text, responses sound like they are approaching talking about thinking from a stance of right or wrong, responses do not yet exhibit evidence of connecting aesthetically with text When assessing student's comprehension of text scores yield low to average percentages, their answers show patterns of close but not clear understandings and obvious misconceptions,	Reading is thinking How to tune into the details of text to make their reading experience pleasurable Reading requires varied thinking about the words, meaning/content, AND thinking about a response to the meaning they are constructing Reading and thinking evoke individual responses and are open to individual interpretation How to engage generatively and authentically with text Reading provides possibilities to understand the world, ourselves, and people in it Reading intonation matches understanding and therefore mimics oral language (sounds natural- prosody)

Gist(y) Meaning Making		strength in literal text-based answers but not yet generating individual interpretations based on text evidence Uses visual information when encountering an unknown word producing a nonsense word or a word that does not make sense, or skips the word and keeps reading without returning Tracks print with finger and seems to impede fluency, Typically reads fast and accurately offering little to no responses Head bobs off and on while reading words	How to insert high quality miscues in order to maintain meaning

False Confidence **False Confidence**	Initiates talk that exudes confidence that the student believes in their ability to make sense of text yet their responses show a breakdown in comprehension and/or assessments yield low scores. High accuracy of reading words correctly Miscue Analysis indicates high percentage of visual cue-use with low percentage of meaning cue-use Skips reading sections of text	Talk: use snippets of text to talk about text without extending or supporting what they have to say using their own wording, retell facts, may disagree with fact presented and may even suggest the author or narrator is mistaken (approach text from a right or wrong stance) Initiates answering questions yet answers are often riddled with misconceptions and the student is seemingly unaware Disposition conveys resistance to revising understanding and/or interpretations, Makes comments such as, “I know all the words, I’m too smart for books, this book is too easy” despite the fact that the teacher observed the student making a high percentage of miscues	Meaning-making is breaking down and the reader is responsible for maintaining a flux between keeping up with their thinking and how it is logically supported by the text Enjoyment of text requires the reader to be willing to suspend taking a critical stance and thinking logically and believe the unbelievable.
Overly Tentative Talk	Thinks about and refers to specific parts of text but the student’s ideas are	Talk: When responding to text there is no text-based evidence to support	There is an ebb and flow to the thinking a reader generates and

	disconnected and/or illogical	what the student has to say, or there is some evidence but it is weak and the possibility suggested by the student is extremely far-fetched, the student makes comments that might sound as if s/he is grasping at straws as they take on a role of composing as an attempt to convince themselves or others why their idea is correct, Rephrases, or repeats something a peer just said, often times prefacing their response with "Well maybe..." or "If…Then"	keeps track of while reading A reader generates possibilities and revises their thinking as new information is gained
Lackluster Reading	Disengaged during reading Frequently abandons books Blames the book for lack of interest Read words without evidence of natural responses (inner voice) Any attempts to engage the student to share thinking or	When the student responds to text, the main types of response are retell and prediction Reads fast and accurately The student doesn't seem to understand but continues plowing through the text The student makes comments such as, "I've never seen this	Reading and thinking evoke individual responses and are open to individual interpretation How to navigate text demands/ complexities How to get started or get settled into a book How to genuinely access both efferent and aesthetic stances

	have a conversation while reading suggests that it's bothersome to them or received as an interruption Sigh, count pages left, comment on number of pages read so far, puts head down, stops reading, Pretend reading	word before, I don't know this word" and then continues reading without returning and meaning breaks down. Or, when the student encounters an unknown word, might insert a non-word, mumble through, insert a word that does not make sense and continues reading and meaning breaks down Student blames their lack of interest in reading on the book Student reports, "This book is boring or reading is boring. I'm just not interested."	(Rosenblatt, 1978) while reading There are many reasons a book might start to feel boring and the reader should explore them fully before making a decision to stop reading The reader has a responsibility to create and/or maintain interest
Halfhearted Book Preferences	Chooses books based on surface-level attributes (picture on cover, number of pages, or no real reason for picking a book except that the teacher said so) Selects books that are too hard Multiple chapter books in book box	Student provides vague explanations for book selection such as, "I like to read chapter books, long books, short books, picture books, books with big print and not very many words" And/or "I only like nonfiction, I like books with lots of action." Yet they do not complete reading them. Return books before completing	Reading is a meaning-making process (Smith, 2004, 2005; Goodman, 1965) Reading is personal Reading can be pleasurable and pleasure is experienced in many forms such as social, play, intellectual, inner work and work (Wilhelm, 2017)

	for Independent Reading Abandons books before completing them	them saying, “The book got boring.” Or “I lost interest in reading it.” Attempts by the teacher to get the student to elaborate on how they selected a book are met with vague descriptions such as, “I don’t know, I can’t remember.”	because it meets an intrinsic need (Halliday, 1975)
Strategy-calling	Use strategies to read and problem-solve during reading, however the strategic behavior does not result in successful problem solving. For example, in attempting to figure out an unknown word the student reads past the unknown word and rereads and still does not problem-solve, skips the word and keeps reading The student previews the text before reading (picture walk, blurb on back or inside jacket) but does not access, or refer to	Problem solving: the reader reads past an unknown word and rereads and then says, “See. I read past but it didn’t work. I still don’t know the word.” Makes comments like, “I have to put this book back because of the five finger rule.” “I looked at the picture, but I still don’t know the word.” “I get into the story the more I read it.”	Reading is a meaning-making process How to collect and use information from previewing the text to support both decoding and understanding

	information gathered as they problem-solve, or read		

Re-conceptualizing choosing to read. The idea that reading is pleasurable because it is personally satisfying in some way is complex. Although, there were times Slater and Nico begged to keep reading *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005), at different times, both boys complained of boredom. I hypothesized that they did not yet engage with narrative text in ways that afforded them experiences tuning into, connecting, and/or valuing the details in text from an aesthetic stance. Therefore, it became my goal to teach in explicit ways positioning the boys to discover the potential for pleasure reading experienced for the purpose of fun/entertainment. I listened and watched intentionally for opportunities to explicitly name yellow flag descriptors, making them public in hopes of inviting the boys to privately reconsider the possibility that reading narrative text could serve a pleasurable function (Halliday, 1975). My hope was that the pleasure they experienced from doing this together would persuade/position them to consider the idea that reading narrative text could feel pleasurable in a kind of playful, fun, and entertaining way, in hopes that eventually the boys might discover that reading held that possibility for them. In this social setting, I watched and listened for opportunities to name and notice when the boys appeared bored, disengaged, interested, entertained, or engaged with text and then led focused instructional conversations pertaining to engagement in hopes of raising their awareness and presenting new opportunities for them to construct an understanding about what specifically might be contributing to their feelings.

Kacee and I Reorient Preparing for Spring

Before Kacee left for medical leave she made two requests that, in retrospect, provided the seed and fertile ground for my learning in the fall. Kacee reminded me to continue thinking about her initial goal, to intentionally analyze classroom structures, routines, and instruction for evidence that reflected the ideas and values represented in The What Matters List (Stephens et. al., 2012). Then in early October, because of the observations she made of Nico and Slater's lack of reading engagement and abandoning books, she requested I inquire specifically into helping her understand more about them as readers while she was gone. I now realize that as I worked with Nico and Slater I pushed myself to develop new interpretations to explain the observations of readers in Kacee's classroom and gained insight into the complexities of their reading identities.

Shortly after Kacee returned from medical leave in late November, we viewed a video clip of Nico and Slater reading their novel with me. I couldn't wait to watch the recordings together, possibly generate additional interpretations, and share what I had learned about Yellow Flags. Kacee's four week medical leave turned into a seven week absence and there were never enough hours for us to catch up on with all that had transpired. Understandably, she still had many pressures to juggle: playing catch-up with getting to know her students again, teaching all the other content areas, and managing all the other duties that come with the teaching profession, e.g., parent communication, data-teams, committee and unit leader responsibilities. These pressures kept getting in our way. In the days leading up to our debrief session, I felt increasingly eager to chat with Kacee because Slater had complained of boredom while reading *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005) two days in a row and I needed Kacee's help with developing more

interpretations or confirming "pretty sures." At the time, I had not realized that as a result of honoring Kacee's requests coupled with my extensive time reading with Nico and Slater, I was in a very different place theoretically and practically when Kacee returned from medical leave. While Kacee was gone, I had gotten to know the kids and "gain entry" and I had generated new theory. Therefore, when Kacee returned I had come to understand observations of reading engagement and the relationship to comprehending text quite differently. I had organized observations of readers into seven categories that I called Yellow Flags. I had worked out a table, which gave particular information about what I considered to be Yellow Flags. Consequently, I had generated new theory and changed and unknowingly, my relationship with Kacee had changed because I was no longer the same teacher.

Finally, we got together. We watched the boys, pausing the video to talk about what we noticed and wondered. Perplexed by Slater's previous complaints of boredom, I reiterated my confusion, "There wasn't anything in the way that he was reading and talking, reading and talking to signal-."

Kacee finished my thought, "Right, to signal boring. Right, I agree."

The boys' dispositions appeared engaged and Kacee agreed. I said, "Yeah, there wasn't anything that I observed to signal boring, at least the way I understand boring."

Again, Kacee agreed, "Right, or to the point of going that he'd had enough, he was engaged constantly."

I had already eliminated interest as a possible explanation for boredom because the Nico and Slater had self-selected the book, we were far enough into reading and the plot was developing, we socially constructed meaning, and I was certain they still wanted

to find out who shot the manatee. I recounted details of the story that captured the boys' interest, high engagement, creating feelings of suspense throughout the first few chapters. And as we continued talking, my thoughts suddenly flashed back to a group of second grade boys that I had taught years before in reading intervention and brought to mind one theory I had constructed as a result of our experiences reading together; readers who have not yet constructed a generative theory of reading might need to learn to take actions. My prior experiences reminded me of Nico and Slater because both groups did not appear to "fully own their reading process" (Goldberg, 2016, p. 7). I wondered aloud saying, "I wonder if maybe an idea for a reading mini-lesson, is… that readers might need to learn how to be patient? I mean, I find myself, when I read, just going like, oh come on, hurry up I just want to know."

Kacee agreed, "Yeah, me too."

I suggested, "So, do we make that explicit for them? Because could that be, a part of a reason that could explain the pattern we named of kids who are abandoning books?"

Kacee agreed and expressed that she wanted to learn more about this aspect of engagement, "Absolutely. To me, for him saying that twice already, for both of them they would have dropped that book already. You know, I mean Nico's got four in his cubby and I am going, why does he have four chapter books?"

I replied, "If he's living that life, I wonder who else is living a similar life in our class?"

I continued thinking aloud describing the boys' observed candidness with expressing instances of boredom juxtaposed with pleading at the conclusion of small

group reading, “Nooooo! Please, don’t stop, I have to turn the page!” and persistent begging, “Please, please, please let us take the book home!”

I hypothesized, if Nico and Slater feel this way, other kids in the class might be experiencing similar feelings and perhaps thought that quitting the book was the only option. Or maybe, they did not yet understand that they could take actions and were responsible for creating and/or maintaining their interest. Kacee agreed, explaining that she had observed many other students for whom she suspected frequently abandoned books, others who only pretended to read, and still others who read, but comprehension appeared limited to a gist understanding and contained misconceptions. This confirmed our next steps inquiring into the idea of pleasure from a whole class perspective. Kacee requested that I lead the inquiry with the class. I had identified the need for Nico and Slater to learn more about developing patience and savoring details. However, in terms of instruction we had only scratched the surface with providing ways to help them live it. Nico and Slater needed experiences living way a lot more time across the entire school day

In order to inquire with the whole class, I needed to figure out a way to bring What Matters number three— students choose to read and experience pleasure, into the foreground. The ideas of What Matters number one-understands that reading is a meaning-making process and What Matters number two— believes in their ability to make sense of text, were never far from my thinking because they co-occur— all three work together. Kids must understand that reading is about making meaning that serves a personally relevant function and experience it pleasurably otherwise they will not have a sense of self-efficacy.

Engaging in on-going conversations about abandoning books offered opportunities to explore lack of pleasure and not choosing to read, descriptors often associated with a Despondent Reader. Getting the conversation started within our whole class community raised everyone's awareness and created space for acknowledgment, ownership, and reflection.

Class Conversation Addressing the Issue of Abandoning Books

Kacee and I began our inquiry by facilitating a class conversation about abandoning books. I recognized that discussing this issue required careful navigation of teacher language and student responses as we thought together in an effort to learn from and with one another. Therefore, I started our class meeting genuinely requesting their help; I explained that I wanted to learn about a very common "older reader" reading thing that I had observed in past years, in other classrooms, especially when kids get to fourth grade. Since they were fourth graders, I told them I believed they could help me. In doing so, I hoped to normalize the action of abandoning books, creating a space to release the shame and validate what Kacee and I suspected as a common occurrence within the classroom.

The class sat together on the rug in our meeting and early in our discussion Slater and Nico publically divulged their habit of abandoning books explaining that they had not completed reading a chapter book this year until they read *The Missing Manatee.* Their acknowledgment evoked a ripple of responses across the group: wide-eyes, smiles, giggles, "I still haven't," "me either," "I never do." I considered this a turning point, and embraced the moment asking students to raise their hands if they had ever abandoned a book. It was no surprise to see the majority of the class admit that they had stopped

reading a book at one time or another. However, "Yes, I quit reading books all the time," characterized many students' responses. Kacee and I sought further understanding, "Say more about that" and asked, "How do you decide when to quit?" Kids explained that they abandoned books frequently because "it was boring." We were surprised to discern that it was commonplace to abandon books because students had complete control over their book selections. I sought further clarification concluding our meeting asking, "So what I am hearing a lot of you say is that you pick books you are interested in reading but you lose interest in what you are reading and decide not to finish reading the book, and this happens a lot?" The majority of the class nodded in agreement and continued socializing. At that point, I looked at Kacee and said, "I understand what they are saying and I admit that I've started books and decided to quit reading them because it was boring, but it's not something that happens a lot." Kacee agreed. With that, I concluded our class discussion saying, "This is something we will continue to chat more about." With winter break only days away, Kacee and I would figure out a responsive plan upon our return in January. Subsequently, author James Thompson visited our school. The class requested Kacee read his novel, *The Girl from Felony Bay* (2013) upon their return in January.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

"The nature of the student's rudimentary response is, perforce, part of our teaching materials" (Rosenblatt, 1995 p. 50).

I began this study to understand:

- How I could come to understand the reading identities kids held relative to the What Matters List (Stephens et al., 2012).
- In what ways Kacee and I could help kids develop, sustain, or extend reading identities consistent with the theories of the What Matters list (Stephens et al., 2012).
- What impact our actions would have on the kids; what shift, if any, would there be in their ability to comprehend grade level text.

Based on my analysis of the data, I learned that the broader curricular framework that Kacee and I created together and particular actions we took within it fostered a context in which kids developed, sustained, or extended reading identities consistent with the theories of the What Matters list. I also came to understand that the curricular decisions that Kacee and I made relative to the first question simultaneously provided us with the opportunity to address the second question as we came to understand that in Kacee's classroom, assessment and instruction were not separate but always co-occurred. Nearly every interaction with students helped Kacee and me better understand how our students were thinking. We then were able to use our understandings to help students

take actions developing, sustaining or extending a generative theory and take on the identity of being an efficient and effective reader. Wedding assessment and instruction in this way made progress monitoring a natural part of our daily interactions with kids and tied to my third research question. What shift, if any, would there be in their ability to comprehend grade level text? To answer the third question, I used observational and standardized data to write case studies about the focal students and then looked at patterns across. Eleven representative case studies are reported here, as are patterns across.

In the fall before spring data collection, Kacee and I talked in general terms about the context we would create which was consistent with What Matters and we began to put those ideas into practice. We established a broad curricular framework and took specific actions within that framework. The specific actions we took evolved over several weeks across the year. We began the semester observing, reflecting and revising structures and plans responding to our overall assessment of kids' reading engagement. By the end of 20 weeks, we had established consistent ways of being and doing within the broader curricular framework.

The Broader Curricular Framework

The beliefs and ideas represented by the What Matters statements (Stephens et al., 2012) shaped our curricular framework and context. Kacee and I used the What Matters list to help kids understand reading as a meaning-making process, believe in their ability to make sense of text, choose to read for their own purposes and pleasures, and learn more about problem-solving with flexibility across increasingly complex narrative text. Using this framework made it possible for Kacee and me to inquire into understanding

kids' current ideas, beliefs, and problem-solving moves relative to What Matters and to guide subsequent interactions.

Kacee and I used a modified approach to balanced literacy, inviting everyone to take an active stance thinking and talking in the midst of reading. This positioned Kacee and me to explicitly, intentionally and consistently support kids' genuine moment-to-moment readerly thoughts about text and their reading process moves. Furthermore, it afforded us on-going opportunities to apply the concept of the gradual release of responsibility scaffolding kids to independence (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) within three balanced literacy components (the read aloud, shared reading, and guided reading) instead of the structures in and of themselves providing the scaffold. We anchored and guided conversations with kids based on how they appeared to feel and what they said as they made meaning of the literal text-based details, created inferences about characters' actions and feelings, and expressed their ideas and opinions in response to their understandings.

One January day, for example, while sitting with a group of three girls who were silently reading chapter three of *The story of Heidi* (Montefiore, 2006), I noticed Jordyn mark a spot in her book with a sticky-note indicating that she wanted to talk. Because Jordyn had previously read through words at a high rate of speed rather than thinking about the meaning of the text, I assessed her sticky note as evidence that she had made progress in monitoring for meaning. Jordyn put her note next to these lines in the book:

> *'I don't get hungry lying in bed,' Clara murmured.*
>
> *'You'd soon get hungry running up the mountain to Grandfather's hut,' Heidi told her* (p. 35).

I leaned over, pointed to Jordyn's sticky-note by the word *murmured,* and whispered, "What did you decide about that?"

She responded, "Um. I was thinking, 'mumbled' maybe, like-" Then she took a deep breath in, let it out quickly and continued, "Like, she maybe, like, like you soon, she soon get hungry running up the mountain, like running, like mumbling it."

Hypothesizing that Jordyn had read "mumbled" for *murmured* and wanting to understand how Jordyn was thinking, I asked, "What did she mumble?"

Jordyn paused and said, "Like," then she pointed to the text and read, "soon get hungry running up the mountain." Jordyn's response showed that she thought that *mumbled* had something to do with the actions of a character. However, she incorrectly associated its meaning with the second paragraph rather than with the paragraph in which the word appeared. Furthermore, Jordyn did not understand that *mumbled* described the way the character, Clara, uttered her words and offered more information to understand how Clara felt.

I concluded that Jordyn had what I had defined as a gist understanding and needed to refine what she understood about what the characters were doing. Based on this assessment, I facilitated a conversational mini-lesson in which I supported her ability to successfully problem-solve and refine the meaning she initially made. To help her attend to the organization of words on the page and punctuation, I pointed to the text and said, "Do you see how there's more space here?" Jordyn nodded. "But there are not any words, right?" She nodded again. "Then, when you drop down to the next line, see how it indents right here?" Then, I pointed back and forth between the two speaking parts and said, "The spaces are separating these two."

Jordyn interjected, “Those are parentheses.” I provided instructional feedback explaining, “They are not parentheses. They are quotation marks.” Because I did not want her to feel badly, I added, “But, that was close and it’s ok. There are a lot of different symbols that help us make sense of the words on the page. The quotation marks help us understand more about…” I paused, giving her time to process and possibly reply. I was trying to determine if the specific term *quotation mark* would trigger a connection or response. When Jordyn replied, “Ummm,” I continued the conversation by pointing in the text and saying, “The characters are having a conversation. When you see the quotation marks that means that the people in the story are actually having a conversation- talking back and forth.” I explained that the word *mumbling* went with what Clara said. I added, “And based on how Clara is feeling, we know she is sick, isn’t she?” Jordyn continued nodding and I elaborated. “It would make sense to say that she mumbled it. So now read that in a voice that would show how Clara would say it.” She read both paragraphs. There was a slight difference in her intonation and phrasing between the first and second paragraph. To connect back to my instructional goal to get her to notice the organization of words on the page and what that helped us to understand as readers, I elaborated, “See, and the speaker changed, which is why it is indented here.” Jordyn smiled and said, “Ooh. Ok.”

In order to merge assessment and instruction together in this manner, Kacee and I created curriculum grounded in our belief that if we wanted to help kids develop, sustain, or extend a generative theory of reading, we had to create a context consistent with the first three characteristics on our What Matters list while we simultaneously sought to understand their reading identities and responded to their instructional needs. Therefore,

we created a context that engaged readers with text providing consistent and on-going opportunities for kids to understand that readers:

- Refine thinking about meaning in-the-midst of reading
- Take action while reading
- Engage in reading joyfully, pleasurably, and thoughtfully

Had we not done that, we would have been sending mixed messages and unintentionally working against helping students develop, sustain, or extend a generative theory.

Refine thinking about meaning in-the-midst of reading. To help the kids privilege refining meaning rather than word calling that resulted in a gist understanding, Kacee and I talked to kids about their thoughts while they read. In the aforementioned example from *The Story of Heidi* (Montefiore, 2006), I asked Jordyn to talk about the section of text she marked. I sought to understand the meaning she made of the story, not just the word. As I listened to her, I realized she had noted when something did not make sense to her but could not independently problem-solve meaning because she did not understand that the two characters, Clara and Heidi were having a conversation.

Another time, before I joined their table, Bri, Jordyn, and Serena revisited what had happened in the story. They had recounted that Aunt Dete took Heidi to Frankfort and quoted what Heidi said to Grandfather. To reinforce their agentive move to independently discuss what had happened previously in the story, I said, "So we are ready to pick back up reading." Then to help them think about what the details helped them understand I asked them to recall the feelings we had been experiencing towards Aunt Dete. Serena told us that Aunt Dete thought Grandfather was a bad man. Jordyn

said she was still thinking about why Grandfather would let Aunt Dete take Heidi away. I reminded them that they had discussed Jordyn's wondering last session and someone had suggested that it was possible that he did not want Heidi to see him cry. The girls nodded, smiled, and both Jordyn and Serena claimed they had been the one who shared that idea. With that, we agreed upon our next stopping point for the group and they started silent reading. In between the common group stopping points, I reread while watching for opportunities to engage in mini-conversations with the girls based on my observations.

While this entire conversational session reading and talking lasted only 20 minutes, we collectively used a form of the word *think* 61 times and a form of the word *said* 57 times. When we did so, we were reinforcing to ourselves and each other that reading was a meaning making process that requires thinking in personal and unique ways thereby creating individual responses referencing what characters did, said, and felt. Furthermore, it reinforced valuing the process of thinking both efferently and aesthetically— investing time to talk about specific text-based details and developing our ideas and opinions about them. Engaging kids in literacy events structured in this way provided both Kacee and me opportunities to provide relevant, specific, and timely feedback crafting responses seamlessly, helping to support kids with refining literal, inferential, and interpretative levels of comprehension.

Take action while reading. To help students believe in their ability to make sense of text and have a sense of agency, we accepted and showed appreciation for what they said so that they always felt successful. For example, when I asked Jordyn what she decided about the section of text she marked, I reinforced her agentive move.

Furthermore, when I asked Jordyn what the character mumbled, I communicated that the meaning she made mattered. I provided immediate feedback that supported her ability to refine her understanding about what the characters were doing by helping her understand punctuation and organization of words on a page as meaning-making tools.

To help kids take action, I had conversations with kids inquiring and supporting the meaning they made while they read. I assessed, guided, and offered feedback helping them reflect and refine the process by which they came to understand. Furthermore, I consistently used language to communicate to the students that meaning-making itself was a tentative process that required them to think about their understanding, respond, and become more certain about their understanding as they used evidence from the text to explain their ideas.

For example, one time, when Slater, Nico, Gavin, Jay, and I were reading *The Great Chicago Fire of 1871* (Tarshis, 2015) I asked the boys if they were ready to jump back into reading where we left off. Slater responded, "Yes! His head is on fire. He stuck his head in the fire." However, his meaning was not consistent with the text. In chapter five of the text the character, Oscar, was standing outside of a building that was catching on fire and embers were falling on his head and it had started to catch on fire. Slater had constructed a partially correct understanding using snippets of details from the text, however he misunderstood how Oscar's head caught fire. In the same scene, Oscar watched two kids through a window, and was lost in thought. The kids had stolen his suitcase and Oscar was thinking about how sad the girl looked, how poor the children were, and had changed his mind about stealing back his suitcase. However, Nico commented that Oscar decided to steal his bag back. This also showed a partial correct

understanding of text details. Furthermore, Slater misunderstood and thought that Oscar was talking directly to the two kids, when, in fact, he was eavesdropping on them.

To clear this up without the students feeling badly about themselves as readers, I reminded them of what we had talked about at the beginning of independent reading earlier that day: that fourth graders can get bored and experience the feeling of wanting to quit reading a book. I elaborated, "One thing we've discovered that causes us to feel bored is that we lose track of things and right now I can see some details are kind of fuzzy in your thinking. You kind of know but then you are not sure. Some of you are wondering, "Where are they? How did the fire start? And who's talking to who?" Slater then asserted that he "understood everything." He said he did not need to go back and sort anything out because his thinking was "crystal clear." The boys kept trying to convince Slater that we did not know how the fire started, but Slater would not concede. To help him choose to inquire and sort out his understanding of the text, I looked directly at him and said, "You said he's in the house and you think the kids started the fire." Slater agreed. I continued, "Ok, ok, so this is what we are going to do. You all have different opinions and that's okay. Now what we are going to do is sort it out." Slater, with a critical tone, then said, "How about we reread the whole chapter?" To honor Slater's stance, I explained to Slater that we did not need to read that much but instead, revisit parts of what we read and told him that if he stuck with his opinion, he was "going to have more evidence to put out there to convince us, ok? If you come across other evidence, the cool thing about reading is it's not about being right. It's about using those small details to help you understand more along the way."

We had conversations like this across all structures of the day. At the onset of reading, we asked kids to talk about what they recalled about the text and their thoughts about it when we ended last time. We listened to kids independently whisper read, we set stopping points for kids to stop reading, and then we talked and listened to what they said about characters' actions, feelings, and asked why they thought so. We repeated these cycles of engagement reading and talking throughout the entire session immersing kids in conversations that helped them reflect and revise their ideas by 'talking their way to understanding.' When kids said things that were inconsistent with the text, we never told them they were wrong. Instead, we asked questions to make sure we understood them and asked them to explain what made them think so. In structuring reading this way, we consistently provided students with daily opportunities for them to be able to talk about text without worrying they might say something that was right or wrong.

Engage in reading joyfully, pleasurably, and thoughtfully. Kacee and I talked a lot about how to help kids find reading pleasurable. We wanted them to experience what Wilhelm (2017) refers to as play pleasure— immersive pleasure when you get lost in a book— and I refer to as reading for the purpose of fun and entertainment. We made this decision because the majority of the kids in our class reported frequently abandoning books, blamed the book for their loss of interest, and reported that reading was boring.

Our initial theory was that text complexities such as keeping track of speakers or recognizing flashbacks interfered with kids understanding, causing confusions, and that lead to loss of interest and boredom. At some point they seemed to decide that reading was not fun and to think that they must just not be the type of person who reads for fun because they could read all the words but it was boring. We also hypothesized that

confusions and misconceptions were obstacles that impeded their understanding and caused their overall reading experience to not feel pleasurable.

To help kids experience reading as pleasurable and therefore choose to read, across read aloud, independent reading, and small group book clubs, Kacee and I provided kids with the freedom to choose what they read and when to express their understandings and varied interpretations of text. We did this in several ways.

First, although Kacee and I implemented balanced literacy and a workshop model, we established routines and ways of engaging that did not follow typical mini-lesson structures or typical strategy instruction practices. Instead, we created a classroom context that afforded kids opportunities to talk and respond freely during all reading events— creating conditions for kids to participate more organically as thoughts naturally occurred so that they would experience reading pleasure. We intentionally set expectations for kids to speak freely in response to text without the commonly accepted school practice of raising hands. This one seemingly small detail positioned kids to take a more active stance and promoted ownership and self-directed participation in the meaning making process. Furthermore, interacting with text and one another in this way created a social, student-centered atmosphere that valued kids' authentic responses which promoted pleasure during the reading event.

One instance that provides evidence that Kacee and I had successfully created such a context occurred one morning during read aloud. Kacee read the last line of chapter three of *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013) in which Abby, the narrator and main character, communicated her utter determination to clear her dad's name from a crime he did not commit. Kacee read Abby's declaration, "I was going to find a way to

prove my dad was innocent, and I was going to do it this summer. I just didn't know how." The class burst into a roar of chatter. Kids gasped and shouted "Ohh!" And then mini conversations broke out across the room as kids speculated about how Abby would prove her dad's innocence. Nico said, "She's trying to figure out how he's innocent because she knows he didn't do it." Ty replied, "Another way she could figure it out more easily was if her dad wasn't in that coma. If he wasn't in that coma, he could probably give some evidence."

Second, after author James Thompson had visited our school in December and introduced some of his novels, Kacee was inundated by requests, excitement and pleading for her to read *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013) to them. Wanting to help the students find reading pleasurable, Kacee told the kids she would read them the book. Then, within this event, Kacee explicitly said something to the kids about reading being fun, "All right, we've been enjoying *Felony Bay* together. Well, that is an assumption on my part. I know I am enjoying it. So, I was assuming you all were enjoying it too. It looks like you are having fun based on all the talk and things that have been going on during the first four chapters."

Another time, Kacee and I talked with the kids to find out the kinds of books they wanted to read for fun together. We gathered books based on their requests and ones for which we believed they knew most of the words or could predict the ones they did not know with relative ease. Both times my small group of boys selected books for our group reading time, we talked about their likes, interests, and special requests. I invited them to bring books from home, libraries, and other places to help make suggestions by offering more specific ideas to the group. I brought selections based on their expressed

interests and requests. Collectively, I gathered realistic fiction novels that had lots of action in the storyline and characters I thought they would like. Furthermore, I looked for storylines that offered opportunities to evoke emotions and have conversations about values and human nature. In the end, the boys enjoyed reading two novels, *The Great Chicago Fire of 1871* (Tarshis, 2015) and *Weasel* (DeFelice, 1990) together.

Fourth, we helped students clear up confusions. For example, talking with Jordyn about something she determined relevant positioned her to experience pleasure. I supported her in learning about punctuation and organization of words on the page and helped her understand how that knowledge helped her refine her understanding about the actions and feelings of the characters.

Particular Actions Within Our Curricular Framework

Within this context consistent with the first three What Matters, Kacee and I took five particular actions that made it possible for us to simultaneously assess and instruct. We:

- nurtured relationships,
- offered choices,
- helped kids understand that reading was both an efferent and aesthetic experience,
- encouraged a Productive Struggle supported by Careful Navigation, and
- took a reflective practitioner stance

Nurtured relationships. To nurture relationships, we listened and talked to kids person-to-person and crafted feedback so they always felt supported.

Listened to and talked with kids person-to-person. Kacee and I listened and talked with kids person-to-person all year long helping them shift from talking in ways that sounded like they were focused on saying the right thing or answering questions.

We listened to and talked with kids in two different contexts: personal interactions and instructional interactions. Paying attention and responding to both kinds of interactions had a synergistic effect that communicated genuine care and value for kids. These were authentic conversations in which people naturally took turns and it was not necessary for anyone to raise their hand to speak. Personal interactions were brief personal conversations with kids about their lives both inside and outside of school and typically occurred during transitions into small group reading engagements. Instructional interactions were conversations with kids that provided specific feedback to find out more about what the kids had to say about text, understood or did not understand, felt, and had tried or not yet tried. Instructional interactions typically occurred in the midst of reading during whole group, small group, and one-on-one reading engagements.

Personal conversations typically occurred as we greeted one another while settling in at our meeting table. One February morning, while the boys rotated from literacy stations into our small group book club, I overheard Nico tell the boys that he was glad we had not read on in our book without him. As I slid into my chair to join them, I responded saying that I loved that he felt that way. Then, Slater stated that Nico had been having too much fun in Florida with manatees and jokingly asked Nico if he had seen a guy named Dirty Dan shoot a manatee. Nico, Slater, and I had read the novel, *The Missing Manatee* (2005) together in the fall and Slater's quick wit connecting the character Dirty Dan to Nico's trip was amusing. I giggled and Nico smiled, explaining

that there really was a manatee guy. I did not want to crush Nico's excitement but worried that Gavin and Jay might feel left out. So, I assured Nico that I wanted to hear about his trip but regretfully we only had twenty minutes together. I explained that since Gavin and Jay had not read the manatee story with us, we did not want them to feel left out. I quickly transitioned the topic and joked that they all had given me homework because I wanted to remind them of specific things they said the last time we met. This quick conversation nurtured relationships in several ways. First, we greeted one another, acknowledging each person's presence in some way. Secondly, the conversation affirmed a decision we had jointly made— not to keep reading when someone was absent. Third, out of respect for Gavin and Jay, we did not extend the conversation about the manatee. Fourthly, Slater's quick dry wit reinforced the friendly, social, light-hearted atmosphere within our book club. Lastly, taking a minute to chat freely honored their individual personalities affording them opportunities to socialize freely.

Another time, after Serena, Bri, Jordyn and I met on a Tuesday after having missed five consecutive sessions reading together because of a class field trip, absences, and meetings. As we gathered around the table, I told them that I had missed them last Friday because they went on a field trip and then asked them about it. They each had an opportunity to share something about the museum; this sent the message that what they said and did mattered.

Serena then asked if she had missed a lot of things the previous day, Monday. Bri cheerfully assured her that she had not missed a thing because I had been out attending a meeting. Serena smiled and I smiled back saying, "Well, it worked out perfectly, didn't it?" Taking time to express our thoughts about missing group time allowed us to nurture

our relationships in a couple of ways. First, our greeting communicated to one another that we valued our time together and we missed it when we did not have it. Secondly, taking interest in events that had kept us apart showed care for each other.

Another personal interaction occurred one morning in March when the kids returned from Project Love. One Friday each month, a group of elderly volunteers from a local senior care assisted living facility shared their expertise and talents by teaching our kids how to do something they themselves enjoyed. Each student selected one out of six different project ideas offered and spent time in small groups learning the volunteer's craft. After the kids completed their projects and transitioned into small group reading, they showed me what they made. For example, Gavin showed me his painting and shared that he planned on hanging it on his bedroom wall when he got home. I commented on his use of color and brush strokes saying it looked like he really put a lot of thought into his painting and suggested he frame it. Gavin smiled and agreed that framing it was a great idea. Another time, Bri told me that she had learned to sew by making a sock snowman. She stood holding it up with her arms stretched out in front of her and smiled. I told her that she reminded me of how excited my daughter had been after she had made one several years earlier. I thanked Bri for sharing hers with me and triggering that fond memory. These personal interactions nurtured our relationships by communicating that we cared about each other's interests. Furthermore, taking the time to chat person-to-person provided opportunities for the kids to be seen and celebrated for something in which they took pride.

Instructional interactions took place throughout the day and, like personal interactions, they nurtured relationships. I listened to kids conversations regarding their

thoughts about character analysis. I paid particular attention to their content and delivery, noted observable behaviors, and thought about their interpretations relative to the details presented within the text thus far. For example, after missing a few days in a row meeting together in our group due to Jordyn's illness, I initiated the first instructional interaction talking person-to-person explaining that I needed a minute to get back into the story. Serena interjected and suggested we reread. I nodded and recommended that the kids take just a couple minutes and silently reread chapter one of *A Little Princess* (Davidson, 2005) and stop when they had something to say about the characters. The girls read for approximately three and a half minutes and then we chatted. Bri initiated the first conversational exchange when she expressed that she thought the characters Mrs. Minchin and her sister were mean. Serena scrunched her eyebrows, unzipped her jacket and hesitantly questioned, "Her sister didn't seem mean."

Jordyn agreed and pointed to the picture in Bri's book and kindly said, "See, she's smiling."

Serena then smiled and elaborated. She used a friendly tone and said, "Yeah and she says, "Welcome! Welcome!" We all smiled looking around at one another.

I extended Serena's quote and referenced the specific action of the sister. The text read, "'Welcome! Welcome!' she said, bobbing up and down with a nervous curtsey." I honored both Jordyn and Serena's interpretations when I giggled, bobbed up and down in my seat, and said, "Yeah, she's bobbing up and down." Jordyn and Serena giggled and bobbed along with me.

Then I watched as Bri flipped to the blurb on the back of the book and waited to see what she had to say. She smiled, paused, and thoughtfully conceded, "Well, maybe Mrs. Minchin's sister is not mean."

Serena added, "Well, it said 'a nervous courtesy.' She was nervous. She was trying to make a good…" Serena paused, looked directly at me, scrunched her eyes and articulated the sound of the consonant blend /sp/.

I suggested, "Impression."

I made several instructional moves within this reading engagement that nurtured relationships. First, I remained silent and listened. When I was not speaking, I used gestures such as nodding, eye contact, and facial expressions that helped communicate interest in what they said and implicitly conveyed my belief in their ability to actively negotiate meaning. I listened carefully during their conversations and took notes. I reflected on what they said about the actions and feelings of the characters, how they said it, and the explanations they provided or in Bri's case, did not provide, to support their interpretations. Then, I entered the conversation speaking person-to-person smiling, bobbing in my seat, and acting out one action the sister did that reinforced Serena and Jordyn's position. The timing of this instructional interaction affirmed Serena and Jordyn's idea and simultaneously protected Bri because it brought temporary closure to the debate.

Crafted feedback so students always felt supported. Crafting responses so students always felt supported holistically was constantly in the forefront of my mind from the beginning to the end of every session together. In nearly every encounter with kids, I noted multiple examples of Kacee and or me being supportive. In the first

conversation above, for example, when Nico wanted to share details from his trip to Florida swimming with the Manatees, I crafted feedback that acknowledged his excitement and at the same time honored Gavin and Jay's membership. I therefore suggested we wait to discuss it in more detail later.

In my conversation with Jordyn in *The Story of Heidi* (Montefiore, 2006) when it appeared that Jordyn did not understand that *mumbling* described the way the character Clara uttered her words, I explained that noticing punctuation and the organization of words on the page could help her sort out confusions and therefore, provided her the support she needed to refine her understanding.

Most importantly, across all interactions Kacee and I responded carefully to avoid sending messages that might communicate "right" and "wrong" ways of thinking and talking about text. Instead, we responded in ways that honored the students' ideas by engaging in conversations that directly connected to what they said, did, or felt. We pondered ideas together and normalized their misconceptions, confusions, and readerly feelings of boredom and loss of interest through crafting language intentionally and responsively in conversations with kids to expose vulnerabilities, offer new possibilities, extend protection and validation of students' reading identities. I named this process Careful Navigation. This required talking reader-to-reader, continually nurturing relationships offering social, emotional, and academic care, watching and listening for subtle misconceptions. In turn, that provided opportunities for self-evaluation, positioned kids to experience success and develop self-efficacy, while simultaneously navigating the instructional conversation. Kacee and I composed responses in direct connection with observations of them in the act of reading so that responses were timely, relevant, and

productive to support refinement and/or extension of their understandings, their process doing so, and safeguarded against intentionally causing them to feel shame or embarrassment. For example, in the late January session with Jordyn, Bri, and Serena we read chapter three in *The Story of Heidi* (Montefiore, 2006). When we ended our last session, the character Aunt Dete had returned to Grandfather's without notice and against Heidi's will, swept her off to another town to work caring for Clara, a girl who was ill. When I entered the room, I noticed the girls were already huddled around our meeting table chatting. When I joined them, Serena held up her book and read the last two quotes on the back in which character Heidi had said, "I'll never forget Grandfather and one day I'll come back to him." Serena pumped one fist straight up in the air, instantly pulled it down in front of her face dramatically saying, "AND SCENE!" I assessed that essentially, this re-enacted the end of chapter two. We all giggled and Bri added, "We already recapped." Jordyn explained that they had done so because she had told them she had forgotten what happened last. Bri elaborated, "Aunt Dete took her to …Fr…" and Serena provided support saying, "Frankfort." I acknowledged their agentive stance and honored their recap saying, "And so we are ready to pick back up there." However, I could not leave it at that. I reflected on their disposition thinking about what I knew about them as readers, how it applied in a particular moment, what they currently understood, the current instructional goal, how to acknowledge and show value for their interactions with text and one another, and move the session forward creating opportunities to refine and extend understanding. To help me understand them better, I subtly assessed their comprehension relative to consistency with text details as well as literal, inferential, and interpretive understanding. To do this, I asked, "How are we

feeling as readers? I waited. However, they did not respond and not wanting them to feel badly, embarrassed, or incompetent I started to answer for “us” saying, "We're mad at Aunt Dete." I acted as facilitator, co-reader, and teacher supporting their social, emotional, and instructional needs. I made the decision to remind them how they felt when we talked and read during our last session. In this way, I acted as if I was simply joining in where they left off and avoided causing them to doubt what they had just done and shared with me.

Offered choices. Kacee and I offered choices in book selection for independent reading and our small group book clubs, and we encouraged the kids to choose what they wanted to talk about while reading and when they wanted to talk.

During the first week of January, I met with Nico, Slater, Gavin, and Jay to select a book for our subsequent small group reading sessions together. I had placed several sets of books in the center of the table and told them I had picked these out especially for them based on their collective interests and special requests. I made notes about what they did and said throughout their selection process. Slater, Nico, and Gavin glanced at the books, looked up, smiled, and exclaimed, “Chapter books!”

I agreed and reminded them that that was one of their requests. I encouraged them to look at all the books and then decide together which one our group would select to enjoy reading. The boys looked at the covers, sighed as they flipped through pages, glanced at one another, and commented on the number of pages and chapters. I noted that no one appeared to read the blurbs on the back of any of the books. They talked about the surface-level attributes of the books such as the number of pages and chapters.

They also flipped through the pages like one would do to view pictures drawn in a series so that it appears animated when the pages are turned rapidly.

Slater commented, "I really only like reading nonfiction." Gavin and Nico agreed.

To remind them again that I honored their requests and interests, I picked up one of the *I Survived* (Tarshis, 2001- present) books and enthusiastically said, "That's exactly why I brought books from this series. These books are based on real historic events, are action-packed, and told from the point of view of a boy who lived through it." Jay said he had read one of them and it was ok, but he could not really remember because it was a long time ago. The other three boys said they had read one before, but they didn't really like those books because they were boring. I then asked them when they had last read one from the series. They answered: second grade.

Finally, kids could decide when they wanted to talk and share what they had to say in the midst of all reading engagements. Kacee and I structured choice in talk similarly to the freedom kids had when they selected books. The kind of conversations we were encouraging took place both in small groups and in whole class settings. One February day, for example, while reading *A Little Princess* (Davidson, 2005) with Bri, Serena, and Jordyn, in the story, sisters Miss Minchin and Miss Amelia had just welcomed Sara and Captain Crewe to their boarding school. Captain Crewe had told the sisters to give Sara everything she wanted. He elaborated. "I want no expense spared."

Serena announced that she had a question about the word *expense*. Bri agreed, read the sentence aloud, "*I want no expense spared*," and then explained that she did not understand what it meant. Later, in the same session, Bri exercised choice when she

asked us to turn to page six of our book and then read what Miss Minchin said to Sara upon her arrival at the boarding school. Bri read the text, "You must be Sara she said. Welcome to your new home. Oh, what a pretty child you are." Then Bri read the text within the speech bubble that was pictured as a cloud of thought extending from Miss Minchin's head. *"And spoiled I expect."*

During a small group session, while the girls were silent reading *The story of Heidi* (Montefiore, 2006), I slid up beside Serena and asked, "Is there a part you have on your mind that you want to ask about, chat about, or have something to say?" Serena replied, "I don't understand why the boy would be jealous because he knows that Heidi and Clara have become good friends." I asked Serena to turn to the part in the story where the jealousy part first came up and read it to me. I helped her locate that specific section and then listened carefully to her intonation. When she stopped reading I asked, "Who's that?" Serena answered using a snippet of text, "Heidi came a shout." I then inquired, "Ok, the way you said that part, to me, I'm wondering if you feel a little confused about that." Serena smiled and nodded. We then engaged in a conversation helping her sort out her confusion.

Helped kids understand that reading was both an efferent and aesthetic experience. Kacee and I noticed that kids often took a predominantly efferent (Rosenblatt, 1978) stance toward reading narrative text; they focused on reading words accurately and read as if the purpose was to answer someone else's question. They rarely seemed to connect aesthetically (Rosenblatt, 1978). Ideally, in combination with an efferent stance, an aesthetic stance evokes emotions and affords opportunities to generate responses before, during, and after reading. An aesthetic stance elicits individual

interpretation, and increases the possibility that readers learn from text. To help the students integrate aesthetic and efferent stances, we had conversations with kids in the midst of reading— helping them refine their understanding of efferent details in text and respond aesthetically.

One January morning, for example, Kacee had a reading conference with Gravity during independent reading. Gravity was reading, *The One and Only Ivan* (Applegate, 2012). The text read, "Stella's trunk is a miracle. She can pick up a single peanut with elegant precision, tickle a passing mouse, tap the shoulder of a dozing keeper. Her trunk is remarkable, but still it can't unlatch the door of her tumble-down domain" (p. 30).

Gravity read *Stella's trunk is a miracle. She can pick up a single peanut with elegant*, she paused, pursed her lips, made the /pr/ sound, paused and then told Kacee that she did not know that word. Taking an efferent stance, Kacee asked Gravity what she thought the word referred to. Gravity paused, said, "Um, like a touch." Kacee explained that Gravity's prediction made sense and then modeled inserting the word *an* and substituting the word *touch* in place of *precision* saying, "She can pick up a single peanut with an elegant touch. And the word [the author used] is precision. You did what readers do when they come to a new word, you thought about what the word meant." After Gravity completed reading the paragraph, Kacee prompted her to connect aesthetically by encouraging Gravity to share what she thought about all that. Later in the same conference, Gravity read a paragraph describing the scars on Stella's legs left from wearing chains long ago. Gravity read specific details recounting how Stella became lame after falling off a pedestal while working at the circus. Kacee and Gravity had a quick efferent conversation about the expression *went lame*. Kacee prompted Gravity to

connect aesthetically by asking her what she thought about Stella after reading all those details. Gravity shared her interpretation that Stella was sad that she was not in the circus anymore. Kacee helped Gravity consider a different interpretation prompting her to think about the idea that Stella wore chains at the circus for so long that they scared her.

Kacee asked, "When you think about that from the perspective of a person, what does that make you think?" To which Gravity said, "It makes me think that someone's doing something wrong to her." Then Kacee pushed Gravity's thinking a little more and asked, "How does that make you feel?" And Gravity answered, "Sad."

Another time, one week had passed since Slater, Nico, Gavin, Jay, and I had read *The Great Chicago Fire of 1871* (Tarshis, 2015). At the beginning of our reading session, the boys recapped what happened in the story from where they had left off last. I noticed they told a predominantly efferent-based account, but did not say anything that represented taking an aesthetic stance. For example, they did not talk about Oscar's feelings or mention that he had caught on fire. They did not provide any indication that they were thinking or connecting in ways that afforded an emotional response. Therefore, I entered the conversation and prompted them to take an aesthetic stance saying, "Right, so, how's Oscar feeling?" A brief conversation ensued sharing multiple interpretations that Oscar felt badly, excited when he first thought he could get his belongings back, scared, and nervous because of the risk involved. I thought it was odd that no one had said anything about our last conversation about Oscar's head catching on fire. I directed the boys to skim and scan to locate where they thought they left off reading last. In this way, I positioned them to take an action that would help spark important and relevant details and help finish retelling up to the point where they had

stopped reading. A minute or so into skimming and scanning Gavin suddenly gasped and said, "Oh! I remember that part. He was hiding under that rotten wood shed." And then Jay told the group they could see that on page 32. Then Nico said that it was starting to catch on fire. To which Slater responded that he would have run until he died. At which point, he demonstrated activating an aesthetic stance and I told them to continue reading.

Another time, at the end of January, Kacee told me that she had noticed that the kids were now talking more than she was able to read during, *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013). Furthermore, she explained that the kinds of things the kids were saying were not particularly helpful or supportive of the conversations she had hoped to have with them. Therefore, she requested that I join them during read aloud to see what I thought. I watched and listened carefully to what kids said, did, and appeared to feel in the midst of reading and observed that kids were indeed taking the initiative to talk and share their thoughts. Within the three minutes it took Kacee to finish reading the final 14 lines of the chapter, students interjected 13 times, and she attempted to finish reading 7 times before finally completing the chapter. Students talked a total of 2 minutes and 5 seconds, whereas Kacee only read a total of 55 nonconsecutive seconds. In general, the kids' active participation demonstrated belief in their ability to make sense of text. However, based on Kacee's purpose to read for fun and entertainment, the quality and frequency of their responses were not especially helpful and were somewhat problematic.

Nine out of 13 responses reflected thinking from a factual/efferent stance. When Kacee and I thought about each response individually we determined that what the kids said was not overly worrisome given they had only read 37 pages of the 375-page novel. However, when Kacee and I looked at the students' comments holistically, their

responses reflected thinking characterized by a predominantly efferent stance concerned mostly with "right" and "wrong." There was little evidence of aesthetic type responses. Observations of subsequent responses provided more evidence that kids had constructed a gist understanding and seemed overly concerned with attempting to convince others and perhaps themselves that they were "right."

We categorized their responses:

1.) Retell: "He's getting them or putting them up."
2.) Illogical Challenge: Arguing with the ideas presented by the main character and narrator Abby. "Well, how does she know the jewels don't belong to him?" (the class had previously discussed multiple possibilities explaining and making sense of how Abby would know)
3.) Illogical Prediction: "So, what if one of his friends gave it to him because one of my dad's friends…"
4.) Logical Prediction: "He could have just been…"
5.) Connection: You know how when people are trying to blame someone they stick it in a pocket, it was in a movie I saw…this guy took a pearl necklace from a safe and then stuck it in Fred Flintstone's (Hanna & Barbera, 1960) pocket."
6.) Inaccurate retell: "So, she doesn't know if he is innocent but she wants to find out just to make sure."
7.) Agreement with inaccurate retell: "Yeah, and couldn't."

Encouraged a Productive Struggle supported by Careful Navigation. When the kids were in the midst of reading and talking about text. Kacee and I encouraged

them to work together to understand what they had to say about the actions and feelings of characters and what they thought about them. Sometimes, understanding a text involved a lot of negotiation, which involved not just the kids but us. We named these times Productive Struggles. As part of a productive struggle, we provided just enough support for the kids to work through refining their understanding. The net result was that kids refined their understanding of the efferent details in text and activated or extended the aesthetic stance. This helped make reading pleasurable for them.

For example, when Kacee was meeting with James, Tre, Parker, and Ty who were reading the novel, *I Survived the Joplin Tornado, 2011* (Tarshis, 2015) she supported Ty with engaging in a Productive Struggle to sort out his response that it did not make sense that a monster would ride along in the car with Dex and Dr. Gage.

Dr. Gage was telling Dex about a time he had gotten close up with a tornado. He had pulled up his shirtsleeve showing Dex the scar on his arm from that day. The text read, "There was a thick purple scar zigzagging from Dr. Gage's wrist up to his elbow, as though a monster had tried to chew off his arm."

Kacee started the Productive struggle when she reminded Ty to think back to a conversation they had on a different day reading this same story. She said, "Let's go back to that idea when we had a conversation about trees and metal swarming through the air, do you remember that?" Ty nodded yes. Kacee continued, "So that whole idea of when you caught yourself thinking about pocketknives flying through the air, you said, wait a minute. Then you thought, can that really happen?" Ty remembered thinking no, it was not possible that pocketknives were flying through the air. Kacee smiled and said, "Yeah, ok. Now that you are thinking about that…" She looked back in the text and

reread the description. Ty gasped and responded, "Oh, so it's saying like, it's like a monster grabbed Dr. Gage and tried to bite his arm off." Then Ty acted out pretending to bite up and down his arm.

In a similar vein, I helped Slater, Nico, Gavin, and Jay engage in a Productive Struggle in response to what I heard them say during their opening conversation preparing to read the next chapter in *The Great Chicago Fire of 1871* (Tarshis, 2015). I planned to have them share a quick say something and get right back to reading to maintain momentum. There was evidence that all four boys were connecting aesthetically while they read independently and I assessed that engagement was high. However when they started talking, there were confusions about what exactly had happened as the boys recounted the efferent details that had evoked their emotional responses.

Slater gasped, "Oh no! What happened to them?" and then begged, "Oh come on, please, please, let me turn the page." Gavin gasped, "Oh my goodness!" When they all reached the designated stopping point though, through discussion it became clear that they were confused about who got out of the burning house.

Tucker told the group that they got stuck in the house, but then they got out. Then he said, "No. I. Wait." I encouraged him to keep talking. He said, "Jenny got out. Yeah, Jenny got out." Then Gavin suggested that Jenny and Bruno had gotten out and Jay repeated that Jenny had too. Slater disagreed and told the group that Bruno was with Oscar.

To which Gavin said, "Oh, yeah." But Nico maintained that Oscar and Bruno were stuck in the house. Jay referenced the text and read, "But it says, together they flew

out the door. Oscar was just steps behind him and then crash the window" - Gavin interrupted and questioned, "But Oscar was trapped in there because of the fire." Again, Slater helped clarify, "No, Bruno was with Oscar. He was holding him to his chest and he thought that Jenny was going to faint so he said run down and out the door. Jenny ran and the window shattered."

A third example of a Productive Struggle involved reading, *The Story of Heidi (*Montefiore, 2006) with my small group of girls, Serena, Bri, and Jordyn. I had designated a stopping point for the girls to stop silent reading and talk about their understanding of Grandfather's attitude toward Heidi's abrupt arrival. The character, Aunt Dete hastily delivered Heidi to her grandfather. On the way up the mountain, Aunt Dete told Heidi that he was a miserable old man and had not seen her since she was a baby, but she had taken care of her long enough and it was her grandfather's turn — unbeknownst to him. After Heidi's arrival she explored his hut, made a bed in the loft, took in the view from her window, and all the while Grandfather did not look at her. Instead he, scowled, growled, and muttered in response to Heidi's questions. Then at sunset, Grandfather ordered Heidi to come sit down from the loft for dinner. He looked at her for the first time as he handed her a bowl of food and she told him she liked it there.

Serena explained that she thought Grandfather was still acting grumpy as he talked to Heidi at dinnertime, whereas Bri and Jordyn thought differently explaining that he had changed from grumpy to kind. I acknowledged the girls varied understandings saying, "Oh, what an important and complex thing to pay attention to and wonder about because so far he's been acting grumpy." I elaborated, "up until this point in the story the

narrator had helped us understand his feelings by using words such as *scowled*. He had been *scowling* at her, but now the narrator, the person telling the story only used *he said*." To which Serena responded, "I think the narrator should have given us that."

Then, Jordyn expressed her understanding as she demonstrated Grandpa's action while also quoting him. Jordyn gestured extending her hand forward as if to offer us a plate of food and in a kind soft tone she said, "I think he probably said it like, 'Here you are.'' Serena responded to Jordyn's idea and changed her thinking slightly from grumpy to considering the idea that Grandpa might have said it using an, "I don't care voice." I then said, "Because you don't think he's completely won over by Heidi yet. He's still kind of thinking about it." Then I suggested we pause that wondering and explained, "You, as the reader, get to wait to be convinced about how their relationship is growing and how Grandpa's changing. So, let me know when you read something that convinces you."

Took a reflective practitioner stance. Kacee and I took a reflective practitioner stance making specific and intentional moves in-action while reading and talking about text with kids. We gathered information, reflected on observations, and then acted responsively. While all of these co-occurred in nearly every instructional event acting responsively had four distinct characteristics. We:

- Functioned simultaneously as co-readers and facilitators
- Sought to genuinely understand kids' moment-to-moment thinking
- Encouraged kids to take readerly actions supported by an inquiry stance
- Encouraged kids to take responsibility for their reading engagement

Functioned simultaneously as co-readers and facilitators. Kacee and I read with kids acting as both co-readers and facilitators in a fluid-like fashion genuinely seeking to understand and respond directly to what and how kids thought from moment-to-moment as they read and made meaning of text. We acted responsively employing an inquiry stance making sense of what our students said, did, and felt while simultaneously making sense of written text with our kids. In doing so, we engaged reader-to-reader, genuinely demonstrating living as readers, which was the very same way we hoped our kids would experience and make sense of text. Kacee and I helped kids learn about reading by being readers with them, and by facilitating meaning-making conversations with them. In both roles, our focus was on reading as pleasurable and not as work.

One February morning, I sat reading and talking with the Bri, Jordyn and Serena enjoying chapter four in *The Story of Heidi (*Montefiore, 2006). I had observed Serena gasp, look up from her book smiling, and then look back down at her book. Jordyn had whispered, "Oh my gosh!" She continued reading, nodded, and mouthed ok as if she was talking to herself or the text. Bri looked up and smiled too. At that point, I acted as facilitator by asking the girls for permission to stop their silent reading to chat together explaining that I had "just heard lots of reactions and deep breaths, and saw smiles after reading the letter." Jordyn began by saying that she, "was wondering, how what's her name? Mrs.- the girl that takes care of Clara?" Serena helped out saying, "Mrs. Rottenmyer." Jordyn replied, "Yes. I wonder how she feels about her going and also, what is a-bee-ti-tee?" Serena leaned over Jordyn's book and asked where she was looking. I continued facilitating saying, "Ok, I see it. Don't turn her brain off because she has a question about something in the letter. But, before we get to that-" Acting as a

co-reader, I said, “I’ve got to know-” Then, acting as facilitator again, I looked at Jordyn to acknowledge her question and said, “I’m going to write that down. I see the part that you are wondering about and I love that you are paying attention to that. Let’s chat about that in a second.” Then, I simultaneously acted as a co-reader demonstrating excitement and expectation that we have thoughts we want to talk about saying, “So, Bri, what were you thinking about as you read the letter? What kind of reaction did you have? What do you want to say?” We continued chatting and again I replied reader-to-reader by reminding the girls of a prior conversation. We had experienced many emotional responses talking about our feelings for Heidi, Grandfather, and Clara and expectantly had predicted that the story would have a twist of some kind coming. We had brainstormed some ideas, but had not seen this wonderful twist coming. The girls smiled, nodded, and Serena then explained that it made sense to have it in a letter from Clara’s dad, Mr. See-See-sman. I switched back to facilitator joining in as Serena had previously done helping Jordyn with Mrs. Rottenmyer’s name, pronouncing Sesemann.

In a similar vein, in January, after the author James Thompson visited our school, Kacee acted as a co-reader when she shared in her kids’ excitement and agreed to read his novel, *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013) for their class read aloud. Doing so honored their request and simultaneously afforded Kacee the opportunity to read the mystery novel for the primary purpose of experiencing pleasure. When Kacee acted as a co-reader it occurred naturally during the reading event. She made her genuine readerly thoughts explicit responding to text and to observations assessing the meaning her kids seemed to make meaning from one moment to the next. Kacee read with enthusiasm and engaged genuinely in conversation with kids in the midst of reading. When Kacee read

aloud she encouraged kids to talk freely in response to the text creating an enjoyable social ambience by pausing her reading and saying, “Nico, say that a little bit louder.” This reinforced his natural response and informally invited other students to join in talking. Other times, Kacee used her genuine readerly responses to inform how she facilitated from one moment to the next. For example, one time she had noticed that kids had not reacted to a particular funny description of the character she had just read aloud. She paused saying, “Think about that for just a minute.” Then repeated the phrase from the text, “She dressed like a train wreck.” This action elicited chatter and giggles helping to make visualizing the character a pleasurable and meaningful reading experience. Another time, Kacee acted as a co-reader when she thought aloud summarizing specific details from the text supporting children with visualizing what the character Abby was doing. Kacee said, “We know that Abby has gone back to her old plantation and is peeking in the window. When she sees the library, this memory of her dad starts coming back up. She recalls finding him on the floor, unconscious, with a gash. She sees the ladder and at first we thought it was a ladder for the books in the library, but now we realize that he pushed the ceiling tiles up. The jewels might have been somewhere in the ceiling or on the floor.” In doing so, Kacee also acted as facilitator as she integrated many of the student’s response within the summary and then continued reading. She transitioned the class from talking, to listening to her read aloud and acknowledged kids’ contributions in the process. Together, they socially constructed the meaning made while Kacee simultaneously worked to honor kids’ approximations and provide her readerly thinking as support helping to lift and shape it.

When Kacee and I co-taught during shared reading and read aloud, we often took on one role more predominantly than the other. This supported our ability to carefully navigate having productive conversations with kids about text and/or their readerly actions more organically. For instance, during read aloud Kacee acted mostly as co-reader interjecting in-the-moment to raise kids' awareness about the actions and feelings of the characters and elicit responses. I acted mostly as facilitator focused on raising kids awareness about their readerly actions engaging with text. We observed, assessed, reflected, and planned our responses in-the-midst of the read aloud crafting our language and delivery so that it was timely, relevant, and specific. In my role as facilitator, I worked proactively seeking to consistently protect kids from feeling as if they were wrong and therefore avoid intentionally causing them embarrassment, shame, or feeling less than. Furthermore, I worked to help kids make connections by reflecting on readerly actions and feelings experienced during small group reading sessions and independent reading to their work in shared reading and read aloud. In February for example, in order to help kids learn more about the role of talk during read aloud, Kacee took on the role of co-reader whereas I acted as facilitator. Three school days after the aforementioned instance when Kacee read *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013) aloud and we noticed that the class took a predominantly efferent stance toward meaning making, I stood listening to Kacee acting as co-reader, observing students, and acted as facilitator. I had an epiphany prompted in part by the over-whelming number of student responses that interrupted Kacee so often that she sometimes could not finish a sentence.

Two weeks prior, I had had a conversation with my small group of girls. Bri, Serena, Jordyn, and I had been reading and talking about *The Story of Heidi* (Montefiore,

2006). At times, the girls' conversation started to get too long in between our structure of reading and talking and some girls were talking more than others. I noticed that at times, understandably from a reader's perspective, Bri appeared a little frustrated when Serena and Jordyn's questioning and commenting extended on and on. Because I did not want anyone to feel badly thinking that they had done something wrong, I had introduced an idea I called, *Let it Linger*. I began creating a plan while continuing to listen and watch.

While remembering that conversation, I continued acting as facilitator waiting for a lull in the chatter and interjected. "Do you know, Mrs. Smith, one thing I've noticed in reading with small groups of readers is that-" I paused for effect and then thoughtfully continued, "sometimes readers want answers to things really quick. Right?" Kacee raised her eyebrows and nodded in agreement. I continued thinking and crafting a reply based on knowing our kids. The majority of kids in this particular class reported that they did not like to read and frequently abandoned books complaining of boredom. However, they self-selected chapter books. Therefore, I created a response to ignite curiosity and provide an idea that our fourth grade readers may not yet have considered saying, "And what we know about reading longer stories is that the authors intentionally leave details and clues along the way. So sometimes you are going to have to let the thinking that you are doing…what Bri?" I invited Bri to help facilitate and without hesitation she replied, "Let it Linger." Then I continued elaborating. "So, let's let it linger and let's settle into reading to hear more as Mrs. Smith continues reading." Then to be careful, in case some kids were feeling badly or misunderstood thinking that they shouldn't stop to think when they read I explained further. "When you are reading on your own, it's really cool because you can kind of pause and have the thought in your

head and then you can keep going, but as a group if we keep letting every thought that comes to our mind come out, well then, we'll never get through the story. And then it's hard for readers to stay…" Then paused inviting Mrs. Smith to complete the thought. She replied, "…engaged." Lastly, to help kids understand and connect to our real life experiences, I explained, it is kind of like when you watch a movie with a friend. You pick and choose when you talk. It's almost like we're in a movie with Mrs. Smith reading and we've got to pick and choose when we talk. Mrs. Smith replied, "I love that language. Let's let it linger. We've got to allow that to happen. Let's keep going and see."

Sought to genuinely understand kids' moment-to-moment thinking. Kacee and I sought to genuinely understand kids' moment-to-moment thinking by engaging in conversations with kids while reading. We facilitated conversations in response to observations of what kids said, did, and seemed to feel. This provided us with opportunities to customize instruction during the event and impacted plans for the next day. We interacted personally and instructionally demonstrating respect from an inquisitive, tentative stance that considered their unique perspectives and ideas rather than from a 'right or wrong' stance. We continually observed, listened, assessed, reflected, and instructed to provide appropriate scaffolds genuinely in a fluid-like fashion, making decisions in-action to refine understanding and then used identified patterns from that data to inform plans for subsequent sessions.

For example, in a session in which Slater, Nico, Gavin, Jay and I were reading, *The Great Chicago Fire of 1871* (Tarshis, 2015), after the boys recapped they began silent reading. Seeking to understand their moment-to-moment thinking, I watched their

body language, listened carefully to what they said, did, and appeared to feel. I observed Gavin talk to himself while he read. He said, "It's skipping to the middle a little, kind of." I asked him to show where he was reading in the text. He explained that in the part he was reading it was telling him how many people were killed in the fire and how people lost barns, houses, fields. Then he said, "I would have expected it to be more like in the end of the book, not right now." I asked him, "Do you think maybe you are confusing the fires?" Nico explained that it had gone back in time. Slater agreed and said that that fire was someplace else. I asked him where it was and he replied vaguely, in a barn. I then slowly started providing a clue to help support refining their understanding saying, "Castle is where he used to…" then I paused. Slater, Nico, and Jay thought for a couple seconds and then finished it, "Castle is where he used to live." To which Gavin put it all together and said, "Oh! So he's having a flashback." I encouraged him saying, "Good job figuring out something that was confusing. Noticing that you questioned your understanding helped you sort out your confusion and learn something new about flashbacks and recognize in-the-head thinking of characters." The boys all demonstrated agency as they worked together supporting Gavin with refining his understanding. I noted that Slater also refined his understanding and it happened without having to make explicit that he had not understood that Oscar was thinking about the last time his hometown had experienced a devastating fire.

Examples similar to the one mentioned above occurred frequently when Kacee and I read with kids in small group and during reading conferences. We noticed that kids had misconceptions in understanding text and some kids were aware while others were not. Furthermore, some kids resisted revising their understanding while others seemed

unsure when, how, or if they should revise theirs. Based on this identified pattern, Kacee and I decided to ask the kids to examine how words were organized on one page from the class read aloud. In order to gain insights into their moment-to-moment thinking during this shared reading experience, we gathered the class on the rug in front of the Smartboard. Each student had their own copy of page 68 from, *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013), a clipboard, and a highlighter. Kacee had read aloud the section the previous day so it was familiar to the kids. She asked the kids to take a minute and highlight the dialogue on the page. Kacee explained to the class that writers use tools to let their readers know that someone is talking. They are called quotation marks. She displayed a copy on the Smartboard and pointed to the first set of quotation marks at the top of page 68.

Cara asked, "What about the whoever said it part?"

Kacee replied, "No, just highlight the talking parts. So those are the words within the quotation marks." Another student asked if they should highlight every set of quotation marks and Kacee said yes.

Another student commented, "Sometimes when they start a new paragraph they start talking."

Tre replied, "You see quotation marks when they start talking and you don't see them again until they stop talking."

Bri added, "Ok, every time someone new is talking, there is a new paragraph."

Kacee told everyone to let that sink in for just a minute. Bri brought up an interesting point. Then Kacee asked everyone to look up at the board as she read and pointed to the text, "How are you going to do that?"

At which point Tre announced that they left a space. And Kacee confirmed that the space helped the reader know that there was a new paragraph. The conversations about what kids noticed continued. Holly noted that there was a paragraph with no dialogue between two paragraphs that had quotation marks. Tre told her that was because the narrator or the person who wrote it tells what they are thinking or what they are doing or saying something. Holly thought for a minute and told the class that it was actually the character Abby saying it. Tre responded that Abby was not saying it. Several students chimed in and said Abby was thinking it. Nico agreed and told the class that Abby's thinking it in her mind. At which point Kacee pushed the kids to wonder and explain saying, "She's thinking it because if Abby were saying this..." She paused and several students finished, "it would be in quotation marks."

One March morning, I sat observing Slater, Nico, Jay, and Gavin reading chapter ten of the novel, *Weasel* (DeFelice, 1990). The boys were eager to find out what had happened to the characters Nathan and Weasel. Chapter nine had left them in suspense wondering about the outcome of the confrontation between the protagonist, Nathan, and the armed antagonist, Weasel. Trying to protect himself, Nathan had thrown a stick at Weasel trying to knock him to the ground. The last thing Nathan remembered, "was hearing a rifle shot and a long, loud scream, and wondering if it was his voice or Weasel's" (p. 48). At the beginning of chapter 10, the boys would find out that Weasel had accidently shot himself, yet somehow had tied Nathan up and taken him to his cabin.

The boys read silently, as I observed and skimmed my text, rereading it keeping pace with the pages they were on seeking to understand their moment-to-moment thinking in relationship to where they were in the text. I watched them and listened

carefully as they read waiting to select when to interact in response to what they did, said, and/or appeared to feel. For example, 35 seconds into reading, Nico looked up from reading and told me that he thought that Ezra was going to arrive with another stick and save Nathan. I asked him to show me where he was in his reading and then told him to keep reading. A few seconds later, without looking up from the text Slater said, "Oh," and continued reading. Then, a minute later he let out a loud gasp, said oh again, quieted for only a moment, and then in a tone that conveyed disbelief asked, "Why the heck is he doing that?" Nico asked him what he was talking about, but Slater replied, "Nothing." And he continued reading. A few more exchanges took place between them and they kept reading without resolution. Three minutes passed, Nico looked at me and asked if Nathan was still hiding. I noted his confusion, but encouraged him to keep reading and then we would chat. One minute later, Nico leaned over to Slater and whispered asking if Nathan was still hiding. Realizing that Nico read on and still needed support to sort out his confusion, I decided to enter into a conversation with him by repeating his question. He then stated that he was confused and I commended him for noticing and taking action to sort it out.

Encouraged kids to take readerly actions supported by an inquiry stance. Kacee and I encouraged kids to take readerly actions supported by an inquiry stance to help them learn how to discover their own misconceptions and confusions, take actions to connect aesthetically with text, and interrogate the boredom and loss of interest they reported.

For example, within the lesson in which kids highlighted quotation marks, examined how words were organized on a page, and discussed what that helped them

understand, Kacee had positioned kids to take an inquiry stance. Doing so helped them to notice, reflect, revise, and/or refine their understandings collaboratively as they interacted providing insights into their moment-to-moment understandings. For example, as the kids continued talking about what they noticed, all of a sudden Ty exclaimed, "Mrs. Smith! It's kind of like a conversation if you take out all the words we didn't highlight!" And then Ty read the dialogue leaving out all the narration:

> "How are you going to do that? I don't know yet. Are you girls hungry? What are you girls intending to do this afternoon? I was just thinking about that, Bee, if you're up for it, we could take a walk to explore the plantation. That would be a dry walk with no falling in the river? Yes, ma'am. Be mindful of the cane. It's harder to walk that way than it is to walk normally. Quit if you get sore."

He refined his understanding when he realized that the two characters were having a conversation.

Ty's ah-ha moment prompted other kids to inquire as they thought about what he had explained. Tre challenged Ty's idea and told the class that all those other words that were left out were giving too much information. Holly disagreed and explained that all those other words were narration. Gavin agreed that we needed all those other words or else it didn't sound right. And someone else agreed with him and said that they needed to read the other parts or it wouldn't make sense. Kacee facilitated further inquiry recalling a time that Slater had complained and questioned why authors put so many details in books. She asked, "Ok, so let's talk about that because I hear a bit of Slater's voice in my head going, 'Ok. Like, why do we have to have all of this information right here?'"

Tre held his stance and told the class that all the extra words did was give more information that we did not need.

Slater chimed in, "No. We do need it." Kacee questioned, "Oh, Why?" Anna agreed with Tre, "Like Tre said, it's just a little part. This is what Grandma Em said." But then she challenged Tre, "Sometime you need to know what the narrator said." Jordyn explained that the other words helped us to know that Grandma Em was talking.

Kacee navigated the conversation asking the kids to think about the paragraphs with no highlighting. "So let's come back to here, when we realized this was Abby sharing her thinking with us, how did that help us as readers? What did it help us to know?" Tre told her that it helped them know what Abby was doing but they didn't have to say that Grandma Em asked if they were finished eating. Kacee agreed and said, "Doesn't it let us know what Abby's thinking and how she's feeling?" Then she reminded them that Abby had not been hungry. At which point the class burst into chatter. Someone said, "Until she saw the BLT pieces." Serena replied, "I remember her saying that she hasn't had real food in a while."

I interjected to provide feedback in response to their outburst and support them with refining their understanding saying, "And don't you think part of the reason she may not have been hungry was because she's going into her old house and that could have caused her to lose her appetite?"

Another time I observed that Bri, Jordyn, and Serena had made a shift in taking actions to ensure they understood while reading by using sticky-notes all along to denote places where they either needed support or problem-solved successfully. During a March

small group session reading with them I noted that Serena was holding herself accountable for understanding more consistently, was aware of her shift, and appeared proud saying, "I can tell you these sticky-notes are helping a ton. I used to put none, now I have a ton." Jordyn agreed and said, "Yeah, me too." The three girls had all marked the word *relations* as a place necessary to refine their understanding and tried to problem-solve by talking with one another. Bri explained that they thought they had come up with something that worked, but Serena and Jordyn were still not sure. Serena spelled the unknown word "r-e-l-a-t-i-o-n-s" and said, "We thought it could be *relatives*, but it didn't have a v." This demonstrated their ability to use meaning and cross-check for visual information, which was a shift for Serena and Jordyn. Bri demonstrated a shift in developing flexibility problem-solving the unknown word by substituting the word '*one'* replacing '*relations'* resulting in successfully holding the meaning of the text intact. She read, "You have no home and no one to take care of you."

Encouraged kids to take responsibility for their reading engagement. Kacee and I encouraged kids to take responsibility for their reading engagement by taking readerly actions to interrogate experiencing boredom and abandoning books. We talked candidly with kids about our observations of the kind of meaning they made and their general disposition while reading. Additionally, we suggested new ways to think about what experiencing boredom or the desire to abandon books might help them understand about the control they had to create interest and pleasure.

For example, three days after the read aloud session in which Kacee read, *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013), we noticed that the kids were taking a predominantly efferent stance responding to text. Inviting Bri to help introduce the

concept of *Let it Linger* to the class, encouraged kids to take responsibility for their reading engagement juxtaposing it with their in-the-moment thinking actions interacting with the text as Kacee read. Doing so disrupted their current ways of acting— talking too much— by prompting them to consider the idea that too much talk interfered with their ability to understand and enjoy.

Along the same line, when I read in small groups with kids I asked them to self-evaluate their affective engagement by ranking it on a scale of one to ten. In April, just before the boys started silent reading Weasel, I said, "When we left off yesterday, Nathan was with Weasel. How are you feeling about reading on today?"

Jay replied, "On a scale of one to ten, I'm a ten! I'm excited." To which Gavin weighed in at an eight, Slater laughed reporting a two, and Nico said eight. Then Slater, still laughing told the group he meant nine. Without further conversation, I instructed them to open their books and enjoy reading. Slater then said, seven, three, began humming and continued snickering as he settled right into reading.

Another time during read aloud, Kacee and I helped kids learn more about taking responsibility for their reading engagement by introducing the idea of savoring the small details in text. We had hypothesized that they needed experiences learning to slow down and be patient through the "not so high intensity" parts, trusting that salient details would come back around. To help kids discover a relationship between the affective aspects of reading engagement and meaning making, I created a mini-lesson using a tiny efferent detail from the text that I predicted would ignite aesthetic responses and refine our understanding of Uncle Charlie.

A couple weeks before the planned read aloud mini-lesson, I set it up by asking the class to weigh-in on the importance of a seemingly insignificant detail that they already knew about Uncle Charlie—that he was a real estate agent. I anticipated that the majority of the kids would not have given much thought or even considered Uncle Charlie's job important. Doing so served two functions positioning kids to experience a shift. First, it created an opportunity for kids to experience a significant emotional response evoked from a small detail. It offered them a chance to feel the potential power of words so that perhaps, they might consider developing patience and try savoring small details. Secondly, it created a genuine opportunity to suggest new ways for kids to think about the value that small details offered and evaluate their prior thoughts and resulting understanding. This experience pushed them to consider their role in feeling bored and encouraged them to try out readerly moves that could help them create and/or maintain interest and refine their understanding.

I started the mini-lesson by facilitating a conversation to help remind the kids of our prior shared experience saying, "We found out yesterday that the small details in text that sometimes cause us to feel bored when we are reading really could become…" Several students chortled, "a big deal."

Then to help kids not feel badly I reminded the class that, "This isn't about being right or wrong. We just wanted to make the point that sometimes small details can really turn out to be important so readers need to learn to be patient." To which Slater explained that he now thought Uncle Charlie's job did matter. Publically revising his idea was a huge shift for him. I responded, "Yeah, yesterday, there were lots of gasps! HA! So, Slater, thank you for putting that out there. When you heard that Uncle Charlie

was the one in charge of the sale of the plantation all of a sudden that small detail became a really big-" And the class cheered, "deal!"

To keep the pace of the mini-lesson moving forward and normalize boredom and the desire to abandon books, I continued facilitating by making a suggestion to help kids understand that if we wanted to read chapter books, we might have to recognize when we are not being patient or consider that we might be abandoning a book prematurely. I then explained that after Mrs. Smith completed reading aloud, they would use the details from the chapter to create a title. Furthermore, I suggested that during independent reading they might use the chapter titles in their books to help them read to understand. Conversely, if their book was like *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013) and did not have chapter titles they could create a title as a way to check-on and/or keep track of their understanding. Then I engaged them in a demonstration experiencing how reading chapter titles can help readers keep the events of the story straight, remind us of the most important events, and get us back into understanding exactly what was going on when we left off reading last time. I held the notes that contained the specific details I jotted down from each chapter and had used in my process composing the titles and explained that to the class. I displayed a chart with the chapter titles covered up. One at a time, I revealed the title for chapters one through seven followed by facilitating a fast-paced collaborative retelling which was triggered by the titles read. Kids literally recalled the specific details I had written in my notes, just by hearing and thinking about the title I created. This engagement served as the mini lesson. Next, Kacee read chapter eight and then the kids brainstormed a list of titles using specific details from the read aloud. Then they headed off to independent reading.

Introducing the idea that small details and chapter titles offered meaning support to readers instantly resonated with Jordyn. At the end of the mini-lesson, she demonstrated self-efficacy evident in the thinking she shared with me about what this new idea meant for her independent reading life. Jordyn popped up off the floor, walked directly up to me, and said,

> Whenever you, um whenever you are like, reading, maybe, whenever you don't have like a chapter book, well, if it doesn't have a title, maybe that's why it's so boring sometimes because it, it, when, because like Goodbye, that has an interesting title, and that's why people want to go on and read it."

I worked hard containing my enthusiasm and followed Jordyn's lead responding:

> Ok, well, that's interesting, because that could help, especially since you've noticed, like you've said to me, I'm getting bored, I'm not really getting it. And so now you are thinking about how chapter titles might help inform how you select books. We could read to find out, it would set a different purpose. Ohh, I hadn't thought about that! That is really, really, really, a cool idea. Let's make sure to share that with the group when we circle up to share. You may decide to choose chapter books right now that have titles because it would help keep you interested. Oh, yeah! That's a great idea.

Kids applied the thinking work in shared reading to their small group reading sessions and independent reading. Kacee and I helped kids refine the meaning they made in-the-midst of reading longer, more sophisticated text and simultaneously provided an authentic reason to slow down and savor the details increasing the chance for them to access efferent and aesthetic stances.

Impact of the Curriculum and Our Actions

To understand the impact of our curricular decisions, I used observational and standardized data. I had the observational data I collected as part of the small group sessions that I conducted with seven students and Kacee's anecdotal notes about the other four. In addition, I had video recordings of whole group mini-lessons, oral reading data from Dominie text level readings that I administered to all 11 and standardized test data for all 11. In the examples that follow I predominantly relied on the more extensive observational data that I had from small groups.

Over the course of the semester, the eleven students

- made gains toward reading grade level text,
- took on an aesthetic stance towards narrative text,
- experienced reading for pleasure, and
- chose to read more often (See Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

Text Levels and What Matters Outcomes

Participant Number Pseudonym Gender	**Equated Text Reading Level**		**Takes an Efferent & Aesthetic Stance —Making Meaning**		**Experiences Reading Pleasure**		**Chooses to read independently**	
4th grade	B.O.Y.	E.O.Y.	M.O.Y.	E.O.Y.	M.O.Y.	E.O.Y.	B.O.Y.	E.O.Y.
1-Holly/F	3.3	5.0	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
2-Carol/F	2.4	3.8	N	S	N	S	N	S
3-Ty/M	3.0	4.9	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
4-Jordyn/F	3.0	4.3	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
5-Gavin/M	3.0	4.3	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
6-Nico/M	3.3	4.9	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
7-Slater/M	3.3	4.9	N	S	N	S	N	S
8-Jay/M	3.8	4.8	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
9-D.J./M	3.0	4.3	N	Y	N	Y	S	Y
10-Bri/F	2.2	3.5	Y	Y	N	Y	N	S
11-Serena/F	3.0	4.3	N	S	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mean	**3.0**	**4.5**						
% of Yes			**18%**	**73%**	**27%**	**82%**	**18%**	**73%**

Made gains toward reading grade level text. At the beginning of the year, Dominie Benchmark reading assessments showed the grade level equivalencies of the 11 participants ranged from 2.2 (second grade second month of the school year) to 3.8 (third grade, eighth month of the school year). At the end of year, all 11 participants made more than one year text level growth, based on Dominie Benchmark reading assessments that I administered. Carol and Bri both began the year reading at a second grade level. Carol made one year and four months growth and ended reading at a 3.8 grade level equivalent. Bri made one year and three months growth and ended the year reading at a 3.5 grade level equivalent.

Four students— Jordyn, Gavin, D.J. and Serena— all began the year reading at 3.0 and all made one year and three months of text level growth and ended the year reading at a 4.3 grade level equivalent. Holly, Slater and Nico all began the reading seven months below grade level. Holly made one year and seven months of growth and ended the year reading at a 5.0 while Nico and Slater read at a 4.9. They both made one year and six months of growth. Jay, who began the year at 3.8, was dismissed from Special Education reading services, made a year's growth, and ended the year reading at a 4.8 grade level equivalent. The growth the students made was consistent with our goal of having all students make at least a year's growth and having students who started the year reading below grade level make more than a year's growth.

Took on an aesthetic stance and refined understanding of narrative text. Nine of the 11 participants– Holly, Carol, Ty, Jordyn, Gavin, Nico, Slater, D.J., and Serena had previously constructed a limited gist understanding of text, had misconceptions, took a predominantly efferent stance, and talked mostly about

predictions and/or retellings when responding to text. The other two students, Jay and Bri, already took an aesthetic stance. By the end of the year, all of the students demonstrated taking an aesthetic and efferent stance more fluidly.

In March, for example, while reading *Weasel* (DeFelice, 1990), with Slater, Gavin, Jay, and Nico, the boys noticed that the chapters did not have titles and had decided that they would create them as they completed reading each one. They thought it would be a fun way to keep track of the events, discuss the story with one another, and trigger their memories, helping them get back into the story each day. During our conversation preparing to read chapter three, the boys had each shared their titles and chatted. When Slater responded to a detail that I added to the group's summary of chapter one, he took an aesthetic stance that supported and demonstrated that he understand the character's perspective. Slater said, "Don't say mom is dead. That is kind of rude." I replied, "I was just being factual." He explained, "Ok, but that was offensive to the kid, probably."

Slater had experienced an emotional response interpreting how my comment could have made the kids in this story feel. His response demonstrated that he allowed himself to be taken in by the circumstances of the story and experience feelings similarly to how he imagined the kids in the story might have. This was a significant shift from the predominantly efferent stance he took toward talking about text earlier in the year.

Later, during the same session, while silent reading chapter four in *Weasel*, Nico and Gavin responded aesthetically and refined their understanding explaining why a character could not talk. Prior to clarifying, Nico had told me that he thought the character knew how to talk, but just could not. Trying to understand, Nico speculated

that perhaps he was born that way. He continued reading and suddenly gasped, "Ohhh, nooo!!!" He looked up, smiled, and using a tone of certainty exclaimed, "Oh. Oh. Oh." Gavin agreed with Nico's explanation.

Moments later while Gavin was silent reading, he took an aesthetic stance evident when he gasped, looked up from his book, covered his gaping mouth with his right hand, then drummed on top of his book several times, and shrieked. Then he read another couple seconds, closed the book, and exclaimed, "Oh, my goodness!" Nico and Gavin's emotional responses communicated that they realized that the man's tongue had been cut out revising their previous idea that the man had been born a mute.

At the end of May, in a conversation with Slater about his summer plans he said, "I barely read last summer, but my mom is probably going to have to make me read in Hawaii." I asked him if he thought he was the exact same reader as last year or if he thought he had changed this year. He replied, "I know my head has gotten better at reading, it makes more sense. I read more than I used to and when I get into a book I stick with it more."

Jordyn also shifted from a predominately efferent stance to a stance that was both aesthetic and efferent. At the conclusion of a mini lesson learning to use the small details in text to better understand the actions and feelings of two characters in a scene from, *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013), Jordyn took an aesthetic stance using the efferent details in text to infer and create an insightful interpretation. When the class transitioned from the whole group mini lesson to independent reading, Jordyn talked with me. Trying to understand the perceived sadness of the girl, Bee, and Grandma Em's actions, Jordyn explained that she had a feeling that Grandma Em knew what was behind

the mystery of Bee's sadness. Jordyn said, "There is something going on with Bee that is a mystery and we don't know what that is yet, but I have a feeling that Grandma Em knows what is making Bee sad." I asked what make her think that and she replied, "Whenever Grandma Bee put her hand on Bee's arm and squeezed, it's like she's saying, are you ok."

Experienced reading pleasure. Three students— Gavin, Jay, and Serena already engaged in reading pleasurably. Seven of the 11 students- Holly, Carol, Ty, Jordyn, Nico, Slater, and D.J., had previously reported that reading was boring and frequently abandoned books. Bri did not think reading was boring, but complained that reading was hard. All eight students made a shift in experiencing increased reading pleasure.

For example, after a mini-lesson helping kids use small details in text to create, refine, and monitor their meaning when reading chapter books, Jordyn demonstrated self-efficacy when she told me her plan to use chapter titles to create interest and refine her understanding. Jordyn had popped up off the floor, walked directly up to me, and said, "Whenever you, um whenever you are like, reading, maybe whenever you have a chapter book that doesn't have titles, maybe that's why it's so boring sometimes…" Then she referenced one of the titles we had created in the mini-lesson for the class read aloud, *The Girl from Felony Bay* (Thompson, 2013). "Like in *Goodbye,* that has an interesting title, and that's why people want to go on and read it." Jordyn determined that she would start using chapter titles as criteria that informed her book selections. In this way she made evident her new belief that understanding result in increased enjoyment. Her decision also revealed a shift in her understanding that it was not always the book's fault when she

lost interest. Instead, she took initiative, made plans, and asked for reading conferences with her independent reading books more frequently and experienced reading pleasure.

Another time, on a morning in April after the kids had returned from a week off school for spring break, Slater told Kacee that he had read over their holiday break. He explained that his mom made him, but then he smiled and indicated that he experienced reading pleasure when he said, "But the book was ok and I finished it." Although Slater maintained that he did not like to read, when he read in small group he experienced reading pleasure. For example, during one group session when the boys were reading and discussing whether or not Oscar, Bruno, and Jenny had made it out of a burning house before it exploded into flames, the timer chimed indicating we only had one minute to clean and transition-ending our small group. In a tone that conveyed disappointment, Slater said, "Oh, I want to read more. The timer just went off."

Nico's mom confirmed that he was experiencing reading as pleasurable when she shared that while on vacation in Florida, he had "talked nonstop" about the novel, *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005) and that she "had never seen him enjoy a book like that before." Then on May 24, 2016 while chatting with Nico during recess, he said, "I am going to read on the way to the beach. My mom doesn't make me read, I just choose to read now."

Chose to read more often. Kacee and I observed increased reading engagement of kids in the classroom and reports of increased reading from students and parents. According to Kacee's anecdotal records in which she recorded notes about time on task reading, 8 out of 11 students demonstrated a shift in choosing to read and staying on task during independent reading time in the classroom. Two of the 11 read during

independent reading all year and so no significant shifts were observed. One of the 11, Carol, did not show a shift of increased reading time on task during independent reading time in the classroom.

One day after school, Kacee and I discussed observations of Slater and Nico that indicated an observed shift in their independent reading life at school. For example, I shared that during an independent reading conference with Slater, I learned that he was reading *Because of Winn Dixie* (DiCamillo, 2010) because he had really liked the book when his second grade teacher read it to his class and he wanted to read it himself. Then I told Kacee that while I sat reading and talking with Gavin, I observed that Slater continued reading silently at the table. I heard him giggle so I turned and looked at which point he explained that he had read a funny spot. He proceeded reading the text aloud, "Where the guy behind the counter had thick black hair and it was slicked back like Elvis Presley." Kacee then shared that over subsequent days she had noticed that he had been engaged across the entire independent reading block. She had noticed that he sat in a special chair in the class library and at transition time, he remained seated with his nose in the book. She too had conferenced with him recently during independent reading and asked me what page he was reading when I conferenced with him. She checked her conference notes and confirmed that the page numbers seemed reasonable and their conversation about the text showed that he indeed was reading more.

Another time while conferring with Nico about the books in his independent reading box, I learned that he taken the initiative to go to our school library and checked out a book from the *I Survived* series (Tarshis, 2001-present) and was reading more

during independent reading. I observed a bookmark inside the book and the subsequent conversation confirmed that he was indeed reading it.

One morning in April, after the kids had returned from Spring Break, upon arriving in the classroom that morning Nico told Kacee that he had read over their holiday and stated that he had "wanted to." Another time Nico's mom reported noticing that he had taken the initiative to sort the books in his bedroom into two stacks. Later, she noticed that one of the stacks had disappeared. When she asked Nico about the sorting and stacking, he then told her that he had given away the books he had read to some friends so they could enjoy reading them like he had. Then on May 12, 2016 at 9:34 pm Nico's mom posted a picture of the two of them reading together on Facebook and wrote, "Nick and I reading. He insisted on downloading a book he's already read…so that we could read it together." She quoted him as saying, "Mom, I want to read the second book together and you need to know it all from the beginning!" Then she ended the post writing, "Thank you Mrs. Thompson for igniting his fire!!"

Another time Holly's mom texted a picture of her reading a book at the kitchen table before school. Her mother sent it to Kacee with a comment explaining that Holly had gotten up early and completed getting ready for school faster than usual so that she could have time to read more of her book. Her mom wrote, "It is great to not have to feel like I am forcing Holly to read anymore. This year she has gained confidence, comprehends better, slowed down and truly loves reading on her own now."

Jay who had reported that he liked to read, but did not choose to read for fun demonstrated a shift taking initiative to read more in school. For example, one day before leaving to go to his Special Education class, he asked me to write a note to his

teacher to tell her what time his book club started in the classroom because he wanted to make sure he got back in time read *Weasel* (DeFelice, 1990). Meanwhile, his mom reported that he was reading at home more often. Jay was released from Special Education reading services at the end of his fourth grade year.

State standardized reading test outcomes. I analyzed standardized test results for the 11 students in the participant group. I compared the results of the state end of third grade test performance levels (ACT Aspire Reading-Performance Level Descriptors) to the results of the state end of fourth grade test performance level (SC Ready ELA Performance Level Descriptors). Although the state tests were different, the frame used to interpret results established four performance levels as a continuum that reflected achievement. The ACT Aspire Reading Performance levels terms used to describe the lowest range of achievement to the highest range were Needs Support, Close, Ready, and Exceeding. The SC Ready ELA Performance Level Descriptors in ascending order were Does Not Meet, Approaches, Meets, and Exceeds.

Seventy-three percent of the participants (eight of the 11 students)— Carol, Ty, Jordyn, Nico, Slater, D.J., Bri, and Serena— increased by at least one performance level. Six of these eight students— Carol, Jordyn, D.J., Bri, Serena, and Nico— had scored at Needs Support, the lowest performance level at the end of third grade. Five of the six participants— Carol, Jordyn, D.J., Bri, and Serena increased one performance level moving out of the lowest level on the continuum scoring Approaches grade level at the end of fourth grade and Nico, the sixth student, increased two performance levels scoring at the Met grade level performance at the end of the year. The other two of the eight participants that increased one performance level, Ty and Slater, moved from Close to

grade level at the end of third grade up to scoring on track for Meeting performance level at the end of fourth grade. Three of the 11 students— Gavin, Jay, and Holly maintained equivalent performance levels at the end of both school years. Gavin and Jay held at Close/Approaching being on track toward meeting grade level and Holly held at Ready/Meets on track for grade level.

Table 5.2

Standardized End of Year State Test Outcomes

Participant Number Pseudonym & Gender	**End of 3rd State Test ACT Aspire**	**End of 4th State Test SC Ready**	**Comparing Performance Level end of 3rd to end of 4th**
1-Holly/F	Ready	Meets	Remained same
2-Carol/F	Needs Support	Approaches	Increased 1 level
3-Ty/M	Close	Meets	Increased 1 level
4-Jordyn/F	Needs Support	Approaches	Increased 1 level
5-Gavin/M	Close	Approaches	Remained same
6-Nico/M	Needs Support	Meets	Increased 2 levels
7-Slater/M	Close	Meets	Increased 1 level
8-Jay/M	Close	Approaches	Remained same
9-D.J./M	Needs Support	Approaches	Increased 1 level
10-Bri/F	Needs Support	Approaches	Increased 1 level
11-Serena/F	Needs Support	Approaches	Increased 1 level
Percent scoring at the Lowest Level at end of school year	55%	0	
Percent scoring Close/Approaches Grade level at end of school year	36%	64%	
Percent Reading at Grade Level at end of year	9%	36%	
Percent of students that increased at least 1 performance level at end school year			73% 8 out of 11

I also analyzed the end of fourth grade Measures of Academic Performance (MAP). At the beginning of fourth grade, six out of the 11 participants—Ty, Gavin, Nico, Slater, Jay, and Serena met or exceeded the grade level norm. Eight out of the 11

participants— Holly, Ty, Gavin, Nico, Slater, Jay, D.J., and Bri met or exceeded the grade level norm at the end of their fourth grade year.

Table 5.3

District Universal Screener for RtI Services

Participant Number Pseudonym & Gender	**Beginning of 4th grade MAP Reading percentile**	**Beginning of 4th MAP Reading: At or Above Grade Level Norm (mean RIT 197.7)**	**End of 4th grade MAP Reading percentile**	**End of 4th MAP Reading: At or Above Grade Level Norm (mean RIT 205.9)**
1-Holly/F	41	No	63	Yes
2-Carol/F	41	No	40	No
3-Ty/M	53	Yes	56	Yes
4-Jordyn/F	41	No	42	No
5-Gavin/M	76	Yes	81	Yes
6-Nico/M	63	Yes	58	Yes
7-Slater/M	63	Yes	66	Yes
8-Jay/M	76	Yes	56	Yes
9-D.J./M	36	No	50	Yes
10-Bri/F	4	No	35	Yes
11-Serena/F	48	Yes	35	No
Percent at or above Grade Level Norm		55%		73%

CHAPTER 6

LESSONS LEARNED AND IMPLICATIONS

"There is no such thing as a generic reader"
(Rosenblatt, 1978, pg. viii).

The theme, "What at first seemed so simple, turned out to be incredibly complex" underlies all my theoretical shifts. I made five of them as a result of this study. I:

- refined my understanding of the role of relationships and emotions
- refined my understanding of the What Matters list
- refined my understanding and use of Yellow Flags
- re-conceptualized the role of context and reading engagement
- refined my ideas about reading identity.

These theoretical shifts impacted my practice during and after the study and have implications for the practices of other teachers.

Refined my Understanding of the Role of Relationships and Emotions

Before the study, I had a tacit understanding of the role relationships and emotions had in teaching and learning. Building relationships with kids came easily to me and I thought it was simple. I tried to understand kids socially, emotionally, intellectually, and create the conditions which I hoped positioned them to experience success and be active participants within our learning community. However, I had not named those conditions.

During the study, I realized that the connections among relationships, emotions, teaching, and learning were more complex than I had previously conceptualized. Consider the conversation I had with Jordyn when we chatted while reading, *The Story of Heidi*. She was in the process of learning new ways to sort out confusions and develop certainty about what and when she understood. Jordyn took a risk when she marked a spot in the text that read, "'I don't get hungry lying in bed,' Clara murmured. 'You'd soon get hungry running up the mountain to Grandfather's hut,' Heidi told her" (p. 35).

I assessed her sticky note as evidence that she had made progress with taking an action to problem-solve monitoring for meaning. I acknowledged Jordyn's readerly move when I leaned over, pointed to Jordyn's sticky-note, and whispered, "What did you decide about that?" My response demonstrated that I valued her action and communicated my belief that she had acted strategically. It also required her to explain her reason for marking that particular spot in the text. I knew that Jordyn frequently misunderstood text, lost interest in reading, and yet did not fully understand when, why, and how to change interacting with text. Consequently, my question asked Jordyn to engage in risk-taking actions which increased her vulnerability. Each of my responses could cause Jordyn to experience feelings of success or failure socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Furthermore, our interactions influenced not only her perceptions, but also shaped the perceptions of those within an earshot listening as we talked. Given what I knew about Jordyn, I realized it was likely that she might not know and/or be able to articulate specifically why or what she needed support clarifying. Therefore, I continued inquiring one step at a time, following her lead, seeking to understand the meaning she

made and the moves she made, taking a proactive approach communicating that I valued Jordyn's contributions while continuously seeking to understand more.

It was at that point that I realized that I did not just have a socio-emotional constructivist perspective of reading, but my view was fully aligned with discourse analysis grounded in Gee's ideas that consider "discourse, with a little 'd' to mean language-in-use or stretches of language (like conversations or stories) and 'Big D' Discourses language plus" ways of "acting-interacting-thinking-valuing-talking-in the 'appropriate way' with the 'appropriate' props at the 'appropriate' times in the 'appropriate' places" (2008, p. 26). Furthermore, Newkirk's (2017) work made explicit my tacit understanding of the role that embarrassment has on and within both little discourse and Big Discourses. Newkirk contended that, "in all social encounters we play roles that we desire to perform competently" (2017, p. 9).

As a result of this study, I can now name that I sought to ensure that kids always felt competent and therefore our conversations were not focused on students providing right or wrong answers. Instead, I helped kids engage in conversations that consistently revolved around what they did, said, and felt. I tried to help them understand their responses. I believed that the thinking work was important for all of us as learners, for me as the facilitator, and for the kids as readers. Furthermore, I noticed that what they did not do, say, or report feeling helped me to gain insights about what they might not yet understand. I used my understandings to craft language thoughtfully so that kids would not feel less than or broken, or feel that they in some way needed to be fixed. For example, when Jordyn responded to my question with, "Um. I was thinking, 'mumbled' maybe, like…" Then she took a deep breath in, let it out quickly and continued, "Like,

she maybe, like, like you soon, she soon get hungry running up the mountain, like running, like mumbling it."), I instantly tuned into her mannerisms and general disposition. The content of what she said was just as important as how she said it. She conveyed hesitation, sounded like she was grasping at straws using snippets of text, and in the end, she still did not communicate a complete thought to explain an idea. I discerned uncertainty evident in Jordyn's circuitous delivery responding to my inquiry. She replied using filler words such as *um and like* (repeatedly), paused frequently between utterances, took deep breaths, and used exact snippets from the text, yet she did not articulate a clear response. I thought it was possible that Jordyn could feel anxious and possibly embarrassed given that she had not communicated and/or constructed a clear explanation of why or what she had marked. While I assessed Jordyn's disposition and listened to her attempts to explain her thinking, I considered that she might have marked the lines of text as an act of compliance, and/or to follow previously established routines and structures and became concerned that she might experience shame.

Reflecting on situations like this, helped me name, to be consciously aware, that nurturing relationships required me being truly present with kids from one moment to the next showing care and concern across personal and instructional interactions. This required an enormous amount of cognitive and emotional energy as I observed, reflected, planned, and responded in-action. For example, across all my thinking in the first 4 minutes and 11 seconds recapping chapter five from the boy's prior session reading *I Survived the Great Chicago Fire of 1871* (Tarshis, 2015), I made 50 moves responding to salient observations of Slater, Nico, Gavin, and Jay. I participated as a co-reader and facilitator reading and talking about the text with them. I realized that not only did

participating in these ways create instructional opportunities to assess and instruct the boys' general disposition toward the reading engagement relative to the understandings they constructed integrating both the aesthetic and efferent stances (Rosenblatt, 1938), but our interactions also worked personally to nurture relationships. I genuinely enjoyed my time with them and interacted with intentionality and specificity. I listened, watched, and simultaneously withheld judgment. In this way, I took precautions to safeguard against intentionally causing undesirable emotional, social, and intellectual experiences for kids.

I realized that previously I had a tacit understanding of how relationship-building worked. I approached all interactions as if they mattered and were fragile. I never reached a point where I considered relationships established and therefore no longer had to think about how I made kids feel. However, I had not named this. I now understand even more passionately than I did before that relationships require tending to every action, word, and conversation. Therefore, for example, when a student was absent the group did not meet to read our shared text. Instead, I implemented alternate plans. Doing so was a reflection of alignment between my actions and beliefs and simultaneously sent a clear message to kids that their actions, thoughts, and feelings mattered. They were the instructional resources that fueled what we read, talked about, and learned as we socially constructed meaning. Responding personally and instructionally was a fluid process that required everyone's presence, embracing one moment to the next, acting and believing that each interaction was the most important. Acknowledging kids' feelings and current ways of knowing when it mattered to them

across all interactions showed my genuine care and value for how kids felt, thought, and learned.

Unpacking my process also helped me realize that I simultaneously assessed and instructed kid's social and emotional interactions within reading assessment and instruction. What I said, how I said it, and why I said it were critical instructional interactions that supported their social and emotional growth. For example, in the middle of a small group book club conversation with the girls, Serena asked if she could get her jacket. I responded, "If you're cold." I honored her personal need even though everyone in the group was talking to her attempting to help her sort out which character needed a wheelchair. Serena was the only member unsure that it belonged to Clara; however, she adamantly debated the issue even though everyone else agreed with each other and their interpretation was consistent with the text. We had been chatting about it for approximately three minutes and the timing of Serena's request was less than ideal and a little suspect. However, I believed that if she needed to step away for a moment, I wanted to her have that time. She returned within forty seconds and I subtly directed her to the top of page 42 in the text and the conversation continued as normal. I gave Serena the benefit of the doubt and avoided challenging her need for a jacket, or pointing out that this was an inappropriate time to ask about a jacket or leave the group since we were discussing her confusion. Interacting in ways that were respectful and caring mattered within this instructional moment and if handled differently, could have resulted in her experiencing unpleasant emotions such as embarrassment, anger, frustration, and/or shame. In this way, I took care of kids first and foremost as people. I genuinely sought to know them and provide unconditional acceptance and critical care.

Understanding the role of shame and the desire to appear competent helped me understand more about how to care for the affective aspects of readers as part of instruction and this required a lot of thinking in-action. The shift in my thinking caused me to question the inauthentic ways that standards are often "taught" within reading mini-lessons. For example, consider the idea of unpacking standards into miniature "I can statements" such as, *I can ask and answer inferential questions.* When teachers approach strategy instruction in isolation requiring kids to then prove that they "can do it" it sends unintentional messages to kids that reading is about using strategies to get things right. I have observed teachers struggle over how to teach kids to ask questions when they read. Teachers need to understand why readers ask questions and use that knowledge to inform instruction for kids who appear not be asking them. People naturally ask questions when they realize there is something they do not understand or for which they want to gain deeper insights, not to simply prove they can ask and answer questions. There is a fine line and critical importance between simply teaching reading and teaching readers and understanding this makes the difference between teaching that is helpful and that which is not. My refined understanding of the role of relationships and emotions in teaching and learning to read not only helped me better understand kids' affective instructional needs, but also led me to question the impact of broader issues on relationships such as behavior management routines and programs; rigid scheduling demands; design and pacing of lessons; and instruction that reflect a businesslike stance. Often pre and in-service course work and PD about building and maintaining genuine relationships unintentionally send messages that relationships are separate from teaching and learning. Instead, in the study, I came to understand that teachers should focus on

structures that encourage teachers to embrace and integrate personal interactions within instruction. It is possible and necessary for children simultaneously to feel joyful and engage in rigorous learning.

Refining my Understanding of the What Matters List

As I reflect back on my study, it becomes clear that the What Matters list was central. Kacee and I used the list to understand kids, readers, and reading and that informed teaching and learning for everyone in the room. At the same time, as a result of the study, I refined my understanding of how and why the What Matters list works. I can now name that it provides a curricular framework that simultaneously makes reading assessment and instruction possible. Concurrently, it shapes the context, a context that is also shaped by the multiplicities and complexities of reading identities within and across all reading events. I am now able to articulate that What Matters is not simple, but rather complex. I unpacked:

- the definitions that students and I had of meaning-making (WM #1).
- what it means to believe in one's ability to make sense of print (WM #2).
- the concept of pleasurable reading (WM #3).

Unpacking definitions of meaning-making (WM # 1). Before the study, I believed that kids needed to understand that reading was a meaning-making process. I considered myself a social constructivist. I believed that kids had background knowledge and transacted with what was on the page to create meaning.

During the study, I realized that the understanding I held of meaning making, like my understanding of the role of emotions, was more complicated than I had previously conceptualized. For example, while reading *The Missing Manatee* (DeFelice, 2005) in

the fall with Slater, I observed several instances of Yellow Flags. He demonstrated Gisty Meaning-Making by reading fast and with high accuracy while being overly focused on finding out what would happen next. He seemed to view my attempts to engage him in conversation periodically as interruptions. Then, long before the solution to the mystery was revealed in the story, Slater wanted to abandon reading the book explaining that he was no longer interested. He believed that he had solved the mystery and complained saying, "There's nothing else to figure out. I know Dan is the killer." Slater did not realize that he had misunderstood some things along the way and that there was more to understand. Unbeknownst to him, Slater's interpretation was not consistent with information in the text and yet he was not open to considering other possibilities and resisted revising his understanding.

I noticed those same patterns when we were reading *The Great Chicago Fire of 1871* (Tarshis, 2015) in the spring. Slater's attention seemed focused on the surface-level, end-result of gathering the literal facts of the story for the sole purpose of figuring out what was going to happen. I noted that his responses were consistently limited to predictions and/or retellings and he often had misconceptions that were only partially supported with text-based evidence. He did not transact with text personally to determine what the literal details would help him understand about Oscar at particular points in the story and yet Slater felt that he understood the story and, indeed, believed that he was making meaning.

It was at that point that I realized that my definition of meaning making was very different than his. I did not just have a social-constructivist view of reading but my view was fully aligned with Rosenblatt (1978). Like her, I believed that making meaning

exists on a continuum ranging from predominantly efferent to predominantly aesthetic and occurs as the reader transacts with the signs (Pierce, 1867-1893) on the page. Efferent refers to a stance in which the reader's primary focus centers on abstracting publically verifiable information from the text. An aesthetic stance is a more private approach and requires the reader to broaden their attention and focus on experiencing the mood, scenes, and situation being created. In this way, readers create personal and varied interpretations of the text.

Once I unpacked my definition of *meaning-making*, I started to think about how students defined meaning-making and realized that often their definition was not the same as mine. Prior to my study, for example, I would have said that Slater was word calling and did not understand that reading was meaning-making. I came to realize that Slater was not accessing an aesthetic stance which involved his taking a unique personal perspective. When Slater read the part of the text where Oscar caught on fire, he did not understand that Oscar was standing still outside the window or that he was experiencing new emotions as he watched the kids. Slater only had a gist understanding of what Oscar was doing and feeling. He did not understand that Oscar was deeply lost in thought as he watched the kids rummage through his belongings. He did understand the emotions Oscar experienced when he noticed how poor the kids were and how sad Jenny looked. Slater did not understand that efferent details offered him the opportunity to connect aesthetically and elicit his own emotions to understand why Oscar had changed his mind about stealing back his suitcase. I came to understand, however, that Slater was making meaning, as he defined it. He was getting the gist and that matched his expectations.

Understanding my definition of meaning-making and Slater's helped me understand more about why attempts to provide scaffolds to engage him in conversation while reading were often received as unwelcomed interruptions. Slater did not expect to engage in making my kind of meaning in this way or for this aesthetic purpose. After all, thinking in tentative ways or taking time to ponder a variety of interpretations did not match his definition for making meaning. He was genuinely interested in reading to find out what was going to happen next and that alone motivated him. Therefore, when he believed that he had the resolution to the story figured out, he considered himself done with the book.

My revised definition of meaning-making not only helped me better assess the definitions that kids held and understand their responses to my queries, but also led me to question what got defined in our district as successful comprehension. Teachers assess students' reading by having them read leveled texts and answer comprehension questions. If their comprehension score is 75%, they are considered to be reading on that level. However, often, the question(s) they miss have to do with inferences which require taking an aesthetic stance towards text. I realized that kids could appear to make progress in reading levels without engaging in meaning-making as I, and most of the field, conceptualized it. Furthermore, my revised definition caused me to question reading instruction which is supposed to help kids develop and refine inferential thinking to understand text. In my school, teachers provide kids lots of practice with inferential thinking, but typically it is not done so in the midst of reading across the structures of read aloud, shared reading, small groups, and independent reading. Instead, inferential thinking is taught as a mini-lesson. My study suggests however that teachers should be

helping kids make aesthetic connections in small and whole group reading engagements. In the midst of reading, kids need support learning how to build, maintain, reflect, and stay involved in their moment-to-moment thinking process refining their understanding. Doing so requires teachers to listen, observe, keep track of their kids' moment-to-moment literal, inferential, and interpretative understandings of text and in response to it, and facilitate conversations with kids that encourages them to explain their thinking. This is made possible when teachers interact as co-readers and facilitators providing specific, relevant, and timely feedback helping kids self-assess their understandings and integrate both the efferent and aesthetic stances efficiently and effectively to make sense of text. Interacting in these ways enables teachers to respond to kids more organically providing appropriate scaffolds within each structure of balanced literacy. In this way, teachers can help kids refine their strategic actions and thinking by integrating the kind of understandings made available through experiencing unique emotional responses supported by accurate understandings of the publicly verifiable details in the text.

The shift in my thinking also caused me to question how I had been using miscue analysis to understand what kids believe about reading. Teachers analyze miscues and compute percentages to understand students' use of the three cueing-systems: semantic (meaning), syntactic (structure) and graphophonic (visual). Often kids who score below 75% using meaning/semantics are said to not understand that reading is a meaning-making process. However, it may be that kids are making meaning as they define it. Slater's definition of meaning-making influenced his decisions about when he believed he needed to self-monitor or problem-solve both at the word level and the story level and those decisions impacted his semantic/meaning percentage.

Unpacking what it means to believe in one's ability to make sense of print (WM #2). Before the study, I believed that kids needed to "believe in their ability to make sense of print" so that they were positioned to take an agentive stance toward making sense of text. I understood that interest, motivation, attitude, text selection, text level, text complexity, context, and the purpose for reading influenced kids' beliefs in their ability to make sense of print.

During the study, I realized that not only did the kids' definition of meaning-making influence the kind of meaning they made and impact their belief in their ability to make sense of text, but so did their perception of the purpose for reading; and aligning them was more complex than I had realized. Rosenblatt's continuum helped me understand that readers I considered to not hold a generative theory of reading were not accessing the efferent and aesthetic stances in a fluid-like process, which enabled them to adopt different degrees of each stance as they read and created their understanding of the text and interpretations in response to text. More explicitly, Rosenblatt's work regarding what she referred to as the attitude the reader takes into the reading event helped me to understand that the stance the reader took toward the reading event influenced and was influenced by the purpose and their perception of the purpose for reading. Furthermore, I learned that the reader's stance and perceived purpose for reading also impacted the kind of meaning the reader expected to make and, their beliefs in their ability to do so successfully. Furthermore, it affected their degree of certainty about their understanding of the text when they self-assessed while engaged in the meaning-making process. For readers who did not yet hold a generative theory of reading, I realized that their perceptions of their beliefs in their ability to make sense of text relative to their

perception of the purpose did not align with mine. For example, I intended for kids to experience pleasure reading for the purpose of fun and entertainment; whereby the reader becomes so completely immersed in the thinking about the events, actions, and feelings of the characters that they evoke unique emotional responses affording them the experience of feeling lost in a story. However, Slater did not believe that reading could serve him the purpose of fun and entertainment, yet he demonstrated unwavering confidence believing in his ability to make sense of text for a predominantly efferent purpose. I observed and interpreted that his attitude toward text was set on reading for a purpose heavily fixed on finding out what happened and he firmly asserted that he understood what he read. Like Slater, Serena believed in her ability to make sense of text and she adamantly claimed that she liked to read for fun and insisted that she chose to do it a lot. However, based on the kind of meaning Serena made and observations showing that she frequently abandoned books, I had a hard time believing that she liked to read for fun. Her idea of what reading for fun and entertainment felt like and the kind of meaning made while doing so, did not align with mine. Like Slater, she took a predominantly efferent stance into reading narrative text and was overly focused on the publically verifiable details in the text.

It was at that point I realized that in the past I had tacitly supported students in learning to take a more personal approach to enjoying and understanding text and it had worked for the majority of kids. When I unpacked my process to understand more, I learned that by asking kids to say something beyond retelling and predicting which required taking a predominantly efferent stance, I was helping kids take an aesthetic stance. Moreover, I realized that teaching from a stance whereby I participated as both

co-reader and co-facilitator, valuing what kids said, did, and felt (and did not) about the act of reading and in response to the text in the midst of reading helped kids refine and extend the ways they interacted with text authenticity.

Understanding the impact of our mismatch in the purpose and perceptions for reading influenced the stance kids took, their expectations for making sense, and their degree of certainty in their ability to do so, and therefore, how kids interacted with text. This realization helped me to understand the outliers I had not been able to figure out. To help these kids discover that reading for the purpose of fun and entertainment could exist as a possibility, they had to experience the feeling of being lost in a book for that purpose. However, for kids like Slater, who had not yet taken on the identity of being a reader that chose to read for fun and entertainment to experience being lost in a book, they needed support doing so. Kids like Serena, who had taken on the identity of being a reader who chooses to read for fun and entertainment yet, frequently abandoned books that they had self-selected also needed support. I had to help both kinds of readers take on new readerly habits of making effective and efficient meaning of the efferent details in text and activating the aesthetic stance fluidly. Together Kacee and I created conditions for these kids to see themselves as the kind of reader that interacted with text taking actions to create, refine, reflect on, and develop unique interpretations that were consistent with the details presented in the text. In doing so, we created opportunities for kids to actively participate in reading to understand by frolicking with our understandings, socially constructing meaning, and thereby creating new possibilities for kids to reconsider the kind of reader they were and could become.

Unpacking the concept of pleasurable reading (WM #3). Before the study, I believed that kids needed to experience reading as something one does for fun and entertainment**:** I wanted them to experience the evocation of emotions that are made available to readers when they transact with text in personal and unique ways developing genuine care and concern for characters and their circumstances as they would in their lives. However, I had not named this as an instructional goal or understood the full impact of it. Most of the kids I worked with reported that they did not like to read for fun and I worked with them to create conditions under which they would experience our reading time together as pleasurable. After lots of time doing so, I imagined that ultimately there would be a shift in their thinking and they would report liking to read. While this happened for the majority of students, there were a few kids who appeared to experience pleasure in our reading together yet continued to assert that they did not like to read and therefore did not choose to read independently for fun. I was concerned about their disinterest because I believe that if kids do not choose to read, they are less likely to grow as readers.

During the study, I wrestled with understanding the relationship between observations of kids experiencing pleasure while reading together yet choosing not to read independently, and/or maintaining that they did not like to read; or conversely, understanding kids who claimed to like reading, yet frequently abandoned books and complained of boredom. Like my other theoretical shifts, I realized that the relationship was more complex than it first had seemed. I began to pay closer attention to the discrepancies between kids' pleasure claims and my observations of their actions, interactions, and disposition while reading. For example, during independent reading, a

number of kids frequently abandoned books, complaining the book bored them or they lost interest. Some of these were students who claimed to like to read.

I came to understand that my definition of reading pleasure did not necessarily match the kids' definition of reading pleasure. I had defined pleasure reading as what Wilhelm (2017) calls "play." I realized that it was possible that the students were experiencing other forms of reading pleasure such as: work, inner work, intellectual, and social (Wilhelm, 2017) and they were perhaps overgeneralizing the dominant source of reading pleasure that they attributed to their self-assessment about whether or not they liked to read.

Once I understood this, I realized that even though my intention and instructional goal was to immerse kids in conditions to read purely for fun and entertainment they had actually experienced other forms of reading pleasure together in our group. For example, for kids like Slater, who did not yet choose to read independently for the purpose of fun and entertainment, yet experienced pleasure in our book club, his pleasure came predominantly from the social interaction of reading and talking together. Whereas, on the other hand, Serena approached reading as work, chose to do it, and therefore she predominantly experienced work pleasure. School was her work that she enjoyed doing very much, yet she frequently abandoned books and blamed the book for experiencing boredom and losing interest. She did not realize that her overly efferent stance toward making sense of text aligned more predominantly with work pleasure and interfered with her ability to connect aesthetically. Moreover, she had not yet discovered and lived the genuine feelings associated with 'being lost in a text' for the purpose of fun and

entertainment as the dominant experience. Consequently, she did not really know the possibilities available for experiencing this different kind of reading pleasure.

Because our context predominately provided opportunities for students to experience play pleasure, I watched and listened for opportunities to name and notice (Johnston, 2003) when kids appeared bored, interested, entertained, or genuinely engaged with the text and then led focused instructional conversations validating their feelings, hoping to raise their awareness and then present new ways to think about the kind of pleasure they were getting from reading at those particular moments. I wanted to disrupt their beliefs that reading for that specific purpose did not have to continue to feel boring. I crafted language that invited them to privately reconsider the possibility that reading for fun and entertainment could serve a real function (Halliday, 1975) for them and it required taking specific readerly actions to refine the ways they interacted with text. One of the biggest challenges was that I could not just tell them that they were reading simply for fun and entertainment. They were in school, they had to read, viewed reading as work, and identified as readers who did or did not read for pleasure. Therefore, what I asked kids to do in the name of reading instruction had to align with the overarching goal of reading for fun and entertainment yet, simultaneously support them in ways that felt social, fun, and less like work to disguise the reading instruction work we were actually doing. I came to understand that I had been tacitly engaging kids in persuasive events to reconsider the function reading served.

My refined understanding of the various forms of reading pleasure not only helped me better assess and understand kids' reading engagement using my new definition of it understood as comprehension and affect, but it also led me to consider

where in school children have permission to read for pleasure and support learning to do so. In school, the idea of reading purely for fun and entertainment seems to be assumed, taken for granted, checked off if /when kids had freedom to self-select texts they are interested in reading, overlooked, dismissed, or various combinations thereof and there is always some form of work connected to reading, which requires the reader to take a predominantly efferent stance into the reading event. My study suggests that teachers have a professional obligation to create instruction that immerses kids in possibilities to experience all forms of reading pleasure (Wilhelm, 2017). Thinking from an ideal instructional stance, balance in the function a student chooses to read is key to creating a well-rounded readerly life. Ideally, balance means that the student chooses to read to do work resulting in the completion of a task (assigned and self-initiated), *and* for the sole purpose of entertainment. If a child does not experience immersive play pleasure, they will not identify as a reader who chooses to read for that purpose. Additionally, when a student experiences reading for fun and entertainment and does not realize that they do not understand (consistent with the details offered in the text), his/her chance of boredom and/or loss of genuine interest increases leading them to believe that they can read, but must be the kind of person who does not like reading for play. I recognize that it is likely that multiple forms of reading pleasure operate simultaneously making it difficult to segregate, however, it is helpful to think about them separately to understand readers and to identify instructional needs. I interpret Wilhelm's play pleasure as reading that feels personally satisfying for the purpose of fun and entertainment.

Rosenblatt predicted that the trajectory of reading instruction within schools was headed fast and furiously toward creating readers who interact with text with extremely

limited expectations— to get the gist, complete a task, and move on. When teachers take an efferent stance toward helping kids learn more about how, when, and why readers activate their aesthetic stance it becomes inauthentic. For example, strategy instruction that asks kids to demonstrate that they can indeed connect, predict, ask questions, infer, and synthesize without learning more about why, inadvertently turns the really good instructional ideas into disingenuous readerly actions. Doing so positions readers to take a predominantly efferent stance shifting the focus on the strategies themselves as the end product instead of the reading experience. Although it has happened and continues to occur quite unintentionally, it leads me to question the impact of requiring teachers to name "I can statements" in an effort to teach reading standards from which all lessons are created in my district. Doing so unintentionally requires kids to take an efferent stance and omits their feelings, likes, and dislikes about reading as if they are not instructionally worthy. Teachers may not realize that when they ask kids to employ a strategy such as, "Book, Head, Heart connections" (Beers, 2017) it disingenuously causes confusion for readers who are not yet independently transacting with text aesthetically. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to create instructional goals that are measurable and are told that reading engagement is not. However, it is typical for teachers to observe instances of disengaged, compliant readers who complain of boredom on a daily basis. Teachers desperately want to help make a change and they are capable, but often cannot gain permission to make reading engagement instructionally worthy and/or need support learning how to refine their practice so that it occurs authentically and can be measured. Surface-level understandings of the role that motivation, interest, and attitude have on reading engagement will only perpetuate current practice.

This shift in my thinking not only helped me to better assess and respond to my queries, but also led me to question typically accepted structures and routines. For example, it is commonly accepted that kids make progress towards reading grade level text when they are given the freedom to select books they are interested in reading. However, the degree to which teachers adhere to that ideal varies in how much freedom kids are really allowed to exercise. In part, this is due to another typically accepted idea that kids need to read books that they can read with relative ease to make progress towards reading grade level text. This concept usually trumps and then narrows kids' freedom to exercise choice. Given both typically accepted practices, kids rarely have choice in selecting what they want to read in small group reading. I modified structures of balanced literacy and routines in whole group and small group reading with sessions with kids so that they consistently had various degrees of choice in what they read in whole group, small groups, and independent reading.

Refining my Understanding and Use of Yellow Flags

Before the study, when I worked directly with readers in classrooms or in an intervention setting, I had a tacit understanding of salient behaviors and their impact on student learning. I referred to the behaviors as Yellow Flags and considered them signals that kids might not have developed an efficient and effective reading process. I had organized salient behaviors into three general Yellow Flag categories; Strategy-Calling, Gisty Meaning-Making and Low Affect.

I considered students to be Strategy-Calling when they named a strategic action used to problem-solve a new or unusual word and/or sort out confusions, but did not employ the strategic action, or if they did, it did not result in successful problem solving.

For example, consider students do not know the word coiled in the following sentence. *The snake was coiled at the bottom of the tank* (DeFord, 2014). When attempting to figure out an unknown word, students read past the unknown word, reread, and then comment that rereading did not work. Then, they make comments such as, "See. I read past, but it didn't work. I still don't know the word." The students did not access meaning made available by reading and thinking about the phrase that came after the unknown word as meaningful clues to problem-solve. The phrase *at the bottom of the tank* provides additional meaning support to help the reader understand that the unknown word described what the snake was doing or how it was positioned.

Additionally, there are instances of Strategy-Calling that are different than problem-solving attempts, but still intended to be strategic. They can be observed when listening to a student read and/or when conferring with a student about their process in making book selections. For example, I consider it Strategy-Calling when a reader decides to stop reading in the midst of reading a book in which s/he had been managing the text until that point. However, upon noticing the fifth unknown word s/he stops reading and comments, "I have to put this book back because of the five finger rule". Observations like this indicate that the student has a surface-level understanding of a strategic concept meant to help kids pick books that they can read with relative ease. Other times, students use the five-finger rule ineffectively as a strategy for making their initial book selection for independent reading. In this case, the student is observed opening a book up to a random part of text (does not start at the beginning) and reads one page for the purpose of counting the number of words they cannot read, then decides to keep the book or put it back if s/he reaches five unknown words and comments

accordingly. Selecting books based solely on the concept of accuracy depicts the Yellow Flag named Strategy-Calling.

I considered kids to be Gisty Meaning-Makers if, when engaging in conversation about a text, the student says s/he can't remember, provides vague answers, uses exact snippets of text, appears to focus on providing the "right" answer, cannot remember what happened, provides details that are limited to retelling and predicting and the retelling is mostly efferent-based, and/or inconsistent with the details presented in the text. I also suspect kids are Gisty Meaning-Makers if, while reading aloud the student shows evidence of monitoring for meaning saying, "That doesn't make sense. I forget that word," yet mumbles through confusing or misconstrued parts of text and frequently skips words that interrupt meaning, or frequently inserts words that result in a meaning change. Third, fast reading rates and highly accurate reading suggest Gisty Meaning-Making especially when my attempts to engage the reader in conversation are received as bothersome and/or result in responses indicative of the descriptors already listed above. Finally, I suspect Gisty Meaning-Making when readers are seemingly unaware of misconceptions in their understanding.

In Low Affect, I had lumped together all the observations of readers' general disposition interacting with text evidenced by observations of their affective characteristics regarding attitudes, motivations, and interests. In every case for which I observed kids demonstrate low affect, I noted that they also had constructed a gist understanding of the text.

Across all three categories, I monitored how kids appeared to experience reading events and tried to assess and respond to their general disposition, engagement, and

responses about the act of reading and the text. As I reflected back on this time, my sense was that what the kids and I did together felt "good" to me, and it appeared that kids "felt good" too.

During the study, I realized though that there was more to unpack and make explicit to explain the genuine engagement and pleasurable disposition that occurred when I was teaching and learning with kids. Additionally, I needed to understand more about kids who read words with seemingly relative ease yet continually reported that they did not choose to read and whom I described as disengaged readers. It was at that point that I started using Yellow Flags even more explicitly and intentionally as a scaffold to investigate kids' complete reading experience to include their understanding of text and their affect.

I can now name that together my actions observing and responding to both aspects (kids' understanding of text and their affect) played a vital part in their progress as readers. More specifically, I realized that in almost every interaction responding to kids, my actions demonstrated that in the forefront of my mind, I privileged showing care for their affect and I had not named this before or realized the full impact of doing so. I learned that, I showed consideration and appreciation for whatever they said, did, and appeared to feel while simultaneously working to push their thinking. I can now articulate that in seeking to understand kids interactions more specifically and accurately, by asking kids to explain and elaborate, or by commenting as a co-reader it made our experience pleasurable. Furthermore, it also helped them reflect, self-assess, and refine their understanding as we discussed explanations of everyone's ideas regarding why and what they said, did, and felt. As I followed instances of Yellow Flags more

systematically, I learned that supporting readers in the midst of making sense of text across entire texts was possible and the necessary conditions needed for teaching and learning that is helpful to all kids especially those who do not choose to read for fun and entertainment, have misconceptions about what that feels like, have not yet experienced the fullness of it, and/or need to refine their literal, inferential, and interpretive understandings making sense of text.

Looking more closely into instances of Yellow Flags led me to a new understanding of the relationship between Gisty Meaning-Making and Low Affect. As a result, I expanded the list of Yellow Flags making observations of affect more easily identifiable within classroom interactions. When I did this, I had taken my previously named Gisty-Meaning Making category— focused exclusively on comprehension and integrated the Low Affect category— focused on general readerly disposition. I delineated observations to represent both their comprehension of text together with their affect. Consequently, I created four additional categories that portrayed students' general readerly disposition making sense of text, together with their degree of certainty in the kind of meaning they made, relative to their perception of the purpose for reading. When I did this, I realized that the four new categories together with Gisty Meaning-Making created a continuum. At one end was what I named Reading Aversion, then Lackluster Reading Engagement, followed by Overly Tentative Talk, then Gisty Meaning-Making, and False Confidence at the other extreme. Additionally, I named one other new category focused more predominantly on observations of kids book selection process and named it Halfhearted Book Preferences. In all, I organized observations of readers into seven categories of Yellow Flags.

Given the tentative nature of inquiry and the meaning-making process, deciding which classification an observation signaled was not always definitive. For example, some of the characteristics of Gisty Meaning-Making, False Confidence, and Overly Tentative Talk overlap. However, although the delivery and perceived willingness of the student to revise their understandings, ideas, and interpretations help make a distinction, the classification of the descriptor is not what matters most. Instead, tuning into the observation for the purpose of seeking to understand the student's theory of reading is absolutely necessary and what make cycles of assessment and instruction seamlessly possible.

The shift in my thinking helped me realize that Gisty Meaning-Making and Strategy-Calling reflected a more predominantly efferent stance toward meaning making. And the newly named five categories reflected taking a more predominantly aesthetic stance toward meaning-making bringing new ways of understanding the relevance of kids' feelings about what reading is and does for them into the limelight of reading instruction.

As a result of my study, I realized that my refined conception of Yellow Flags created a scaffold that supported my ability to make observing and responding to my kids' moment-to-moment understandings of text, juxtaposed with their kids' emotional responses toward the actual act of reading, within the act of meaning-making the foundation of reading assessment and instruction with kids. I realized that *the* instructional material necessary (Rosenblatt, 1978) to help kids develop, sustain, and extend a generative theory of reading was at the heart of all seven Yellow Flags.

Halfhearted book preferences. When students select books without enthusiasm, appeared unconcerned, and uninterested in picking books, I refer to that as Half-hearted Book Preferences. Some examples of observations that captured my attention in this category occurred when students selected books based on surface-level attributes such as the picture on the cover or, number of pages, or to be compliant. Typically students that exhibited this Yellow Flag claimed to prefer reading predominantly nonfiction books that were structured so that information could be read and understood in snippets of text, did not have to be read in any particular order, and did not include story elements. Other indications of Halfhearted Book Preferences that prompted inquiry occurred when kids frequently selected books that were too hard yet they claimed that they could and did read them.

Reading aversion. When kids look like and sound like they do not want to read, or they do so reluctantly and/or to be compliant, and do not appear to genuinely enjoy reading independently for a variety of purposes, I now refer to that as Reading Aversion. I consider observations of students pretending to read, putting their heads down, counting pages left, resisting reading books they formerly expressed interest in reading as signals that prompt inquiry. I also consider it Reading Aversion when, during independent reading, a student frequently says, "I forgot my book; I cannot find a book I want to read." and or takes multiple trips to the bathroom, water fountain, and health room.

Other possible signs of Reading Aversion are when a student blames the book for them not liking to read, frequently abandons books, sighs and/or takes deep breaths while reading, talks about unrelated thoughts interrupting their reading, claims to prefer reading certain kinds of books and yet does not read them. I also consider the following

comments indicative of Reading Aversion. "I hate reading. I don't like to read. I don't want to read. I'm not a good reader. Good readers know all the words. I don't like chapter books. I prefer to read in my head."

Lackluster reading engagement. When students' talk about reading seems uninspired, uninterested, or students appear to approach reading as a tedious and boring task, I consider that Lackluster Reading Engagement. Kids blame the book for their lack of interest and motivation to read. They read without evidence of creating responses that should occur within transacting with text. For example, Jordyn explained that perhaps her independent reading book was boring saying, "Maybe whenever you are reading a chapter book and it does not have titles, maybe that's why it is boring."

I also consider the behavior Lackluster Reading Engagement when kids frequently abandon books. I identified this as a pattern during independent reading time in Kacee's classroom. While discussing observations with kids, hoping to gain insights, I noticed that a lot of kids revealed that they put books back before they finished reading them. I followed that lead responsively in conversation. I was not surprised to see everyone in the class admit that they had stopped reading a book at one time or another. However, I was surprised to observe that their overall disposition towards reporting that they "quit reading books all the time" explaining that "the book was boring" appeared that this was perfectly normal and acceptable. Kids in Kacee's class had complete control over picking their book selections, yet it was commonplace to abandon reading books that they selected based on interest. Furthermore, they seemed to believe that interest alone was a perfectly acceptable reason to continually quit reading and *the* main reason for abandoning books they originally were interested in.

Overly tentative talk. When students talk about text in ways that often look like they are thinking about and referring to specific parts of text, yet their ideas are disconnected and/or illogical and they convey an overall disposition that conveys continual uncertainty, I consider that an instance of Overly Tentative Talk. This typically sounds like kids are attempting to "play it safe" and avoid committing to their retelling, inference, or interpretation regardless of whether or not their thinking is consistent with the text. Typically, instances of Overly Tentative Talk emerge and become evident when kids are given time to talk, listen, and respond to one another's ideas. Often times, as the discussion evolves and these kids listen to ideas that are different from theirs, they interject comments that suggest that what they just heard so-and-so say was what they meant. Examples of this stance sound like, "I knew that, but I just forgot; That's what I said." Or they repeat exactly what someone else said as if they did not hear them; or rephrase the same idea; or sound as if they are taking on the role of composing attempting to convince themselves or others why they are right. Often times they preface or end sharing their idea with a hesitant, "Well…, maybe…"

False confidence. When kids act overly assertive, self-assured, and approach text as only having one correct way to understand I consider this False Confidence. I also considered it False Confidence when a student initiates talking about text exuding confidence, yet their response(s) often contain misconceptions and/or are inconsistent with details offered in the text. Furthermore, they are seemingly unaware and appear to resist revising their understandings. Slater demonstrated instances of False Confidence when he claimed that he had a "crystal clear" understanding of how Oscar caught on fire and how it had started explaining, "He stuck his head in the fire. And the kids started the

fire." Slater did not realize that he had misunderstood some things along the way and that there was more to understand. When Nico and Gabe explained that no one had started the fire, Slater held his ground. He had misunderstood the text and yet he was not open to considering other possibilities.

Other observations in which I consider instances of False Confidence occur when students refer to snippets of text in talking about it without extending or supporting what they have to say using their own words; or when presented with details consistent with the text, they resist contemplation and/or disagree with the efferent details, and sometimes may suggest that the author must have made a mistake. Kids that demonstrate instances of False Confidence make comments such as, "These books are too easy; I read better in my head; I only read chapter books."

Re-conceptualized the Role of Context and Reading Engagement

Before the study, I believed that the actions, interactions, and emotions of all the people in our room mattered and worked together to create our context. I had a tacit understanding of how my actions and interactions observing, responding, assessing, facilitating, and reading text with kids and other teachers impacted the role of the context. I was an avid kid-watcher (Goodman, 1978) and paid careful attention to what kids did, said, and felt (and did not) as they made sense of text, selected books, read, talked about the act of reading, and responded to text. I thought that building a friendly, positive, and productive learning community was simple. I acted genuinely as a reader with kids, wanted them to do the same, and I thought a lot about the possible messages my actions sent to them. However, I had not named it as part of my teaching and learning process or

understood the fullness of the impact. As with all my other theoretical shifts, what seemed simple turned out to be complex.

During the study I realized that in our context, by communicating explicitly and implicitly to kids that (a) I learned with and from them, (b) their presence and contributions were necessary and influenced subsequent engagements, and (c) their contributions connected directly to their learning and the learning of others, it created conditions that helped them build agency. In our class, I took an active stance across all our interactions and I expected all people in the room to do the same -listening, talking, reflecting, and considering what they and others thought, did, felt, and working together to understand why. I learned that to help kids interact genuinely and successfully meet expectations required an enormous amount of time engaged in conversations navigating personal and instructional interactions. This was how we developed a caring, respectful, rigorous, all-inclusive learning environment in which we were all teachers and learners. In our context we continually experienced social, emotional, and intellectual successes. Just as importantly, we embraced recognizing differences as opportunities to learn with and from everyone in the room across all interactions and content areas.

As a result of the study, I unpacked understanding how the beliefs and ideas represented in the What Matters list laid the foundation for me to build a classroom context with and for all the people in the room, consistently making time to take care of one another while we engaged as people and learners throughout reading engagements. This required understanding kids' emotions at the interpretive level. I achieved this by creating academic intimacy made possible through embracing personal (social and emotional) interactions within instructional (intellectual) interactions.

I now can name that by creating a context grounded in the beliefs and ideas represented in the What Matters list, Kacee and I created a context that honored the multiplicities and complexities of reading identities. We used the statements in the What Matters list to guide how we set up the room arrangement, designed routines and procedures, planned, assessed, instructed, talked, and engaged in on-going reflection of all those aspects. We interrogated all aspects by checking for alignment and paying attention to signs of dissonance across all our interactions offering choices, planning, assessing, instructing, talking, and providing feedback. Doing so not only supported our ability to create conditions for kids to create, maintain, revise, and refine their own theories of reading, it afforded Kacee and me similar opportunities to name, revise, and refine our own theories about reading, teaching, learning, and being a reader. It made assessment and instruction a fluid process. We interacted in ways that enabled us to continually seek knowing our kids really well by taking both an efferent and aesthetic stance to understand their ideas, perspectives, and emotions as people, readers, and learners. For example, when Kacee and I observed and named that kids were making an abundance of efferent responses to a text being read aloud, we debriefed about how to handle that. We noted that it was not serving the class well as readers, but we were not sure how to proceed. Therefore, we did not formulate a responsive plan that day. Instead, we kept it in the forefront of our mind, letting it resonate until we felt sure about how and when to offer kids explicit support. We discussed possible implications of various instructional moves. We decided that we had to figure out a way to help the class refine the kind of thinking they had in response to reading without sending the message that what they were currently doing was not right or not important. We considered them

"fragile thinkers" when it came to reading for the purpose of fun and entertainment. We could not risk saying something that might make them feel incompetent. We could not risk responding in a way that would shut down their current interactions as they made sense of text. Timing was critical, however, we understood that how and why we took action held potential to lift the quality of their responses or cause them to revert to not thinking and/or not taking the risk to share it in the midst of reading.

To this end, I learned that observations of kids' moment-to-moment understanding of text, combined with their emotional responses toward the actual act of reading, within the act of meaning-making were *the* instructional material (Rosenblatt, 1978) at the foundation of all seven Yellow Flag categories. As a result of refining my understanding of Yellow Flags, I realized that I had re-conceptualized the role of context on reading engagement. Consequently, I now define reading engagement as the synergy between the cognitive/intellectual (kids' comprehension of text) and affective aspects (attitudes, interests, and motivation) of A Complete Reader (Layne, 2009).

The shift in my thinking caused me to question professional development in our field. Learning is messy yet it appears that the majority of professional development presents teaching as perfectly planned mini-lessons that follow a routine structure such as, naming the instructional goal, demonstrating with kids in five to ten minutes, practicing the targeted instructional goal, providing support just above what they can do by themselves rotating through small groups and sometimes work in one-on-one conferences, and voila! Kids follow directions perfectly, engage with grit and determination, can always tell you what they learned today and make a difference in their

learning again tomorrow. This does not help teachers build capacity in him/herself or in their students.

Refined my Ideas about Reading Identity

Before the study, I interrogated my practice intuitively ensuring alignment between theory and practice. I took it personally if my kids did not enjoy being at school, enjoy learning, consistently feel successful, and believe that they were a valuable contributor who impacted the success of our learning community. I understood that the implicit and explicit ways I delivered that message mattered. I never thought or wanted my students to think that not knowing was a deficit. Instead, I believed and wanted them to believe that not knowing held huge possibilities for learning. In my work with kids, I drew from and connected to my childhood experiences as a reader. I shared genuine memories from my past reading life reminiscing about times when reading felt boring, hard, confusing, and eventually revealed that I hated to read in elementary school.

Privately, I recollected that I was a student who asked lots of questions, wanted to learn, worked hard, thought that my understandings and ideas made sense, but teachers quickly deemed them incorrect. More poignantly, I remembered feeling shame, embarrassment, and not smart enough. Teachers inadvertently and repeatedly communicated that my understandings were illogical, wrong, seemingly irritating, and disrupted the forward progression of their lesson. I felt their frustration and did not mean to or want to cause them difficulties. I came to believe that my thoughts and ideas were not valuable so I learned very quickly to be quiet. I did not ever want to make kids feel the way I did in school. Therefore, publically, I spoke candidly with kids sharing my personal experiences, thoughts, ideas, successes, and feelings connected to observations

of their comprehension of text together with the affective aspects of being a reader. In doing so, I valued kids' feelings equally to their understandings, if not more, seeking to understand their theories and beliefs about reading and readers. My identities as a reader, learner, and teacher were grounded in my experiences and heavily influenced my actions and interactions whether I realized it explicitly or not; however, I had not named this or understood the impact.

As a result of my study, I understand reading identities as informing the theory (generative or not generative) a reader holds about reading (Stephens, et al., 2012). Reading identities are evidenced by the kind and quality of constructed meaning in tandem with the reader's desire and perception about what reading is and does (Halliday, 1975) at that particular time, and their beliefs in their ability to engage successfully (Johnston, 2004) with text and experience reading pleasure.

I can now articulate that my refined understandings of the role and impact that my past, present, and future identities had in my work with readers made all the difference both implicitly and explicitly. My study demonstrates a direct connection between theories, beliefs, desires, and the theories of reading identities, all of which influence and are influenced by verbal and non-verbal actions, inaction, interactions, dispositions, emotions, intentions, purposes, and perceptions that occur and are bound to that specific context at that particular time. Reading identities represent what a person believes about reading, the function it serves, the level of confidence in their ability to be successful, the form of reading pleasure, and their desire to engage grounded in his/her perception of the purpose. All kids make meaning when they read; however the kind and quality of

meaning kids construct is dependent on the enacted theories, beliefs, and desires of all the identities as they interact within the context.

During the study, I realized that the reader modifies their expectations of the text, how and why they interact, and the kind of meaning made, based on their belief in their ability to engage successfully and experience reading pleasure. When I acted as co-reader and co-facilitator supporting readers simply to read for fun and entertainment, constructing understandings that were consistent with details offered in the text and encouraged multiple interpretations, kids were successful over and over again and experienced reading pleasure. Interacting with texts and kids, focused on helping them actively participate to make sense of text in ways that felt social, fun, entertaining, and expected approximations, contemplation, and revision of understandings using evidence from the text resulted in readers that created high quality literal, inferential, and interpretative kinds of understandings as a consequence of being immersed in a context whereby accessing efferent and aesthetic stances fluidly, effectively, and efficiently was how we spent our time together.

The What Matters list provided a structure for believing and acting in ways that accepted everyone for who they were and how they were, while simultaneously trying out others ways and reasons for doing, being, and experiencing new ways of feeling or understanding emotions. I now understand that by drawing from the multiplicities of my own identities being a reader, student, classroom teacher, interventionist, reading coach, researcher, mother, friend, sister, Aunt, and learner that embraced *being* with and caring for kids, I interacted genuinely, vulnerably, and risked appearing incompetent. However, instead of viewing not knowing as a deficit, I helped kids understand that our current

ways of feeling, being, acting, and understanding as readers are not good/bad, right/wrong, or static, but rather complex, fluid. I helped kids discover that there was more to reading and readerly lives than readability issues such as text level, text complexity, decodability, and surface-level understandings regarding interest, motivation, grit, endurance, rigor, or attitudes. As a past insecure, but successful reader, and a current confident and successful teacher, I knew that kids' emotions impacted their engagement and provided insight into understanding the sense they made reading text.

I now can also articulate that when I gathered observations of students, I acted as a researcher, reader, teacher, and learner fluidly as we interacted in-the-midst of reading to explore a variety of conditions to learn about their theories of reading relative to the first three statements on the What Matters list. When I listened and watched kids' verbal and nonverbal cues acting as readers, I genuinely empathized with them as people, students, readers, and learners. This was made possible through drawing on various aspects of my past, present, and future identities acting as a researcher, reader, teacher, and learner. With this said, I do not mean to imply that identities are static. I recognize that my beliefs about who and how I am, are complex and in flux. I now realize that I enact one identity more predominantly than others from one moment to the next depending on the sense I make and the purpose it will serve at that time. Each identity provides different lenses to understand the multiplicities and complexities of kids' identities at a particular moment specific to those conditions. Acting fluidly considering multiple perspectives affords the development of foresight.

My experiences and the emotions were reflective of my identities and influenced my work with Kacee and the class. For example, in the conversation with Kacee's class

when they reported that they frequently abandoned books and blamed the book for their boredom, I showed empathy by enacting multiple identities as a learner, researcher, teacher, and reader which supported my ability to connect and communicate genuine understanding and appreciation for their honesty. Doing so, offered kids validation, invited them into the process of learning more about boredom together, and opened space for them to consider new possibilities and refine understandings about the roles of motivation, interest, and attitude in their identities as people, readers, and learners. I learned and helped kids discover that we could embrace dissonance as an opportunity to learn that held potential to reinvent how we were, how others saw us, and shape how we wanted to be seen by others. Emotions are at the center of everything we do and think and evoke emotional responses about who we think we are and what we believe we can do. More importantly, the impact of the entire context depended on interacting with kids in ways that helped them to be seen and accepted for who they are and how they are which comes through nurturing relationships organized around a common theory made available in our conversations. I now understand the impact of the time that Kacee and I invested having conversations with the kids to implicitly and explicitly demonstrate that we valued their thoughts, actions, and feelings as people, readers, and learners. I now can name that the way Kacee and I talked and the content of it communicated that we expected and trusted our kids to take an active stance talking, thinking, listening, and responding, to understand what they thought. And no matter what, they might envision new ways of being, understanding, and leaning. In essence, I helped kids name and notice instances of alignment and/or dissonance interrogating their expressed and/or private beliefs, practices, and desires regarding reading and readers.

I am now certain that Yellow Flags provide windows into understanding kids' identities (theories, beliefs, desires); salient observations provide insights into considering what kids believe about reading, themselves as readers, the kind of meaning they make, how they feel, level of confidence, and their perception of the purpose reading serves specific to varied contexts. Thinking about salient observations of kids in the act of reading helps me now understand and name that kidwatching (Goodman, 2002) honors paying attention to their identities. Furthermore, I now understand how the flux, multiplicities, and complexities of my past, current, and future identities were at work with everyone else's identities in the room. Altogether the synergy created a safe space for being people, learners, and readers that offered multiple interpretations without fear of feeling that they might be wrong or not good enough. I sought to consistently create conditions that prevented kids from experiencing emotions that could cause them to shut down or withdraw. I now understand the full impact of how the flux of my former, current, and future identities as a learner, reader, teacher, coach, and researcher enabled me to anticipate or identify instances in which kids' might have felt shame, embarrassment, or not good enough. The culmination of my feelings and experiences informed *the why* that undergirded my responses, actions, and interactions as I carefully navigated conversations in ways that helped kids build agency.

I made what was formally tacit explicit. I am certain, confident, and now realize that I approached teaching and learning from a stance that privileged noticing and seeking to understand kids as people and learners in order to know them within a context consistent with the beliefs and statements represented by the What Matters list. I now understand that knowing kids comes through considering the complexities of their

intersecting identities as people, learners, and readers within and across varied contexts. To accomplish this, I totally immersed myself in getting to know kids similarly to how I approach getting to know characters in texts with my students. I observe carefully to what they do, say, appear to feel; consider multiple explanations to gain insights; employ both the efferent and aesthetic stances fluidly as I consider multiple interpretations; and respond in kind believing in the possibilities of not yet. The instructional data I used are in the actions, interactions, and emotions experienced as a reader, teacher, learner, and transacted with my kids' enacted identities as people, readers, and learners. I used *that knowing* to build curriculum with, and for, kids. The What Matters list provided a frame and stimulus for observations and reflections for Kacee and me to use, refine, expand, and integrate knowing our kids as people within noticing and responding to the complexities and multiplicities of our kids' reading identities. Paying attention to kids' theories and beliefs about who they are as people and learners within reading cannot be separated. Reading identity is about more than just reading and readers. Building theory and beliefs as people, learners, and readers occurs within acting as readers diversifying authentic purposes in which kids have opportunities to develop, sustain, and/or extend reading identities. It encompasses knowing one another as people, readers, and learners under a variety of conditions across contexts and using that as instructional data. I noticed when my kids were genuinely happy, engaged in their learning, felt while reading and when they were not so that we could modify conditions leaning into believing everyone into the fruition of possibilities of not yet. Therefore, I consistently and continually sought to understand how and why kids felt relative to what they did as people, readers, and learners considering multiple interpretations above and beyond what

I already thought reasonable. This created a context that provided effective, efficient, and responsive cycles of assessment and instruction. Furthermore, it required all the people in the room to commit to using language as a tool (Johnston, 2004), commit to engaging in conversations seeking to know and understand one another. We all committed to responding thoughtfully, providing care, acting respectfully, accepting approximations and crafting responses that communicated and encouraged active participation. Doing so, positioned everyone in the room to experience vulnerability and to have the courage to interrogate what we thought we knew and, understood. It made it possible to believe everyone in the room into being socially, emotionally, and intellectually competent.

As part of this, I sought to understand how the conditions under which we were interacting made them feel as a person, learner, and reader. In doing so, I made my explicit what had been my tacit understandings about how the flux of identities worked, shaping and being shaped by one another, as they simultaneously intersected with the context, curriculum, assessment, and instruction. It became even more clear to me that the love and desire that I genuinely felt for kids to always feel accepted and successful did not just explain my passion for teaching and learning— it explained my ability to empathize with the multiple possibilities of my kids' various identities.

The research on reading identity seems to treat reading identity as if it is isolated from practical classroom instruction, and/or suggests that only our most talented teachers are capable of understanding how to support student identities. For example, the research on reading identity seems to send a message that the impact of a few factors on reading identity such as, cultural relevance, life experiences, and choice in book selection are more critical to foreground than another, rather than something that is impacted by the

entire context that is created. I now understand that if teachers want to help kids build, sustain, or extend their identities as readers they have to create classroom conditions grounded in a consistent theory. My study suggests that the What Matters list is a structure which helps teachers develop and implement a systematic approach for naming, noticing, shaping and being shaped by their current beliefs and understandings about teaching, learning, readers, reading and embraces, honors, explores, and validates the multiplicities of reading identities.

Implications

The findings of this study, discussed in Chapter 5, and the theoretical shifts addressed above suggest that to be effective, teachers of readers should operate from a theory about themselves by naming their beliefs. They should also pay close attention to kids' theories. This creates a context that is supportive to kids as readers. Teachers naming of their beliefs, their developing understanding of students' beliefs and the process of creating a context all co-occur with reflection. For example, when a teacher notices what a kid says, it impacts the teachers' thinking about their own theory, the kid's theory, and simultaneously leads to new curricular decisions impacting what everyone does in their context.

In order for this process to work seamlessly, teachers should understand that everything they and their kids do (efferent) and feel (affect/aesthetic) interacting with one another impacts relationships and reading instruction. Consequently, every action, interaction, and feeling experienced provides the instructional material (Rosenblatt, 1938, 1965, 1968, 1976, 1995) upon which teachers need to reflect. When they name what they do and feel, notice what kids do and appear to feel, and continuously reflect with

practitioners that can support them with embracing their Productive Struggle— naming beliefs that explain their observations, it creates a synergistic context that then comes back and reshapes all of those aspects. Engaging in this way makes everything teachers and kids do and feel as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners available for the continuous transformation of all those things. In this way, teachers interrogate their current theories juxtaposed with their practice as they notice and name looking for alignment or dissonance which leads to a new decision about what they do in their context. Therefore, it helps them shape new theories about themselves and their students.

To create and maintain this synergistic context, teachers should:

- organize their practices around their beliefs, keeping relationships in the foreground
- understand the importance and impact of interactions and use that to modify practice
- help kids respond efferently and aesthetically to develop an understanding of the impact on comprehension and reading engagement
- help kids explore and experience various forms of reading pleasures
- support kids' engagement in a Productive Struggle.

Organize their practices around their beliefs, keeping relationships in the foreground. Teachers have a tendency to engage in practices that they have not named and/or examined. I believe, instead, they should operate from an informed theory that reflects a research-based understanding of the reading process, reading instruction, and the role of relationships in learning. Their practice communicates their beliefs and should be named explicitly by noticing what they think, do, and feel across the entire

instructional day. When teachers interrogate their practice to understand which beliefs are supported by their practice and which might not yet be fully represented, they will refine their understandings learning more about why they do what they do and be able to name the impact. This requires reflection and analysis seeking to understand how they think and feel about themselves as readers and reading and why it matters. If teachers do not understand why they are doing and feeling what they do and feel in their practice, they risk sending mixed messages to their kids about readers and reading. For example, a teacher that engages kids in reading acts that result in reading words emphasizing accuracy, whereby they create a gist understanding, overlook emotions, focus mostly on specific details, negate personal interactions and multiple interpretations of text, risks sending messages to kids that reading is mostly impersonal and privileges thinking in "right and wrong" ways. Naming beliefs and reflecting on them is a recursive and synergistic process that does not end; the teacher constantly and consistently remains actively engaged in refining his/her practice.

I had the advantage of having spent three years in professional development in which we used what we read, did and talked about in order to form a theory, a theory of What Matters. Other districts can provide similar opportunities for teachers or teachers can create those opportunities for themselves by forming learning communities. Alternately, working with a peer group, teachers can use our What Matters list as a starting point for building their own. Once teachers have defined for themselves what characterizes students who are positioned to progress as readers, they can use their beliefs to assess their curriculum to determine whether or not they are creating the conditions that will help children acquire these characteristics. For example, Kacee and I defined

reading as an active process that should make kids think, want to say something, experience emotions, and understand why we did so. Then we tried to interact in ways that were consistent with our beliefs. We then debriefed with each other, talking about the messages we sent relative to the messages we wanted to send. We reflected regularly to check for times when we sent a message not consistent with our beliefs. Based on our definition of reading, were we encouraging kids to talk while reading free from judgment about how they acted, interacted, and felt as we made meaning of text, rather than focusing on completing the reading task, practicing a skill, or answering questions correctly? We reflected on observations of kids' reading engagement evidenced by their disposition and content of their talk, rather than focusing kids' attention on minutes or pages read, strategies, or "right" answers. When kids needed to problem-solve, were they aware, what action did they take, and what were their results? In all cases, we identified salient patterns based on our reflections and made decisions about next steps.

My study shows the importance for teachers to know their students really well and I consider it is just as important for me to know the teachers I work with really well too. Therefore, in my building as coach, I will build relationships with teachers while simultaneously getting to know them as readers, teachers, and learners through providing them support with planning, assessing, and instructing. I will begin getting to know teachers by asking them to complete a survey to learn about what they do for fun, their hobbies, reading lives, interests, preferences, as well as their teaching interests and preferences. Doing so will launch a beginning inquiry into understanding what they believe about reading, readers, reading assessment and instruction, and their students as readers and learners. I will use the data from the survey to inform subsequent planning,

assessing, and instructing moves with teachers. Therefore, protected time with teachers on a regular consistent basis is vital to make this process for teaching and learning effective, efficient, and successful. In this way, I can differentiate for teachers engaging them in ways that honors their expertise, integrates demonstration, responsive to their desires, requires their active participation, and builds the very context with them that has proven successful for kids.

Understand the importance and impact of interactions and use that to modify practice. My study demonstrates that every action and interaction simultaneously sends implicit and explicit messages to kids communicating who and what I think about them and their ability to be successful. More importantly, the total impact of the decisions made before, during, and apart from the entire context impacts and influences how and what kids believe about themselves as people, learners, readers, and their value. It simultaneously sheds light on what those who make the decisions believe about teaching and learning. The total impact of the context is grounded in the actions that organize it, the interactions, and the relationships among all the people in the room. Our actions and interactions position, influence, and shape how kids see themselves and how others see them; communicate acceptance and value for who they are and how they are (Gee, 2008, 2010, 2012); create relationships; and make theories about learning, reading, and being readers available.

Teachers should understand the importance and impact of interactions on relationships and learning. Personal and instructional interactions work together fluidly and should not be thought of as separate. Kids need to know that their feelings, thoughts, current ways of engaging with text, and acting as readers matter. When teachers

genuinely seek to know and understand their kids personally and instructionally, kids feel validated, accepted, and safe. More importantly, it sends messages that help shift the focus of their interactions away from talking about their ideas and understandings from a "right versus wrong" stance. Instead, interacting in these ways for these reasons enables the teacher to understand the kind of meaning kids make, their attitudes, interests, and motivations while reading and regarding reading. In order for teachers to be effective, they need to attend simultaneously to both the efferent and aesthetic, the instructional and personal aspects of reading and readers. To accomplish this, teachers not only need to know the content (in this study, reading) but they also need to know and show care for their students personally as people. Teachers need to take time to talk with kids seeking to nurture relationships by developing an understanding and appreciation of why their kids think and feel what they do while reading, their abilities to read, their criteria for what they consider successful reading, and the conditions under which they choose to engage and experience pleasure. All teachers' verbal and nonverbal forms of communication must demonstrate respect, curiosity, and kindness. Interest, attitude, and motivation for reading are complex, shape, and are shaped by both personal and instructional interactions. This means that classrooms should be intimate places where teachers spend time talking with their students to know them as people and treat them as such. How's the baby sister? Is the new dog still barking a lot? Is your mom feeling better? How was your weekend? Creating personal relationship makes learning possible. Instructional moments though are also personal moments. They are times when teachers get to know how children are thinking, responding, and making sense of who they are and how they are which is made available in conversations. Teachers then use that

knowledge to inform their responses which impacts their practice. Perhaps teachers learn, as Kacee and I did, that a number of students focus on the efferent and so miss key aspects of texts. That may result in one or more different kinds of conversations— whole group, small group and/or one-on-one. These instructional conversations are personal, reader-to- reader conversations in which the more experienced reader (the teacher) offers suggestions to less experienced readers (the students). This combination of personal and instructional may be inconsistent with current school structures, but if teachers are going to be able to help kids progress, our study suggests they need to know kids and respond authentically. In this way, kids know that their feelings, thoughts and ways of engaging with text matter and become receptive to instructional suggestions. The alternative – depersonalized instruction – may cause students to experience unpleasant emotions such as embarrassment, anger, frustration, and/or shame— conditions which shut down learning.

In my setting, as a coach, I have been thinking about the implications of team teaching. My teachers have limited flexibility to modify their classroom schedules and that causes them to feel that they do not have time to talk personally and truly be present with their kids within and between instructional blocks. Team-teaching in my school means that third and fourth graders spend a mere two hours of instructional time with two different teachers and that time can be interrupted by other pullout services such as additional reading instruction, speech, special education services, and English language learning groups. Teachers in my school are talented, passionate, want the best for our students, and work hard to meet their needs. However, they do not have the time or feel free to take time to be fully present with their kids, to act responsively as needed and

desired, to nurture their social, emotional, and intellectual needs. The result depersonalizes instruction, disrupts relationship building, and causes everyone to frequently experience frustrated and to experience burnout. Teachers need to feel the freedom to be fully present with kids from one moment to the next throughout the entire day. Quality time interacting genuinely personally and instructionally to show value for how one another feel, to know kids better, and support them with their feelings and relationships within the classroom community is a form of meaning making. If kids are not learning about multiple perspectives making sense of people and circumstances in their world to practice developing an understanding of the impact of actions in the world, how can we expect them to value doing that with printed text? Teachers are left with no choice but to tell kids that they do not have time to listen. Doing so causes teachers to miss the seemingly little things that are important to kids and sends messages that their feelings are not important. Scheduling matters and positions teachers to have flexibility or restrict their ability to make sense of and support their kids as people— socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Teachers need flexibly with how they spend their time with kids so that they can provide timely, relevant, support when kids genuinely need it. For example, teachers do not have dedicated time to enact calm, harmonious, all-inclusive morning meeting rituals and routines that contribute to building the foundation for acting, interacting, and responding aesthetically to one another in the learning community. Teachers need dedicated time to embrace and support interacting with one another as people to nurture relationships. When teachers' schedules do not have flexibility the morning meeting can feel rushed, or enacted from a predominantly efferent stance as a task to check-off, focused on an end result, and/or an isolated prescriptive

solution to problem-solving when issues arise. Where do teachers have time to help kids wrestle with in-action emotional responses to people, reading, relationships, and learning? Think of the emotional and social impact for a student who has to miss their morning meeting time to attend a pullout supplemental service. This sends unintended messages to kids leaving them to understand that they are missing out, their contribution to the community is not important, their difference needs fixing (deficit), their differences (how they are) are more important than who they are, and being with the class, and their feelings about missing out are not important. In an attempt to make the school's master schedule work best from a business standpoint, it limits the opportunities for teachers to interact in ways that give teachers time to truly embrace and engage in having genuine conversations with kids showing value for them as people first and foremost. Emotional well-being is directly related to personal and instructional interactions that occur within instruction and should be considered part of instruction.

Help kids respond efferently and aesthetically to develop an understanding of the impact on comprehension and reading engagement. My study suggests that teachers should understand that reading requires the reader to access the efferent and aesthetic stances flexibly and fluidly as they make meaning in a way that is personally relevant and satisfying for them. Furthermore, each aspect influences the other and impacts comprehension and engagement and their beliefs about what reading and being a reader mean. My new definition of reading engagement understood as the synergy between the cognitive/intellectual (kids' comprehension of text) and affective aspects (attitudes, interests, and motivation) of A Complete Reader (Layne, 2009) can support teachers' ability to use observations of kids affect as a window into their understanding of

text. Teachers can help kids engage with text in ways that support them with learning that reading is not about right and wrong thinking, but instead it is individual and revision is a natural part of the process in which we cross-check the kind of understanding made (literal, inferential, interpretive) for consistency with details offered in the text (quality).

Teachers can do this by paying attention to the evocation of their own emotional responses to observations of their kids comprehension and engagement to create new insights understanding their readers' actions and feelings. If teachers expect kids to interact with text in this way then they must interact with their students in the same way making sense of the kind of meaning they make seeking to understand their engagement and belief in their ability to do so successfully. To accomplish this, in my work I discovered that reading entire texts together in whole group and small group was necessary to create the conditions for kids to talk candidly and to listen carefully to their genuine responses withholding judgment. When kids appeared disengaged, it opened up the possibilities for us to talk about why. When they reported that they did not like reading, thought it was boring, or did not want to do it, I pushed myself to develop new understandings to explain what might be causing kids to experience said feelings within my control, rather than accepting interpretations that were not. For example, interest and readability together are not the only explanation for observations of disengaged readers. Teachers can help kids understand that readers take actions that support their ability to create and maintain interest supporting their ability to learn more about the relationship between comprehension and interest. My study demonstrates that when teachers help kids explore the idea that boredom could be a sign that they do not really understand what they are reading, or consider that they might have a limited understanding of the text,

kids expectations of reading engagement shifts. Teachers must be present with kids as they are making meaning to understand what kids are thinking, not yet thinking, feeling, and experiencing. When teachers experience the specifics of the reading event with them, they are positioned to gain new insights that explain boredom, dislike, and to support readers responsively in-action navigating conversations to ensure refinement and/or extension of the kind and/or quality of meaning made. The affective aspects of readers are typically considered invisible, however, they are made visible through careful observations assessing how kids engage relative to the understanding they create. Kids' comprehension of text should not be analyzed separately without understanding how and why they felt about the reading task and in response to it during the actual reading event. In Kacee's class, we observed kids interests, attitudes, and motivations for reading to be in great shape at the beginning of a text. They picked their book, it was a book they could read with relative ease, and they expressed wanting to read it yet, during the reading event all three aspects waivered. I learned that in actuality I had been experiencing text (text as book and text as student) in the process of reading afforded multiple opportunities to notice and respond genuinely shaping and being shaped by engagement (reading engagement defined as the combination of comprehension AND emotions/affect).

I have been thinking about the implications of the relationship between balanced literacy structures and the Gradual Release of Responsibility (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) for the teachers with whom I work. Teachers often develop an understanding that read aloud, shared, guided, and independent reading structures represent the progression of the gradual release of responsibility. However, it is equally important to understand

that the Gradual Release of Responsibility occurs within each structure and requires modification of the actions and interactions talking in the midst of reading. Teachers can modify the structures by intentionally and explicitly interacting in ways that make the reading event feel conversational. Taking a conversational approach into each structure affords teachers opportunities to refine their observational skills as they interact with kids and the text acting as facilitator and co-reader in a fluid-like manner as they make decisions about when and how to inquire and/or offer support. More importantly, interacting from this stance creates a context that reinforces the idea that reading and being a reader requires enacting a variety of actions that are directly connected to their in-action, personal thoughts. When the teacher carefully crafts language seeking to understand the students' reading engagement (defined as comprehension and affect), using conversation as a tool, h/she demonstrates value for individual interpretations, engages kids in ways that make self-assessment and revision (if necessary to be consistent with the details presented in the text) a natural part of the reading process, and provides on-going opportunities to learn more about how, what, and why kids say, do, and feel they way they do when they act as readers in the action of reading. In this way, teachers are helping kids engage with text in ways that support them in the belief that reading is not about right and wrong thinking, but instead it is individual and revision is a typical part of the process in which we cross-check the kind of understanding made (literal, inferential, interpretive) for consistency with details offered in the text (quality).

In my setting as a coach, I can help teachers refine and extend the meaning they make of their kid's actions, interactions, and feelings during the reading event as well as to support them in crafting responsive language to help them inquire further more

specifically and intentionally, and/or help navigate focused instructional conversations (Stephens, in print) with kids in-action.

Help kids explore and experience the various kinds of reading pleasures. Teachers need to understand the kinds of reading pleasures their students already experience, how they define reading pleasure, explore possible misconceptions, and create opportunities to envision and discover new possibilities. When teachers understand the relationship between their kids' perceptions of the purpose for reading and observations of their reading engagement, they will learn that comprehension and affect cannot be separated. One informs the other and inquiring and responding to observations of both will lead to disrupting the prevalence of disengaged readers. Teachers can use Wilhelm's concept of the five forms of reading pleasures to figure out which form of pleasure dominates various aspects of their personal reading life and their kids' readerly lives. To do so, teachers must unpack the complexities of their own reading experiences and engage in having reflective conversations seeking to understand why they feel the way they do. They can work with their coach or other peers that are willing and able to push one another's current understandings to develop new interpretations that they may not have previously considered. To learn more about the varying role of reading pleasure and its relationship to comprehension, teachers should experience whole texts with kids in the midst of reading with them across all structures of ELA. Just as teachers' beliefs and practices are often out of alignment, so are kids'. When teachers consider the conditions under which various form of reading pleasures are brought into the foreground, they can begin to think differently about the impact what they ask kids to do as readers has on the reading experience. Furthermore, it positions teachers to discover

and/or refine their understandings of the impact that perceptions have on the reading events.

My study provides evidence that children have varying conceptions of what it means to read for pleasure. For people who do not identify as readers that read for play pleasure, Wilhelm's work can help teachers understand misconceptions that they and their kids might have about it that is not serving them well. Kids reported that they do not read for the kind of pleasure Wilhelm named as play pleasure (and which I refer to as for the purpose of fun and entertainment), however they may be confusing other forms of reading pleasure as immersive reading pleasure explaining that they experience the "lost in a text" kind of pleasure reading an informational text. In these cases, the purpose is influenced by the dominant function and impacts the resulting pleasure. In both instances, the reader claims to experience being completely taken in by reading the text. However, could it be that the source of the pleasure is predominantly served by work, inner work, intellectual, or social pleasure?

When teachers help make their kids' feelings about the act of reading and in response to reading explicit, it supports exploring the various forms of reading pleasures (Wilhelm, 2017). This involves assisting kids with seeking to understand relationships between their perception of the purpose for reading juxtaposed with the kind of reading pleasure they think they are experiencing or might not yet experience. For example, it is a commonly accepted practice for teachers to allow kids to self-select books to read for pleasure and assign reading work with it. There are varied explanations used to justify doing so, such as, holding students accountable, gathering proof that students read, and assessing comprehension. However, the dominant purpose for reading foregrounds

completing the work, rather than interacting with text in ways to focus on reading for the purpose of fun and entertainment. If readers are like Serena, and experience work pleasure reading, they may have misconceptions about what immersive "getting lost in a book" kind of reading for fun and entertainment feels like. Teachers can help kids experience what it feels like to get lost in a book and consider doing so as an instructional goal. It's typically accepted to refer to kids who read words with high accuracy and at a fast rate with limited understanding of text as word-callers. It has been my experience that these children typically do not report that they love to read for the pure fun of it and they also do not choose to read just for the fun of it when they have free time. If we want kids to realize this new purpose for reading than teachers have to help kids experience the possibility so they know and believe it can exist for them. Helping kids to interact with text aesthetically for the purpose of experiencing it so that it results in play pleasure (Wilhelm, 2017) requires simulating that with kids in the midst of reading in ways that do not feel like instruction. It is how we will get kids to understand beyond the text and create varied interpretations that are supported by the text. Students who can read, but do not choose to do it need different instructional scaffolds to support them in learning how to interact with text differently. It may be that as long as kids are expected to produce a product as a result of reading instead of as a natural part of the process teachers are unintentionally contributing to perpetuating reading for a mostly efferent purpose. Aside from honoring interest, what are teachers doing differently in instruction across all structures of balanced literacy to offer kids new ways to help kids understand what the aesthetic stance has to offer their meaning-making process? Readers adopt the stance which is appropriate given their perception of the purpose for reading.

I find myself thinking about the implications of my teachers' various identities– especially as teachers, readers, and learners. The multiplicities, complexities, and flux of all their identities impact curricular plans, assessment, instruction, and the kind of reading pleasures made available in their context. Teachers' willingness to be vulnerable, like kids, varies and depends on strong and safe relationships. In my work as coach, I need protected, regular time to interact with teachers and text in across varied structures such as: with the whole faculty, small group grade levels, and one-on-one, as well as, with the teacher and their whole class, small group, and one-on-one. Within every structure, we will be building relationships as we create a context that honors everyone's expertise, explores, and expands their understandings about the kinds of reading pleasures (Wilhelm, 2017) by engaging in conversations to reflect on knowing themselves, their kids, and their identities as people, readers, and learners within planning, assessment, and instruction. In doing so, I hope our interactions will inspire teachers to help their kids explore, experience, and consider all forms of reading pleasures as possibilities in their reading lives. When teachers engage in reflection about the purpose, pleasure, and reasons they read it will support them in learning how to help their kids do the same. Teachers in other contexts can do this too. For example, they can begin by reading and talking about characters in books that present a wide range of how people experience reading and being a reader in the world.

Support kids' engagement in a productive struggle. Teachers should take responsibility helping kids embrace their Productive Struggles in positive ways that celebrate uncertainty without making kids feel or appear incompetent. On the other side of success is failure. Failure evokes negative emotions which according to Newkirk

(2017) is the enemy of learning. My study demonstrates how teachers can interact with kids in ways that celebrate approximations, and then use those understandings to refine their thinking by having conversations that Carefully Navigate Productive Struggles. I learned that in response to observations of Yellow Flags, I crafted language in ways that celebrated revision as typical ways of engaging with text to create our understanding and as a process, helping kids and teachers come to understand that it's not about right versus wrong and there are no quick fixes to help kids progress as readers. Instead, embracing a process oriented stance reading with kids creates a gentle entryway for kids to consider new ways of acting as a reader, new reasons for reading, and that when they realized they did not know or understand something, that was a sign to embrace because they could be getting ready to learn something new or understand it in a new way.

Teachers must come to terms with the subtle, implicit, and sometimes obvious, explicit ways their actions and interactions unintentionally cause kids to feel shame and consequently shuts down engagement interfering with opportunities to learn. When teachers employ Careful Navigation across all interactions whether there is a Productive Struggle to embrace or not, they are communicating respect, value, appreciation, that is free from judgment which works proactively to protect kids from feeling embarrassed or shamed on purpose. When teachers engage in conversations with kids consistently taking the time to employ the characteristics of Careful Navigation it helps kids interact similarly, nurtures relationships, and creates a safe context in which teachers and kids will be more likely to interact in ways that allow them to refine the sense they make.
In my work with learners, tall and small (Mills, H., & Donnelly, A. 2001), I think about the implications of learning and emotions. When I teach demonstration lessons or co-

teach in classrooms, I communicate to kids that we all depend on one another to learn and that requires each person to participate and embrace a feeling of discomfort that I now call a *productive struggle***.** I do this explicitly using intentional language and implicitly - putting social structures in place, making choices available to students during instruction, and referring specifically to what kids do, say, and appear to feel. Enacting this authentically requires careful planning and responsiveness and reminds me of Dweck's (2006) work regarding the growth-mindset and Burkins and Yaris' 2016 idea called "productive effort" (p. 6). Naming the thinking work people do as a Productive Struggle, communicates the value in putting forth effort that might feel difficult, confusing, and/or uncomfortable and which has the potential to evoke feelings that create social and emotional risk. It also positions the learner to understand that if they choose to take a stance that allows them to temporarily push aside ideas of "right versus wrong" they might create new understandings and simultaneously discover new ways to learn during the experience. This requires teachers to invest an enormous amount of time encouraging kids to talk open-endedly about what they have to say and helping them participate in genuine conversations about what they said so they become comfortable with articulating their moment-to-moment understandings. As a result of the having conversations, students listen, reflect, consider, and can choose to then revise. When kids interact and act in these ways they are positioned to discover that productive struggle is how we learn and can sometimes feel uncomfortable. When teachers refine their language, actions, and interactions with and for kids helping them try out new ways of interacting with text and one another, this process creates conditions under which every participant in the room

can create more effective and efficient literal, inferential and interpretative understandings of what they read and how they read.

Teachers can use my list of Yellow Flags as a scaffold for noticing and naming (Johnston, 2003) salient observations of their kids' readerly actions (and/or inaction) during the process of constructing meaning-making to learn more about the relationship among the kind and quality of meaning made, readerly actions attempted (or not), and levels of interest and engagement. Reading coaches and other professional learning communities can reflect and discuss observations of their kids' comprehension and affect grounded in the specific details of what their kids did, said, and appeared to feel when kids listened to text, selected books, read and talked about their reading. Together, they can share new ways of responding to kids, interpreting observations, and crafting explicit language to refine assessment, instruction, and curricular decision-making. When teachers begin listening and watching even more carefully than they already do to identify salient observations and think with a peer to develop new ideas for next steps in response to kids' misconceptions, limited understandings, and/or low affect, they will learn more about how to provide effective feedback to support their kids through their productive struggles.

When teachers actively participate seeking to understand the relationship between their practice, beliefs, and enacted identities on the job it requires more time on the front end, but saves time in the long run. Time is the biggest commodity of which we never have enough. Therefore, in my role as a coach, my goal for my time with teachers is the same as with kids. I want to know my teachers really well, and I need them to know me. I want them to know that I believe that together we can create a learning community that

nurtures relationships while simultaneously refining our practices that result in positive social, emotional, and academic outcomes for kids. To achieve this, similarly to what works for kids, our time together must be responsive. Their practice and sense teachers make of their kids as readers and learners cannot be understood apart from their own reading lives, histories, habits, and experiences learning. For example, it matters what kind of reader a teacher identifies as being and they take time to reflect on the impact of their identities on their instruction. A teacher who identities as someone that reads for fun and entertainment may interact with their students and text very differently than a teacher who does not. However, in either case, their readerly actions may or may not be reflected in their practice, awareness of alignment is the first step to opening up new possibilities for all identities and impacts teaching and learning.

Limitations and Lingering Questions

In this study, my theoretical frame influenced data collection, analysis and interpretations. Because of my roles as a teacher, interventionist, reading coach, and response to intervention specialist at the school in which I collected data, I had previously established relationships with Kacee and many of the student participants before the study began. Although this was a positive aspect in terms of trust, it impacted my interpretation of the data and the story I told even though I used peer debriefing and member checks to minimize limitations. While the small number of participants afforded depth, the findings might not hold true for the general populations.

As a result of this study, I learned a lot and now have many new questions. For example, how best to help teachers gather assessment data including my new conception of reading engagement (defined as comprehension and affect) and Miscue Analysis

(Goodman, 1965) as well as, assess the kind and quality of understanding made, across all structures of balanced literacy to understand the theories that their students hold? Furthermore, I wonder how best to support teachers with acting responsively in-the-midst of reading across all structures of balanced literacy? I also wonder how best to help teachers establish authentic intimate relationships with every child and create learning communities that position reading as play pleasure and not always work pleasure (Wilhelm, 2017)? How best to support teachers so that they will consider, refine, extend, and genuinely experience all forms of reading pleasure (Wilhelm, 2017) with their kids across all grades in our elementary school? In my work supporting teachers with helping their kids develop, sustain, or extend reading identities, how is best to support them with interrogating their practices, beliefs, multiplicities and complexities of their own reading identities? How can I share my new understandings with my district leaders and what impact will our collaboration have on teaching and learning for teachers and kids across a wider audience? And finally, perhaps the wondering I am most passionate about is, how best to help teachers give themselves permission and/or the confidence to slow down and engage with their students personally within instruction to create classroom communities that will invite, ignite, refine, and extend the insights and understandings of all the people, readers, and learners in the room?

This study reflects my experience as I sought to understand the complexities of what matters in assessment, teaching, and learning for readers and reading instruction, taking into account the actions, interactions, relationships, and the multiplicities of the reading identities of all the people involved. I hope that my story will resonate and inspire other researchers leading them to have further conversations about the impact and

response to reading identities in our work with teachers and kids in classrooms that is not yet present in the literature. Furthermore, I hope that the conversations will sound less like “right” and “wrong” ways of doing and being and instead, carefully navigated conversations that embrace individual productive struggles.

CHAPTER 7

IMPACT OF THE STUDY ON MY PRACTICES AS A LITERACY COACH

During the time I was collecting and reflecting on data and writing this dissertation, I simultaneously worked as a coach; the experiences impacted my practices as a coach in four particular ways. I came to understand that:

- the conditions that Kacee and I created for kids were not only helpful for our own learning, but also for the other teachers with whom I worked; they made it possible to connect theory and practice.
- teachers' identities, theories, and beliefs in their abilities to act and interact successfully as readers, teachers, and learners, together with their perception of the purpose served, influences their engagement.
- a list about What Matters for Teachers helps frame how I understand teachers and make decisions with and for them; it helps guide my understanding and decision-making with and for teachers (with and for their students).
- theories of identity are central to what teachers and students are doing every day in their classrooms in the name of teaching and learning.

Connecting Theory to Practice

In my work with Kacee, I spent a considerable amount of time observing, reflecting, responding, and navigating our personal and instructional interactions. I supported her professionally, socially, and emotionally in ways that were similar to how

and why we acted and interacted with and for kids' learning. I realized, working with Kacee, that how she and I worked together was similar to how I worked with kids. Indeed, the conditions that we created for kids were helpful not only for Kacee and me as learners but the other teachers with whom I worked. I came to understand that when teachers choose to inquire into their Productive Struggles, they create for themselves, the conditions needed to unpack their theories and interrogate their practices. That, in turn, results in new learning. While this process is not an easy one, one contribution my work makes to the field is that it brings theoretical and empirical work together in practical ways so that teachers are poised to try out things in their own classroom (see Figure 7.1).

A Theory of What Matters together with Yellow Flags operates at the intersection of theory and practice and plays a critical role in helping teachers build relationships and understand kids in particular ways. Together they stimulate observations and reflections that result in developing new understandings and making instructional modifications. The What Matters list simultaneously provides both curriculum and instruction and puts the students at the center of both. Instances of Yellow Flags make kids' practices visible by naming and noticing what students sometimes look like, sound like, and appear to feel. Teachers can then consider multiple explanations for those behaviors, form hypotheses and test them out. Inquiring into instances of Yellow Flags provides teachers with a scaffold so they can start to embrace observations of students' process as the instructional material necessary to inform instruction. Yellow Flags are part of a model that make what kids do, think, and feel in the process of making meaning visible and connects theory with practice.

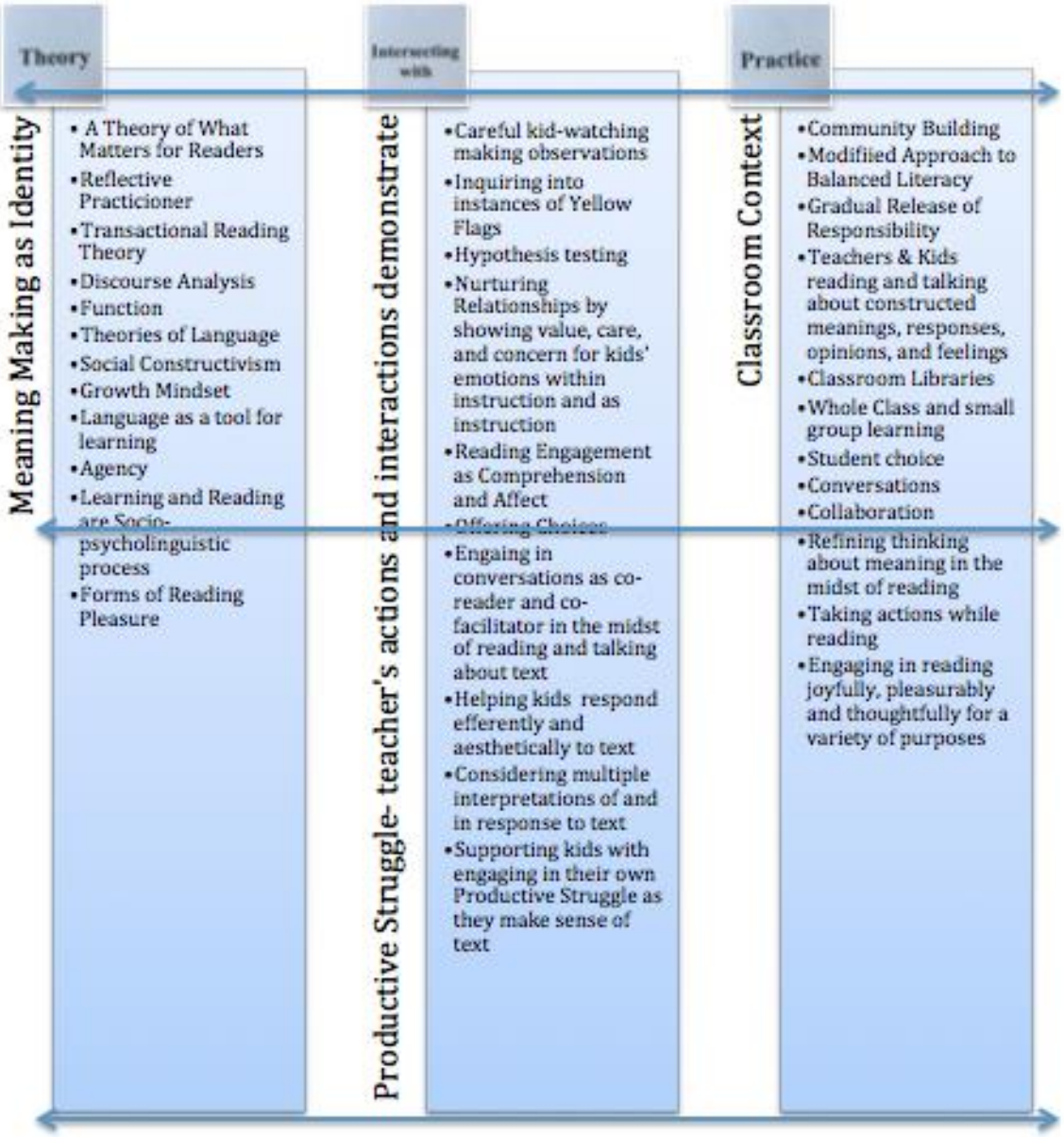


Figure 7.1: Productive Struggles

Influences on Teachers' Actions

There are similarities between kids choosing to read and teachers choosing to take part in professional development opportunities. What helps make engagement possible is for them, as teachers, and me, as coach, to consistently act, interact and communicate genuine care and support personally, socially, emotionally and instructionally. However, there is a difference between acknowledging emotional responses and seeking to

understand them to respond in ways that nurture relationship building. People in general do not want to appear incompetent yet, learning requires struggle and in the process, evokes emotional responses that cause the learner to question their competency. For example, I may once have described teachers as resistant to coaching, or not interested in learning, I now recognize that as an emotional response and have come to realize that, with everyone, there is more to understand.

The issue of nurturing relationships is a critical part of teaching and learning and is on-going. Every action and interaction impacts relationships and therefore occurs within personal and instructional interactions made available through consistently paying attention to specifically what people do, say, and appear to feel. It becomes imperative to try to understand the why behind these observations. Doing so requires consideration of multiple interpretations that could possibly explain engagement (attitude, motivation, interest) and meaning made (kind and quality of comprehension). Collaboration requires time for which teachers frequently run short. However, for learning to occur, it is necessary to take the time to navigate conversations in the moment, to seek understanding and to respond in ways that privilege caring for one another as people first. In-action responses to observations of what people say, do, and appear to feel as they interact with one another and text is the instructional data that is relevant, timely, and creates the conditions for everyone to become more confident, and develop their expertise to understand what works and why.

As I came to understand more about the kind and quality of meaning kids made together while noticing their affect and their perception of the purpose it served, I learned that all this also mattered for teachers. I spent time seeking to understand teachers' affect

together with the kind and quality of meaning they made of their readers, reading instruction, assessment, and planning, and wondered about their beliefs in their abilities as readers, teachers, and learners. I realized that even when teachers believed that we were aligned theoretically, (as Kacee and I did) the kind and quality of constructed meaning varied and impacted our personal and instructional actions and interactions teaching, assessing, planning, and learning with and for kids.

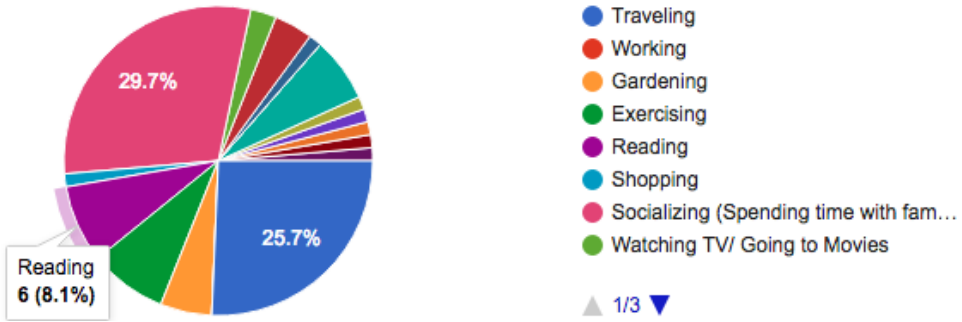
To get to know better the teachers with whom I work, I ask myself seeking to understand about each teacher:

1. What kind and quality of meaning-making s/he creates when reading to do work assigned by others, to do work that is self-initiated, and when reading for the purpose of play (Wilhelm, 2017) which I prefer to call fun and entertainment.
2. Under what conditions s/he believes in her/his ability to make sense of print when reading to do work assigned by others, to do work that s/he self-initiates, and when reading for the purpose of fun and entertainment.
3. What kind of reading pleasure s/he experience predominantly (or not) when s/he chooses to read and/or does not choose to read but does the work (read aloud, small group, independent reading, and independent reading conferences).

I gather this information from observing, talking and reflecting. I also collect survey data from all faculty and staff to understand more about their ideas and beliefs about reading, readers, and learning relative to their reported actions, interactions, and practices as readers, learners, and teachers (See Figure 7.2).

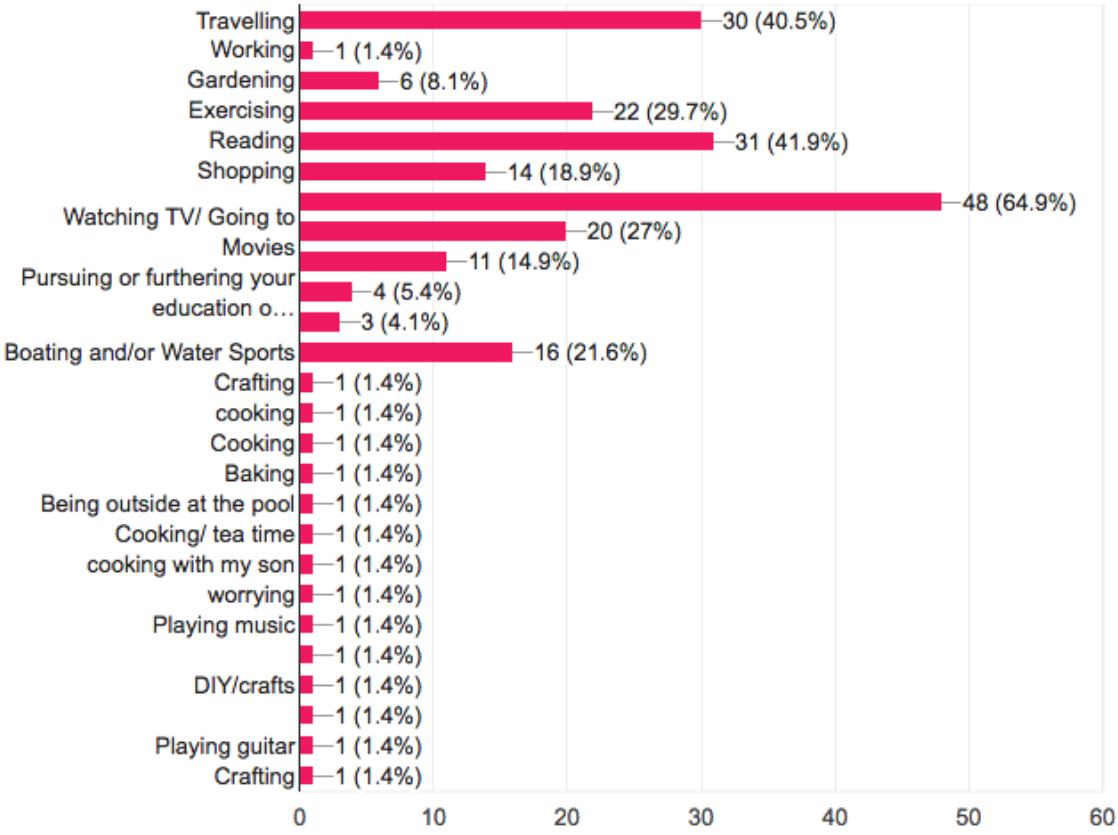
Over your summer break, what ONE thing did you enjoy doing MOST often?

74 responses



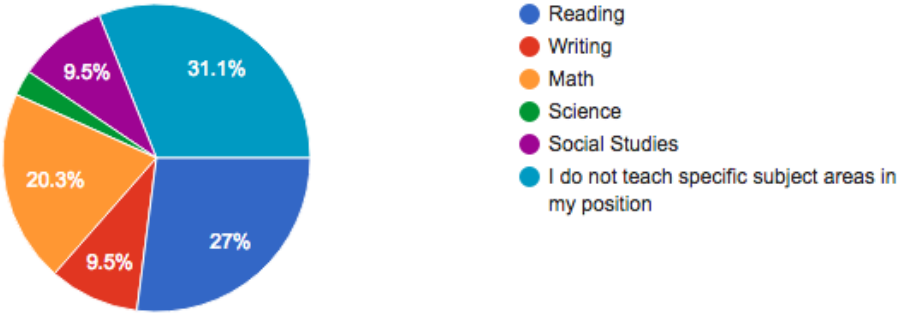
Typically, in your free time, what 3 things do you enjoy doing MOST often?

74 responses



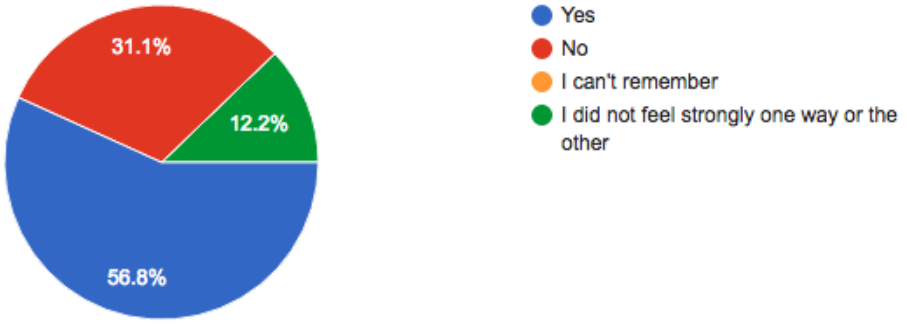
Which subject is your favorite to teach?

74 responses



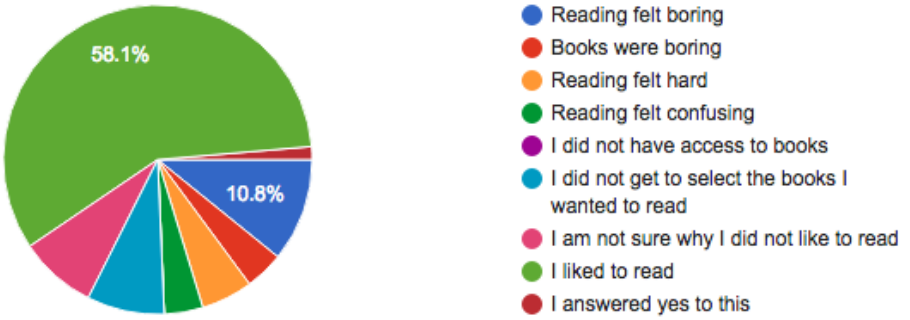
Did you like reading when you were in elementary school?

74 responses



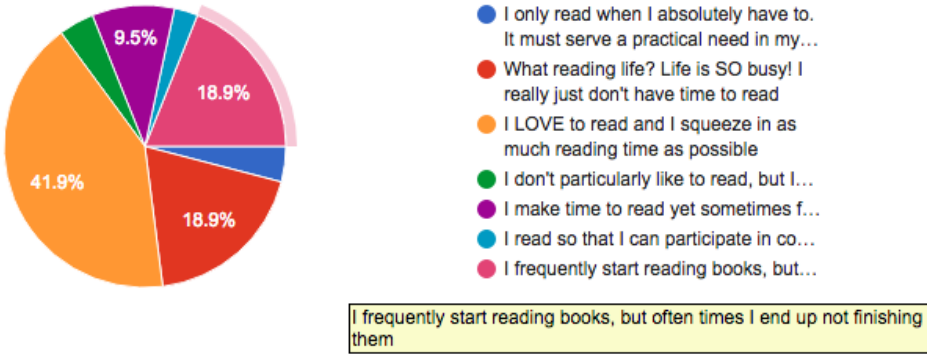
Based on your answer to the previous question, select the choice that best explains why you felt the way you did.

74 responses



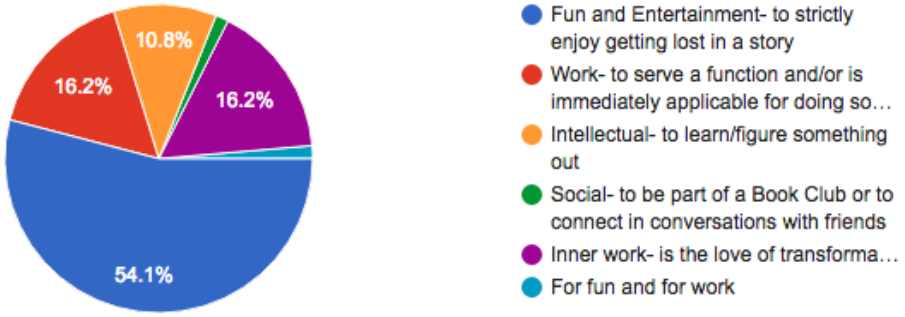
Please select the choice that best describes your current reading life.

74 responses



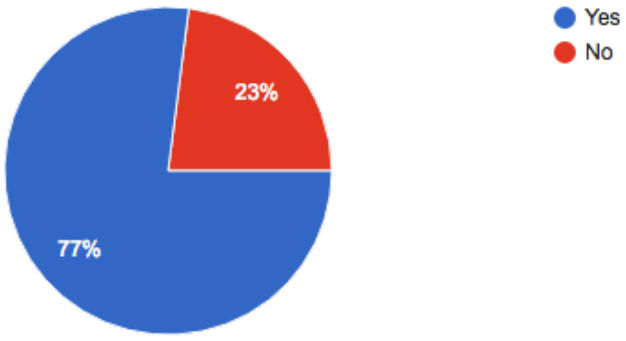
Select the answer that best describes the main reason you read.

74 responses



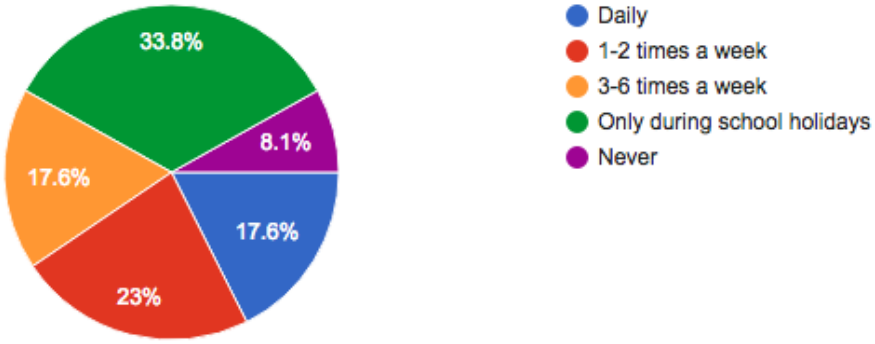
Do you currently consider yourself a person who reads for the purpose of fun and entertainment?

74 responses



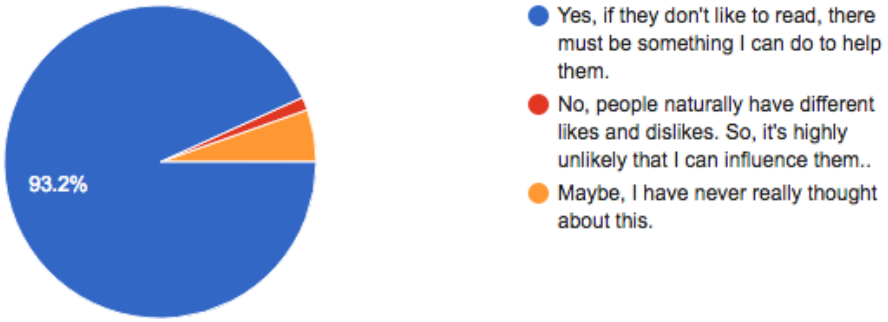
How often do you read for entertainment?

74 responses



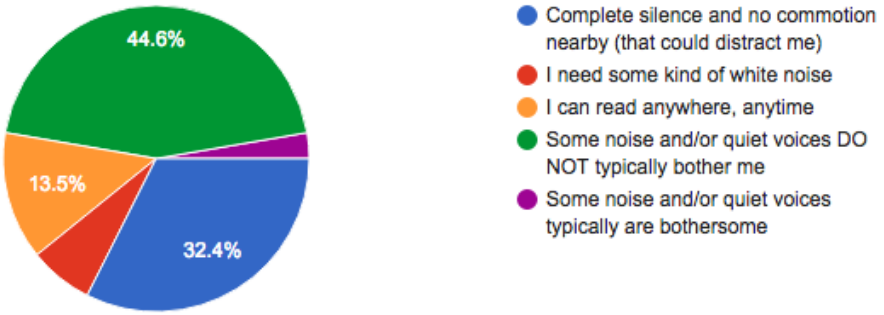
Do you think all kids have the potential to become a person who enjoys reading for fun and entertainment?

74 responses



When you read, what kind of environment do you need in order to enjoy and understand it?

74 responses



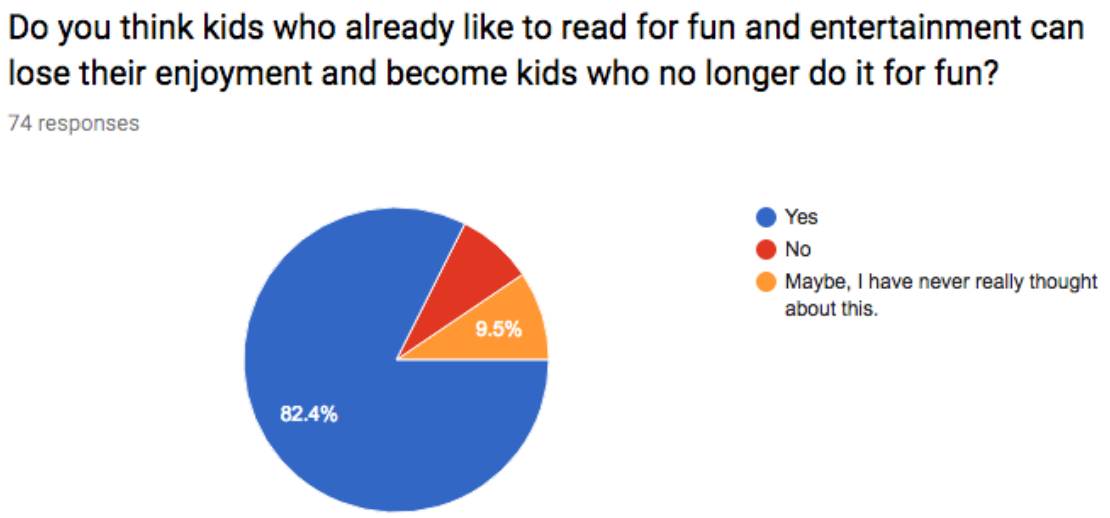


Figure 7.2: Faculty and Staff Survey Results

Across the school year, I periodically share results of one or two questions per meeting. I use them as conversation starters with faculty to prompt reflection and to generate new ideas, considerations, and understandings of our readers. As a result, we discuss implications for teaching and learning and that leads to new curricular moves and instructional decision-making.

In response to conversations with teachers at my school about the prevalence of passive readers that they observed year after year, I developed reading engagement rubrics (See Figure 7.3) to help teachers refine the observations they noted of readers, the sense they made of them, and their subsequent curricular and instructional decision-making in response to their observations and interpretations.

I found that actions like these honor teachers as professionally competent, and meets them where they are on their learning journey. As I have walked this path, teachers have refined their understandings and grown their professional knowledge base. In learning more about their kids' theories, identities, actions, and interactions, they have revised and refined their practice. At the same time, I have continued refining my

practice in response to observations I make while working with both teachers and kids. I work to provide more specific and intentional support, helping them reflect on their beliefs and practices within their planning, assessment, instruction, and data teams. Together, we are making changes within the structures of balanced literacy in response to our professional conversations. Everyone in the room works together to learn more about reading identities and the implications for instruction.

Date:

Student Name:

Teacher:

Reading Engagement Continuum Rubric

(When scoring, think about all you know about your student from using The Burke Interview & Conference Notes with Text Level Reading Records & Direct Observations)

After recording a score in each box (according to the column that best describes your observations of the reader in IR, GR/Reading Conference, and lastly listening for affective responses to text) add all 3 boxes together to calculate: **Total Score:**

Observations of this reader: 0	**Observations of this reader show that with prompting: 1 or 2**	**Observations of this reader show that sometimes independently: 3 or 4**	**Observations of this reader show that they frequently independently: 5 or 6**	**Observations of this reader show that they consistently independently: 7 or 8**
Does not yet choose to engage in Independent Reading Very little or no on task reading minutes during **IR** (looks like-multiple reasons not to participate in IR-forgot my book, bathroom, get water). Selects books that are too hard or based on surface level attributes (picture on the cover, number of pages, or no explanation). Blames the book for lack of interest. Frequently abandons books. Pretends to read '*fake reading*' May say: "I don't want/like to read." "This is hard." "I don't know how to read." "I hate reading." "Reading is boring." ☐	**Almost chooses** to engage in Independent Reading Very little on task reading minutes during **IR** (looks like-multiple reasons not to participate in IR-forgot my book, bathroom, get water). Selects books that are too hard or based on surface level attributes (number of pages, chapter books, or vague explanation, exclusive or rigid book selections). Blames the book for lack of interest. Frequently abandons books and/ or *'completes'* reading books unusually fast. May engage in reading after the teacher supports the student with *'getting into a book'* (by reading the beginning together) to support comprehension. ☐	**Sometimes independently chooses** to engage in Independent Reading On task reading minutes ½ or less of **IR** time (might count number of pages left to read, blame the book for lack of interest, exclusive or rigid book selections appear frustrated with many facets of living a readerly life such as-having to read, monitoring for meaning, problem-solving for understanding). Completes reading books. May search for particular books (by a favorite author/familiar series). Selects books with appropriate text demands. Miscue analysis shows: Low % accuracy of reading words and miscues interrupt and/or change the meaning ☐	**Frequently independently chooses** to engage in Independent Reading On task reading minutes ½ or more of **IR** time Show initiative to search for and select books. Book selections are just right (meaning they can read and understand) and choices reflect an openness to select texts that span a variety of genres. Completes reading books. May search for particular books (by a favorite author/familiar series). Selects books with appropriate text Miscue analysis shows: High % accuracy of reading words and miscues do not interrupt or change the meaning. ☐	**Consistently chooses** to engage in Independent Reading On task reading minutes ALL or MOST of **IR** time Show initiative to search for and select books. Book selections reflect their ability to choose books that they understand and chat about. and choices reflect an openness to select texts that span a variety of genres. Makes comments like, "I love reading." "Can I take this book home?" May read when it's not reading time. Miscue Analysis shows: High % accuracy of reading words and miscues do not interrupt or change the meaning. ☐
During GR/Reading Conference-Does not yet: retell accurately and in a logical sequence using own words. Instead quotes exact snippets of text without extending or supporting what they have to say. Talk- Read words without thinking (inner voice) "I don't understand." Count pages left to read. Fast reading rate with no sign of stopping and/or pausing when intonation and phrasing does not match meaning & punctuation. Word solving: wait for a told, omit, mumble through, produce nonsense word, insert word(s), reads on **AND** meaning breaks down. ☐	**During GR/Reading Conference - With teacher prompting:** Talk-shares thinking in response to the text but is **limited to predicting and/or retelling** Ask seemingly irrelevant questions or make comments that do not support understanding. Resist revising understanding. Any attempts to engage the reader in a conversation while reading suggest that it's bothersome or received as and interruption (sigh, count pages left, put head down, continues reading) ☐	**During GR/Reading Conference-Sometimes independently:** Talk-shares thinking that demonstrate varied types of responses **beyond** predicting and retelling **AND** support further understanding (Ask relevant questions, analyze character's actions and feelings, clarifying meaning) Engage in conversations in ways that support constructing a more complex understanding Word solving: omit but does not interrupt meaning, may say, "I know this means…" ☐	**During GR/Reading Conference-Frequently independently:** Talk-shares thinking that demonstrate varied types of responses **beyond** predicting and retelling **AND** ask relevant questions, analyze character's actions and feelings, take actions to clarify meaning, construct a more complex understanding Word solving: omit, or replace unknown word with a meaningful substitution and/or meaning is not interrupted Rereading results in self correcting intonation and phrasing to match meaning ☐	**During GR/Reading Conference-Consistently independently:** Talk-shares thinking that demonstrate varied types of responses that lead to more complex understandings Shows willingness to revise thinking, "At first I was thinking…but now I am thinking…" Word solving: omit, or replace unknown word with a meaningful substitution and/or meaning is not interrupted Rereading results in self correcting intonation and phrasing to match meaning ☐
Does not yet respond **affectively** to text (ex. smiles, laughs, responses are authentic and support understanding). ☐	Respond **affectively** to text when provided comprehension support (ex. smiles, laughs, responses are authentic and show understanding). ☐	Sometimes independently respond **affectively** to text (ex. smiles, laughs, responses are authentic and show understanding). ☐	Frequently independently respond **affectively** to text (ex. smiles, laughs, responses are authentic and support understanding). ☐	Consistently independently respond **affectively** to the text (ex. smiles, laughs, responses are authentic and support understanding). ☐

Tara Thompson Drafted 10-1-17 informed by many other scholars such as Stephens et. al 2012; Pearson & Gallagher 1983; Johnston 2004; Rosenblatt 1978; Gee 2008, 2012

Figure 7.3: Reading Engagement Continuum Rubric

What Matters for Teachers

As a coach/researcher, I found it helped to create a What Matters list for teachers showing the reflexivity between teaching and learning for and with kids and teaching and

learning with and for teachers. I also constructed a What Matters for Teachers to guide my curricular and instructional decision-making moves.

Throughout the school day, effective teachers seek alignment between their actions and beliefs which:

- protect and nurture relationships always safeguarding against the possibility of causing shame or embarrassment.
- are careful observers of their students noting their specific actions, interactions, comprehension, and overall disposition toward making sense of text.
- believe in each student's ability to make sense of text and seek to understand the kind and quality of meaning their kids construct.
- provide time, encouragement, and feedback for students to interact as they make meaning of text through expressing and considering multiple interpretations using personal experiences together with text-based details that are consistent with the text.
- seek to understand and make explicit the various reading identities represented in the world and inquire with kids to uncover the complexities and multiplicities of readers within and made available within their context.
- prioritize watching verbal and nonverbal actions and interactions paying careful attention to the details of what kids do and listening to what they say in the midst of reading text.

When supporting readers, effective and efficient teachers:

1. Consistently communicate that they understand that reading is a meaning making process; they immerse kids in regular opportunities to engage in the thinking processes required to construct meaning. To do this they consistently:
    - encourage varied interpretations that are consistent with details offered in the text;
    - participate reader-to-reader— interacting with the printed text both efferently and aesthetically and expecting kids to interact similarly;
    - facilitate conversations that are directly connected to what their particular kids do, say, and feel in the midst of reading;
    - keep track of their kids' understandings and possible inconsistencies/misconceptions of the text as they talk about the actions and feelings of characters and their individual responses;
    - assess kids' understanding of text and navigate conversations in ways that support them with revising and refining their comprehension of text as typical interactions and actions of readers meaning-making process;
    - keep track of efferent and aesthetic responses and actions of problem-solving in order to understand the approach kids take to make meaning and create their understanding and interpretations of text.
2. Believe in their ability to teach responsively to the individual needs of his/her class and choose to follow the lead of what they observe related to their readers actions, interactions, and general disposition toward reading and being a reader. They consistently:

- prioritize watching what kids do and listening to what they say in the midst of reading— keeping track of reading engagement as a means to gaining insights into understanding comprehension and the affect of readers.
- participate fluidly— acting and interacting reader-to-reader and facilitating conversations to explicitly communicate that talking about text is not supposed to focus on "right or wrong" ways of thinking, but instead celebrate revising thinking as a typical and expected part of a reader's process as they create and reflect on their understanding.
- communicate within the midst of reading and talking about text that they believe in the ability of every student in the room to make sense of text and that what they have to say matters and impacts the meaning they construct together.

3. Seek to honor student choice in text selection across all structures of balanced literacy to consistently create reading conditions that promote various form of reading pleasure (Wilhelm, 2017). They consistently:
    - respond explicitly and intentionally to the affective aspects that influence and acknowledge how their kids appear to feel when they read;
    - show trust in kids' ability to make decisions regarding book selections;
    - encourage students to make decisions about timing and content of their talk;

- introduce new genres and provide appropriate levels of support to ensure understanding and reading that results in a pleasurable experience;
- Prioritize watching what kids do and listening to what they say in the midst of reading seeking to understand the choices they make about choosing to read and the kind of pleasure they experience;
- Seek to understand how kids feel about reading for various purposes such as completing work or for fun & entertainment.

I am in the process of identifying Yellow Flags for Teachers— a list of behaviors that coaches and administrators could use as possible points of inquiry. Just as with kids, what matters is not what someone does, but why they do it. Yellow Flags indicate behaviors that might be worth unpacking.

Role of Identity

Across the three and a half years during which I collected and analyzed data and wrote this dissertation, I have come to firmly believe that theories of identity are central to what teachers and students are doing everyday in their classrooms in the name of teaching and learning. It is my job as literacy coach to understand the identities of each of my teachers and help them take on their own "generative theory" so they can be a better teacher tomorrow than they are today. My hope for them parallels my hope and theirs for students: that they are more confident, agentive and successful readers tomorrow than they are today. I would be deeply pleased if my actions as a coach help make this hope a reality for the wider professional community.

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APPENDIX A

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

April 28, 2011

Dear Parents,

You know your child best. At XXX we value the knowledge you have about your child's reading feelings and behaviors. All parents of students in K, 1st and 2nd grade are being asked to provide observations of their child's feelings, attitudes, and levels of engagement as they participate in reading related activities. All information in the surveys will be confidential and used to gain insight into your child's specific reading needs as we prepare for next school year. Please complete and return it in the sealed envelope.

Here is a little more background information about why your perspective is so important. During the past seven years, I received specialized training about readers and reading process through XXX. I have come to understand that how your child feels about reading is an important factor to use to guide reading instruction at school. The teachers at XXX are constantly striving to meet students' individual needs. Since you know your child best, it is important to get detailed information from you about how your child feels about reading. Their feelings could vary depending on the place, purpose, and the person reading; therefore I have come up with specific questions for you to provide your insights and understandings about your child. This information will remain confidential. The results of this interview will be combined with all other responses allowing patterns to be identified to guide instructional needs of students. The identification of students and parents will not be shared.

Your voice is important. Please take the time to fill out this interview and return it to XXX in the sealed envelope provided. Your observations, thoughts, and understandings will help make a difference in the education of all XXX students. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. Email tsthomps@xxxxxx.xxx Or phone XXX-XXXX Leave a voice mail and I will return your call.

Thank you for your time and support,

Tara Thompson

Student Name _____ Parent Name _____

Grade _____ 2011-2012 Teacher _____

If your answers require more space please use back or attach a page. Please return in envelope provided and seal it.

1. Does your child have nightly reading homework? Circle Yes or No
2. How long does the reading homework take? _____
3. Please explain the reading assignment and how your child acts when they need to do reading homework. What does your child do and say?

4. Has your child's approach to reading changed from last year to now? Circle **Yes or No**

Please explain by providing detailed information in questions 5-10.

5. Overall, what did you notice your child **doing** and **saying** about him/herself as a reader **last year?**

6. Overall, what do you notice your child **doing** and **saying** about him/herself as a reader **this year**?

Questions 7-10 Please answer based on this year.

7. When **you** ask to **read** to your child, what feeling do you get from them?

8. What does your child do and say before, during, and after **you read** to them?

9. When you ask your **child** to **read**, what feeling do you get from them?

10. What does your child do and say before, during, and after **they read** to you?

11. Please share any additional information you think is important to understand about your child.

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANTS

Table B.1

Participants

Student	Kindergarten Ranking	Reading MAP Fall percentile grades 1st	2nd	3rd	4th	3rd Grade ACT Aspire Readiness Ranking	Fall 4th Grade Text Level Grade Equivalency	Response to Intervention Service History
1F	Top ½	48	51	28	41	Ready	3.3	2 years of private tutoring with Reading Interventionist
2F	Bottom ½	51	33	26	41	In Need of	2.4	Completed Reading Recovery-like
3M	Bottom 1/2	14	24	57	53	Close	3.0	Incomplete Reading Intervention, 3 summers of private tutoring with Reading Interventionist
4F	Bottom ½	28	38	62	41	In Need of	3.0	None
5M	Bottom ½	18	36	49	76	Close	3.0	1 year of Reading Recovery-like intervention followed by Incomplete Reading Intervention
6M	Top ½	76	87	69	63	In Need of	3.3	None
7M	Top ½	28	77	59	63	Close	3.3	1 year of private summer tutoring with Reading Interventionist
8 M	Bottom ½	13	41	35	76	Close	3.8	1 year Reading Intervention incomplete due to move into 3 years of Special Education, 3 summers of private tutoring with Reading Interventionist,
9M	Bottom ½	25	36	49	36	In Need of	3.0	Incomplete Reading Intervention
10 F	Bottom ½	42	10	17	4	In Need of	2.2	3 years Reading Intervention, Identified Gifted and Talented
11 F	Not enrolled	16	23	77	48	In Need of	3.0	1 year Reading Recovery-like