

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS' READING EXPERIENCES AND BEHAVIORS
AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO READING ACHIEVEMENT AND SELF-
EFFICACY: A STUDY OF ONE RURAL MIDDLE SCHOOL IN SOUTH TEXAS

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

This doctoral study examined the relationship between middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors, reader self-perceptions, and reading achievement. This study also explored whether or not the characteristics of middle school readers differ because of gender or ethnicity. Participants attended a rural middle school, grades six through eight, in a South Texas farming community.

Over half of the students believed reading was important and read at least once or twice a week. A majority of students also preferred to read text messages, magazines, websites, and fiction. A higher percentage of females than males enjoyed reading, read because they believed it was fun, and read realistic teen fiction. More Caucasian students than Hispanic students enjoyed reading and believed reading was important. A majority of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, held positive reader self-perceptions and attained the passing standard on the TAKS. Statistical analyses revealed that students with more positive reader self-perceptions scored higher on their TAKS, as did female and Caucasian students. Students who enjoyed reading and read more frequently also scored statistically significantly higher on their TAKS. Females ranked higher than males in their enjoyment of reading and belief that they read enough; males ranked higher in their belief that reading is boring and that they do not read well. On the average, Caucasian students ranked higher than Hispanic students in their enjoyment of reading, number of books in their homes, and the belief that reading is important.

The more teachers know about their students' experiences and interests, the more they can "tailor-fit" their instruction and locate reading materials that will promote interest and achievement in reading. Teachers who know their students' reader self-

perceptions can work to maintain and improve them by creating a learning environment conducive to student success, which will foster students' feelings of competency with reading and transfer to the literacy tasks of their content area classes, as well as their reading outside of school. In addition, the achievement gaps between the genders and between the two predominant ethnicities confirm the need for teachers to be responsive to their students' individual needs and interests as learners.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my Mee-Mee and Pappy. Thank you for a lifetime of love and encouragement, for without you both, I would not be where I am today. I love you forever and always—Angel Baby.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Adolescent literacy is a multifaceted field that involves a wide range of readers and learners, as well as years of research that has been and is continuously shifting in order to address the ever-changing needs of today's youth. Labeled a "very hot topic" since 2006 (Cassidy & Cassidy, 2005/2006) in Cassidy's annual *What's Hot, What's Not* surveys, adolescent literacy remains at the forefront of education (Cassidy & Cassidy, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2009/2010; Cassidy & Grote-Garcia, 2012; Cassidy & Loveless, 2011; Cassidy, Ortlieb, & Shettel, 2010/2011). The literacy field continues to examine the myriad of interrelated factors with regard to the development and expansion of adolescent literacy skills. Several professional organizations, in conjunction with individuals who specialize in the field, have offered position statements and policy guidelines that described the specific literacy needs of adolescent readers in an attempt to guide classroom instruction and impact educational policy. Such statements were written with the purpose of effectively and directly addressing the needs of adolescent readers as they progress through middle and high school (International Reading Association [IRA] & National Middle School Association [NMSA], 2001; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999; National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE], 2007).

One of the first recommendations in these position statements is that adolescents should have continual and explicit instruction in reading that is individually based and builds the skills of reading, as well as the appreciation of and desire to read. Upon entry into middle school, the process and demands of reading change, at which point students need reading and strategy instruction that is tailored for their individual cognitive needs.

Students' multiple literacy practices should also be utilized to offer individualized literacy instruction. Adolescents should have access to print and non-print resources that are appealing and diverse, and opportunities to read self-selected materials each day. Validation of student interest and choice is key in fostering independence and confidence in adolescent readers, which motivates them to engage in literacy behaviors within and beyond the school setting. These position statements provide research-based recommendations that serve as a foundation for educational practices that extend the literacy abilities of adolescents.

Researchers in the field of adolescent literacy have utilized questionnaires, interviews, and case studies of students from sixth through twelfth grades to describe adolescents' reading experiences, preferences, and attitudes associated with traditional texts such as chapter books and novels, as well as other reading materials like magazines and newspapers (Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008; Nippold, Duthie, & Larsen, 2005; Pitcher et al., 2007; Strommen & Mates, 2004). Nippold et al. (2005) examined the leisure activities of sixth- and ninth-grade students to determine how reading compared to other free-time activities. They conducted a survey to identify students' most preferred free-time activities, as well as document the amount of time they read for pleasure and the most common reading materials. Pitcher et al. (2007) developed and administered the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile (AMRP) to students in grades six through twelve. The survey component of the AMRP provided information regarding students' self-concepts as readers and overall value of reading, and the interview component addressed students' free-time activities and their perceptions of instructional methods used in the classroom. Strommen and Mates (2004) characterized "Readers" and "Not-readers"

through the use of questionnaires and follow-up interviews with sixth- and ninth-grade students in one suburban school district. Their study revealed how students in both categories spent their leisure time, their self-perceptions and attitudes, as well as information about students' reading practices and preferred materials.

Researchers have also examined adolescents' involvement with non-traditional texts that are digitally based (Alvermann, Hinchman, Moore, Phelps, & Waff, 1998; McKenna, Conradi, Lawrence, Jang, and Meyer, 2012; Moje et al., 2008; New London Group, 1996). These texts are a result of the most recent advancements in computer technology that extend the meaning of text to include email, chat rooms, instant messages, blogs, and any other materials available in electronic environments. Research on adolescents' digital literacies seeks to validate the use of such electronic media in the classroom and advocates for the recognition of these literacies as equal to those in existence prior to such technological advancements (Alvermann, 2008; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003).

Documentation and exploration of the reading experiences of adolescents from different ethnicities is limited with the Moje et al. (2008) study serving as the primary research study involving Latino/a groups in the United States. Moje et al. examined the reading practices of urban youth in a predominantly Latino/a and economically disadvantaged community in a large Midwestern city. Researchers used computer-based surveys, reading diagnostics, as well as school-recorded data and interviews to define the literacy behaviors of adolescents. Mohler (2011) also conducted a study that examined the reading experiences and habits of urban youth. Participants were ninth-grade males enrolled in a South Texas school district, 90% of whom were Latino. Students completed

a survey that revealed their reading experiences and habits, as well as preferred reading materials and people with whom they read and talked about reading.

Studies of adolescent readers have also extended beyond the United States to England (Clark & Foster, 2005; Hopper, 2005). Hopper (2005) surveyed students ages 11 to 15 about their reading choices, including both fiction and nonfiction, and what influenced those choices. Students also indicated their self-perceptions as readers and suggested ways that they could improve their personal reading. Clark and Foster (2005) also used a survey instrument to gather information on students' reading attitudes, preferences, and motivations. They included more than 8,000 primary and secondary students from 57 primary schools and 41 secondary schools, and also examined age and gender differences associated with survey responses.

Amidst the discussion of adolescents' reading experiences and behaviors is concern regarding their reading achievement (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2012). The NCES (2012) noted that the average reading scale score for eighth grade in 2011 was one point higher than in 2009 as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); however, 40 states indicated no measurable change. The average reading scale score for twelfth-grade students, who were last assessed by NAEP in 2009, was two points higher than in 2005, but four points lower than in 1992. Kamil (2003) reported that high school students' reading scores have not improved over the last thirty years, and in international comparisons of reading achievement, eleventh graders in America placed close to the bottom with students from developing nations. Kamil stated, "There are approximately 8.7 million fourth through twelfth-graders in America whose chances for academic success are dismal because they

are unable to read and comprehend the material in their textbooks” (p. 1). Biancarosa and Snow (2006) explained that 70% of older struggling readers required some form of remediation; they were able to read the words printed on the page, but could not comprehend their meaning. As for the almost seven thousand students who drop out of high school every day (Alliance for Education, 2006), a lack of literacy skills needed to master the increasingly complex high school curriculum was the most common explanation (Kamil, 2003; Snow & Biancarosa, 2003).

There is also discussion of a gap in the reading abilities between different genders and also among different ethnicities (Mead, 2006; NCES, 2011; Whitmire & Bailey, 2010). According to the NCES (2011), from 1992 to 2009, the NAEP reading scores of White fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grade students have been higher than those of their Black and Hispanic peers. While the 2009 scores of eighth-grade White, Black, and Hispanic students have increased since 1992, the achievement gaps between Black and White students (-26 points), as well as between Hispanic and White students (-24 points), were not measurably different from the corresponding gaps in 2007 and 1992. The same was true for twelfth-grade students; the 2009 NAEP reading data shows that White twelfth-grade students scored 27 points higher than Black students and 22 points higher than Hispanic students. Again, neither score gap was measurably different from those in previous assessment years.

With regard to gender, the NCES reported that for twelfth-grade students, the average reading scores for both males and females were lower in 2009 than in 1992; female students scored an average of 12 points higher than males, which was not measurably different from the differences in 2005 or 1992. The NCES also noted that the

2009 reading scores for female eighth-grade students were not measurably different from those in 2007 or 1992; however, the reading scores for male eighth-grade students were higher than in either of the two previous years. And although there was a difference in score (-9 points) between the male and female eighth-grade students, it was not measurably different from that of 2007, and it was smaller than the difference seen in 1992 (-13 points). Improvement in male achievement has also been discussed by Mead (2006) who used NAEP data and other information provided by the NCES to prove that male academic achievement is not declining. She stated, “In fact, with few exceptions, American boys are scoring higher and achieving more than they ever have before. But girls have just improved their performance on some measures even faster” (p. 3). She explained that particular groups of males are in danger, specifically Hispanic and Black males and those from low-income homes, but their primary issues are race and class, not gender. Mead purported that closing racial and economic gaps would benefit poor and minority males more than closing gender gaps, and that the focus on gender gaps often distracts attention from the real issues that face these adolescents.

Research has established the link between reading practice and future reading achievement; adolescent readers need multiple and various opportunities to engage in literacy behaviors that will promote growth and mastery (Kamil, 2003; Moje et al., 2008; National Endowment for the Arts, 2007). Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1988) examined the relationship between fifth graders’ out-of-school activities and their reading achievement using their scores on a battery of three reading tests and activity forms on which students documented their out-of-school activities and the amount of time they spent involved in such activities. Researchers found that reading books outside of school

was the activity with the strongest association to reading proficiency and that the amount of time a child spent reading a book was the best predictor of growth in reading from the second to the fifth grade. In his review of the cognitive processes of reading and related research, Stanovich (1986) discussed the concept of “Matthew effects” in reading (Walberg, Strykowski, Rovai, & Hung, 1984), whereby the students with advantageous and positive early educational experiences are better equipped to handle new educational experiences. This “rich-get-richer” and “poor-get-poorer” concept was explained by Stanovich, “The very children who are reading well and who have good vocabularies will read more, learn more word meanings, and hence read even better” (p. 381). Proficient readers will read frequently and with continual success, whereas less proficient readers will avoid reading opportunities and continue to struggle with reading achievement.

An important facet of reading practice and achievement involves the affective domain (i.e. attitudes, desires, beliefs, motivations). In the introduction of the instrument they developed to measure reader self-perception, Henk and Melnick (1995) credited research in the affective domain for the knowledge that “children who have made positive associations with reading tend to read more often, for longer periods of time, and with greater intensity” (p. 470). Thus, successful readers are more likely to read because they believe in their abilities as readers; they possess self-efficacy, which is the belief in one’s ability to complete a specific task and is an important factor in student learning (Bandura, 1993). As adolescents experience growth and success in reading, their positive self-efficacy and self-perception will impact their reading motivation, behaviors, and interests.

Within the discussion of adolescents and their reading behaviors, achievement, and self-perception, is a unique group of individuals that exists within the larger category. Young adolescents, who comprise today's middle schools, are different in comparison to their older counterparts, as they are situated at the beginning of the developmental stage of adolescence and initiate the physical, social, and psychological changes they will experience as individuals, learners, and readers over the next seven years. It is during this time that young adolescents engage with texts differently and make choices and formulate attitudes about reading that potentially impact their future involvement with and value of literacy (Rycik & Irvin, 2005; Wells, 1996).

A substantial amount of research exists on what middle school readers need in terms of their school-related literacy tasks (Beers & Samuels, 1998; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Duffy, 1990; IRA & NMSA, 2001; NCTE, 2007; Rycik & Irvin, 2005). One of the most widely discussed is middle school readers' need for continual and individualized instruction in reading, which involves a focus on the various skills and strategies necessary for reading success. For example, students need explicit instruction in comprehension and vocabulary development. The research also indicates that students should have time within the school day to read self-selected materials and also some of their assigned classroom readings. They must have choice and voice in what they read so that they learn to view reading as a worthwhile and valuable activity that serves a multitude of purposes. The research also points out that middle school students should have access to and experience with diverse reading materials and opportunities to share their reading knowledge and experiences with their peers. Such social interaction is a fundamental aspect of their unique development and should be validated. In fact, the

physical, social, and psychological needs of young adolescents is the foundation upon which experts in the field situate their discussions of middle school readers.

Within these discussions, limited research is available that focuses specifically on the reading interests, habits, and reading achievement of middle school students. Talan (1980) published a dissertation that used the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure (MBRAM) and a correlative analysis to investigate the reading attitudes, reading achievement, home literary environment, and self-concept of middle school students. Similarly, Dismukes (1989) published a dissertation that used the MBRAM, as well as the Teale-Lewis Reading Attitude Scales, to explore the reading attitudes of rural middle school students.

Isaacs (1990) used student-developed annotations to review the independent reading choices of students from a small middle school in Maryland. Students spent at least 70 minutes in class each week reading books of their choice, three of which they were required to annotate and submit for review. The study offered a list of popular titles and genres, as well as students' comments regarding specific titles. Ley, Schaer, and Dismukes (1994) used the Teale-Lewis Reading Attitudes Scales and the Reading Behavior Profile to explore middle school students' reading attitudes and behaviors over a three-year period of time. Researchers sought to investigate the relationship between students' reading attitudes and reading behaviors, any trends in their responses over time, and the value that students placed on reading. The study also evaluated reading attitude and behavior in terms of gender and ethnicity.

Higginbotham (1999), in a master's thesis, explored the reading interests and preferences of middle school students by gender in order to define categories of reading

interests, as well as note differences between categories on the basis of gender. She developed and utilized a survey composed of imaginary book titles and plot descriptions for which the students indicated their level of interest using a Likert scale. Most recently, McKenna et al. (2012) examined middle school students' attitudes toward recreational and academic reading in both print and digital settings by gender and grade level. Researchers developed and distributed a survey to middle school students across the United States that consisted of questions for which students rated their feelings about specific reading scenarios using a Likert scale.

The research has established adolescent literacy as a substantial field of study, as it offers descriptions of adolescent readers' behaviors, motivations, and choices, as well as information regarding their overall reading achievement. And while there are also studies of middle school readers as a fundamental component of adolescent literacy, such research is very limited; study participants attended schools in urban locations (Higginbotham, 1999) or small schools in states located in different parts of the country (Isaacs, 1990; Ley et al., 1994), and even rural schools in southern states (Dismukes, 1989; Talan, 1980). However, none of these studies represent the population of Texas middle school students, specifically those in South Texas who are located in the Texas-Mexico border region. There is an obvious need for studies that describe the literacy behaviors and associated reading achievement of young adolescents in South Texas middle schools.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescent literacy describes the reading needs and literacy behaviors of children and young adults, whose ages and grade levels span at least seven years. The scope of

this term is broad and encompasses numerous and complex changes that occur in the lives of these individuals. As children progress through the developmental stage of adolescence into young adulthood, they mature as readers and establish different and more individual literacy behaviors. While adolescent literacy is an appropriate label, as it relates to the developmental stage of adolescence, the body of literature that focuses on the reading interests, habits, and choices of adolescents often addresses only a few of the many age and grade levels within the larger category.

Thus, adolescent literacy overlooks a unique subset of readers and their literacy behaviors. Middle school students as young adolescents are first to experience the myriad of change and maturation that occurs at the onset of the developmental stage of adolescence. It is during these first few years that young adolescents establish themselves as readers and learners. Their reading development, choices, and achievement are diverse; young adolescents' reading levels span from elementary through high school and differ according to the given text, subject and/or context (Pikulski, 1991). Moore and Stefanich (1990) acknowledged the differences among average readers explaining that while their levels of reading achievement may be the same, their reading interests, learning styles, and backgrounds differ greatly, which affects their overall interest and participation in the act of reading. Ivey (1998) also noted the uniqueness of the middle school students she studied when she described them as "multi-dimensional as readers, and their reading abilities and dispositions toward reading varied with different contexts" (p. 50). Such diversity in middle school students' involvement with and disposition toward reading sets them apart from older adolescent readers who are included in the larger category of adolescent literacy.

Few studies within the body of literature that focus on adolescents and their interests, habits, and achievement as readers, address middle school students specifically. Often these studies examine the literacy behaviors of older adolescents and generalize findings to all adolescents, or they focus on one or two grade levels within the middle school, which excludes an entire population of young adolescent readers. Furthermore, these studies typically involve students from urban school districts who have different reading experiences from students in rural school districts, thus limiting the generalization of any findings. The most recent examination of middle school readers is a study by McKenna et al. (2012) which explored the attitudes of sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students toward recreational and academic reading in both print and digital settings.

There are no publications that describe the reading interests, habits, and achievement of middle school students in South Texas, specifically those in South Texas who are located in the Texas-Mexico border region. Residents in this area are among the poorest in the state, and the poverty rates are significantly higher for the Latino/a population and for African-American Texans (Castro, 2011). According to the United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2011), 24.8% of Black/African-Americans and 26.8% of Hispanics in Texas live in poverty compared to 9.3% of Non-Hispanic Whites and 12.6% of Asians. This survey also showed that poverty in Texas (17.9%) is more prevalent than in the nation as a whole (15.3%). Kurtzleben (2011) noted three South Texas cities ranked in the top 10 United States metro areas with the highest poverty levels: Corpus Christi (20.5%), McAllen-Edinburg-Mission (33.4%), and Brownsville-Harlingen (36.3%).

In Miller's ranking (2011) of America's Most Literate Cities, Texas cities ranked in the bottom half, with the exception of Austin (22), which ranked in the top third of the 75 cities studied. Major cities like Fort Worth (54), Arlington (64), and Houston (60) have declined on the list since 2005. Three South Texas cities ranked in the bottom 10 cities: San Antonio (66), El Paso (73), and Corpus Christi (74). The National Center for Education Statistics (2003) estimated that 27% of the adults in Jim Wells county, which is where the middle school is located, had low literacy levels. *The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2011 State Snapshot Report* (NCES, 2011) reported that the average NAEP reading score for eighth-grade students in the state (261) was lower than the average score for public school students in the nation (264). This average score was lower than those in 32 other states and did not change significantly from the scores reported in 2009 or in 1998. Considering the overall literacy levels in South Texas, in order to promote the literacy of young adolescents in this area, it is vital to learn about South Texas rural middle school readers' interests and habits and how these relate to their reading achievement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gather information which will create a description of the reading experiences and behaviors of middle school students from a rural middle school campus in South Texas and to investigate the relationship between these characteristics and students' self-perceptions as readers, their reading achievement, gender, and ethnicity.

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What are middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors?
2. What are middle school students' self-perceptions as readers?
3. What is the relationship between middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors, self-perceptions, and reading achievement?
4. Do the characteristics of middle school readers differ because of gender or ethnicity?

Definition of Terms

Adolescents	A term that refers to students ranging from 11 to 18 years of age.
Caucasian	Describes students who identified themselves as White or Caucasian.
Commended Performance	Describes students who exceeded the passing standard on the Texas state assessment, incorrectly answering no more than three questions on the exam.

Did Not Meet the Standard	Describes students who did not correctly answer the minimum number of questions needed to earn a passing score on the Texas state assessment.
Hispanic	Describes students who identified themselves as Hispanic or Mexican American.
Met the Standard	Describes students who correctly answered at least the minimum number of questions needed to earn a passing score on the Texas state assessment.
Middle School	For this study, middle school encompasses grades 6 through 8, students ages 11-14.
Reading Achievement	Refers to students' scores on the state assessment known as the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test.
Reading Behaviors	Describes what, when, why, and with whom students read.
Reading Experiences	The aspects of students' lives that have a potential impact on their reading behaviors (i.e., home literacy environment, attitude, past reading experiences).
Scale Scores	A conversion of the raw score onto a scale that is common to all test forms for that assessment (Texas Education Agency, 2012).
Self-Efficacy	The belief in one's ability to complete a given task (Bandura, 1993).

Self-Perception	Students' perceptions of their reading abilities as evidenced by scores on Henk and Melnick's (1995) Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS).
TAKS	An acronym for the standardized state assessment that measures mastery of the state standards; Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills.
TEKS	An acronym for the state standards for education in Texas public schools; Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.
Young Adolescent	A term that refers to students ranging from 11 to 14 years of age.

Summary

This chapter explored adolescents as readers. Their reading needs continue to be a popular topic within the field of literacy, as do their reading experiences, behaviors, and attitudes. There is also a growing concern regarding adolescents' reading achievement, specifically the gap in abilities between different genders and among different ethnicities. There is little discussion of young adolescents, who comprise today's middle schools and add a unique dimension to the larger category, as they are distinct in both their cognitive and reading development. Much of the available research on middle school readers focuses on students in urban schools or small schools in various parts of the country and does not address rural middle school readers, specifically those in South Texas located near the Texas-Mexico border. This chapter also presented the purpose of the study and the research questions.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

This chapter will present an overview of the research relevant to this study and will address the following topics: adolescent literacy, young adolescents, history of the middle school, studies of middle school readers, reader self-perception, and reading achievement.

Adolescent Literacy

Adolescent literacy as a field of study is concerned with the literacy behaviors of today's youth, a group comprised of individuals spanning multiple age and grade levels. By definition, it is "the ability to read, write, understand and interpret, and discuss multiple texts across multiple contexts" (IRA, 2012, p. 2). As it is situated within the larger context of the 21st century, there are specific literacy-related tasks that today's adolescents will do:

- Read a variety of texts including, but not limited to, traditional print text and digital (multimodal) text.
- Author words and images in fixed domains as well as multimodal settings.
- Talk about a variety of texts with others, including teachers, peers, members of their own communities, and the larger world population.
- Interact with text in discipline-specific ways within and across all subjects inclusive of, but not limited to, electives, career and technical education, and visual and performing arts. (IRA, 2012, p. 2)

Throughout their day, adolescents engage with numerous forms of literacy. They search the Internet, create and maintain blogs, participate in social media, play video games, and text; they also interact with traditional print materials like books and magazines. For more than a decade, the literacy behaviors of adolescents, including their reading choices, habits, and experiences, have been widely documented (Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; Ivey, 1999; Johnson-Smaragdi & Jönsson, 2006; Luttrell & Parker, 2001; Manuel & Robinson, 2002; Nippold et al., 2005; Pitcher, et al., 2007; Rothbauer, 2011; Strommen & Mates, 2004; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1999).

Worthy et al. (1999) administered two surveys, a reading preferences and access survey and the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) (McKenna & Kear, 1990), to sixth-grade students from three different middle schools in Texas in order determine what students were reading and how their preferences related to reading attitudes and achievement, gender, and socioeconomic status. The study also revealed the sources of students' reading materials and whether or not these materials were available at their schools. The two most popular reading categories were scary stories and books (66% of students) and cartoons and comics (65%). These were also the most frequently selected materials by students in all subgroups (gender, income, attitudes, achievement). Boys and girls shared six of their top ten favorite reading materials, and low income students ranked books about animals higher than other students who ranked science fiction/fantasy higher. Students who scored 90% or higher on the state competency exam ranked funny novels and books for adults higher than students who scored 65% or below, who ranked drawing books and cars/truck books higher. The results of the ERAS indicated students

with the most positive reading attitudes ranked series and funny books higher than those with negative reading attitudes, who ranked picture books and car/truck books higher.

Strommen and Mates (2004) used questionnaires and follow-up interviews with sixth- and ninth-grade students to identify two categories of teens: “Readers” and “Not-readers.” Adolescent “Readers” regularly interacted with books and other people within their social network who also enjoyed reading. They valued reading as a recreational activity and loved to read because it enlivened their imaginations and introduced them to new ideas. “Readers” also had access to numerous and varied reading materials, and their involvement with reading was something that was established during childhood within the family. Adolescent “Not-readers” had more variable childhood and family experiences with reading and explained that their enjoyment of reading began to decline between the ages of nine and eleven, as they found no alternative reading material to that of their childhood favorites. They prioritized sports and/or spending time with friends as recreational activities rather than reading, and often described reading as tedious and time-consuming.

Based on a survey of sixth- and ninth-grade students, Nippold et al. (2005) investigated whether or not reading was a preferred leisure-time activity for adolescents, the amounts of time adolescents spent reading for pleasure, and the relationship of these to age and gender. They noted that in comparison to activities such as watching television, playing sports, or talking on the phone, reading was a “moderately popular” leisure activity for adolescents ages 11 to 15 years (p. 98). The research also indicated that interest in reading declined during these years, and differences emerged between girls and boys. Boys chose recreational activities that involved computer or video games

and sports in lieu of reading; girls chose shopping, cooking, and talking on the phone. More often than the girls, boys reported that they spent no time recreationally reading.

Hughes-Hassell & Rodge (2007) investigated the leisure reading habits of urban minority middle school students, grades five through eight, using a questionnaire with both multiple choice and open-ended questions. The researchers wanted to know what (if anything) did students read and why, what topics and types of characters did they like to read about, how students obtained their reading material, and who encouraged them to read. A sizable number (72%) of students noted that they read for leisure, 22% said they read “constantly,” and 50% said they read when they had a chance. Only 6% of students indicated that they do not read, and the remaining 22% said they read for school purposes only. The study showed that females read for pleasure more often than males, but both genders showed a preference for magazines—females (76%) and males (68%). There were gender differences in students’ attitudes toward leisure reading. When asked if they enjoyed reading, 42% of the girls responded “yes” compared to 31% of boys. A majority of the students who read for leisure indicated that they did so for three reasons: for fun, to learn, and because they were bored. The students who did not enjoy reading chose other activities like television, the Internet, or spending time with friends. The researchers noted that 29% of students who were nonreaders also had statements on their questionnaires indicating that they struggled with reading.

Pitcher et al. (2007) modified the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996) for use with adolescents, and then administered the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile (AMRP) to students in grades six through twelve across the United States and the Caribbean. In their examination of adolescents’

motivation to read, the researchers discovered various influencing factors involving the students themselves, their friends and family, and teachers. They found that self-concept and value of reading corresponded to reading choices and general enjoyment of reading. Through interviews, they also found that adolescents wanted the ability to choose their own reading materials rather than having them assigned, and that teacher enthusiasm could impact students' reading attitudes and habits. The researchers also noted adolescents' use of multiliteracies, which involved reading magazines and electronic sources such as email and instant messages. Students often referred to friends and family with whom they emailed, chatted, and shared information about books and magazine articles.

Research of the reading experiences and behaviors of ethnically diverse adolescents is limited. A study conducted by Moje et al. (2008) and Mohler's (2011) dissertation serve as the primary research involving Latino/a groups in the United States. Moje et al. conducted a longitudinal study of the relationship between students' literacies outside of school and their academic achievement in school. Students were from a predominantly Latino/a community in a Midwestern city and ranged from sixth through eleventh grade. The researchers collected data through computer-based surveys and reading diagnostics, information from school records, semi-structured and reading/writing interviews, as well as ethnographic interviews and observations. They found that adolescents did in fact read and write outside of school, often texts that were not valued by adults. Adolescents chose to read books about people who were like them socially and who shared similar life experiences. Adolescents also read to fulfill their individual social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual purposes. Researchers also

determined that while adolescents engaged in literacy activities beyond the school setting, such activities may not have been wide or frequent enough to impact their educational achievement.

Mohler (2011) examined the reading behaviors of ninth-grade males, predominantly Latino, from an urban school district in South Texas through the use of a survey instrument. The researcher also investigated the relationship between the students' reading behaviors and their end-of-course grades, as well as their scores on the state-mandated reading comprehension assessment. Mohler found that a large majority of the students enjoyed reading but did not believe that they read enough. More than 90% also indicated that reading was important. Mohler also found that the students who read fiction had higher end-of-course grades, and the students who had between 51 and 250 books in their homes scored higher on the state reading assessment than those who did not.

There is also documented research of adolescent readers in England and their reading experiences, behaviors, choices, and self-perceptions. Through the use of self-assessment questionnaires, Hopper (2005) gathered data regarding students' independent reading behaviors and choices, the motivating factor(s) behind those choices, and their self-perceptions as readers. Students indicated greatest interest in various genres rather than a specific author; magic, fantasy, and issues-based books were the genres cited most frequently. The factors that had the most impact on book choice were prior knowledge of the book or author and the appearance of the book. Recommendations by family members were also noted as a significant factor of book choice. Of the 61% who indicated that they were reading a book at home during the week of the study, 67% were

girls and 54% were boys. Results also revealed that older adolescents read less at home for leisure than did younger adolescents. However, the data did show that 93% of students read material other than books during the week of the study, including magazines, newspapers, and the Internet.

Clark and Foster (2005), in conjunction with The National Literacy Trust, surveyed more than 8,000 primary and secondary students from 57 primary schools and 41 secondary schools in England to discover why some children and young people choose to read while others do not. The data revealed students' reading preferences and behaviors, as well as their self-perceptions as readers by gender and age. Over half of the students expressed that they enjoyed reading "very much" or "quite a lot" and rated themselves as "proficient" readers. Girls revealed greater enjoyment of reading than boys and were more likely to read often. Boys typically presented more negative reading attitudes than girls and more often indicated that they never talked about reading with their families. A majority of students did spend time reading outside of school; 38.1% indicated that they read every day or almost every day and 31.8% indicated that they read once or twice a week outside of school. Students reported that they read a diverse range of reading materials, including texts other than books such as magazines, websites, and text messages. Half of the students noted that they read because it is a life skill; a large percentage of students selected other reasons like "it helps me find what I want" and "it's fun." The researchers documented some age differences as well. Reading enjoyment and positive attitudes toward reading declined with age, as did the frequency of reading outside of school. Primary students believed they were more proficient readers

than secondary students, and they also preferred different reading materials and read for a greater number of reasons.

The literacy achievement of today's adolescents has also been documented (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011; NCES, 2011). According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2011), adolescent literacy is in a state of crisis, as there are more than one million students who will not graduate with a diploma, and the majority of students leaving high school do so without the advanced reading and writing proficiency that is necessary for success in college and a career. NCES (2012) reported that twelfth-grade students' literacy performance on the NAEP was four points lower in 2009 than in 1992, and only 74% of students were performing at or above the *Basic* achievement level, which is a partial mastery of fundamental skills needed for grade-level proficiency. Thus, 26% of twelfth-grade students in 2009 could not complete grade-level literacy tasks. By 2018, 63% of jobs in the United States will require at least some postsecondary education, which means that "High school graduates and dropouts will find themselves largely left behind in the coming decade as employer demand for workers with postsecondary degrees continues to surge" (Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl, 2010, p.1).

Young Adolescents

Middle school students are young adolescents with specific needs, both developmentally and as readers. The unique development of young adolescents was recognized more than a century ago as the call was made for the restructuring of public education. The Committee on College Entrance Requirements, as commissioned by the National Education Association (1899), wrote a report confirming the need for restructuring and also noted that the seventh grade was a "natural turning point in the

pupil's life, as the age of adolescence demands new methods and a wiser direction" (p. 659). Psychologist G. Stanley Hall (1904) also indicated a need for schools to address the developmental needs of young adolescents, as he argued that adolescence is a distinct stage of development. He called it a "psychological second birth" and developed a "culture-epoch" theory which stated that humankind's future was dependent upon the quality of education received during this stage of development. Havighurst (1953) developed the concept of developmental tasks, which was based on the idea that human development revolves around learning a series of tasks or behaviors within the context of six life stages. He defined the third life stage as "Adolescence" and delineated eight developmental tasks that occur during this phase of development. These tasks involve social, emotional, and physical aspects of development, as well as making and keeping relationships, preparing for a career, and developing the values and ethics that make up one's personal ideology. Although Hall and Havighurst refer to adolescence as the broader age category ranging from ages 12 to 18, the theories and tasks they characterize as part of this stage of development are initiated within the first few years (ages 12-14) and ultimately serve as a foundation for future development and maturation, thus setting young adolescents apart from older adolescents.

Piaget (1958) noted the intellectual changes that occur during young adolescence in his stages of cognitive development, the last two of which are applicable to the young adolescent—the concrete (ages 7-11) and formal operations (ages 11 and up). Young adolescents are described as being in a transitional phase from concrete operations, which involves logical thinking about objects and events, to concrete operations, which involves more abstract thought processes such as hypothetical reasoning, understanding the

multiple meanings of symbols, words, and phrases, and the ability to reconcile what is possible along with what is actual. In this last stage of development, young adolescents gain the thinking and learning capabilities that will be used through their maturity. A decade later, Eichhorn (1966) published the first professional book that focused solely on the middle school and young adolescents. He coined the term “transescence” to describe young adolescents’ unique developmental stage and presented a rationale for a school between elementary and senior high that would meet the unique developmental needs of young adolescents. The practices and programs of the middle school Eichhorn proposed were based on its learners’ characteristics and developmentally appropriate tasks. He sought to establish an educational environment that not only met the needs of young adolescents, but also fostered their distinctive development as they progressed through the broader stage of adolescence.

The reading development and characteristics of young adolescent readers parallel their overall development as individuals in that they experience profound changes as readers, just as they are beginning to endure the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual demands of adolescence. Middle school readers are diverse; young adolescents differ in their levels of reading achievement, experiences, and interests across multiple contexts (Ivey, 1998,1999; Pikulski, 1991). Ivey (1998) explained that at the middle level, students are still developing as readers. They are multi-dimensional with inconsistencies and complexities in their reading abilities, as well as their attitudes toward reading. Middle school students’ levels of reading achievement also vary greatly. Pikulski (1991) explained that the variation in achievement in any one classroom may range from the lower elementary to the high school level. He stated that students’ reading

abilities range "...from essentially nonreaders through readers who are so talented that their abilities are not fully tapped through standard measures of reading" (p. 312).

Upon entry into middle school, the act of reading changes from learning to read to reading to learn, and the classroom texts change and are more difficult to read (Chall, 1983; Early, 1984; Irvin, 1992). Chall presented a stage theory that describes the development of reading skills from birth through maturity and classifies middle school students in "Stage 3. Reading for Learning the New: A First Step." This stage is divided into Phases A and B, in the latter of which middle school readers are situated and which involves the extension and refinement of the ability to read in order to learn new information. In Phase B, young adolescents begin to read on an adult level; they learn to read beyond egocentric purposes and read analytically and respond critically to multiple viewpoints. Chall proposed that the stages are interdependent; each stage assumes the skills acquired in the previous stage and new skills are subsumed by the next stage, which means that middle school readers have acquired the skills of Stages 1, 2, and 3 (Phase A). She explained that without the skills from a previous stage, one would have difficulty with the reading demands of subsequent stages and that reading behavior does not stay at only one stage; it varies according to the reader's purpose. She stated, "Although the general character of reading changes with each succeeding stage, the abilities of previous stages remain for use in situations that require them" (p. 26). Thus, young adolescents who lack competency in the skills necessary for the demands of middle school reading will struggle as they encounter different and more complex materials that demand a higher level of reading skill.

Early (1984) presented an overview of readers and learners in the middle school according to three categories: average readers, problem readers, and superior readers. She stated that the primary characteristic of average middle school readers is that they do not read very much because they have merely acquired basic skills but have not had time to refine these skills to the point that reading independently would be enjoyable. Early explained that average readers can read orally with a few mispronunciations or misreadings of words, which confirms their ability to decode words. They have mastered phonics and know that sounds are represented by letters, although they may not remember a rule on demand. Their reading comprehension is basic, at the very least; average readers can recall short passages about familiar subjects written at appropriate readability levels and answer questions and connect details that are explicitly stated. Average readers have few or limited study skills and rely upon textbooks to consolidate learning they have already achieved rather than for initial learning purposes. The average reader may also experience various problems with one or more of these skills, although not to the degree of problem readers.

Problem readers in the middle school are students with reading skills extremely below average and who are still working to acquire beginning reading skills like decoding and recognition of sight words. Some of these readers are nonnative English speakers who have not had sufficient time to acquire the skills, while others may have physical and/or learning disabilities that delay the learning process. Visual and hearing impairments sometimes go unnoticed, as well as learning disabilities related to minimal dysfunction of the brain. By middle school, these problem readers have had the requisite

time in elementary school but are struggling to catch up and need more time to develop middle level reading skills.

Superior readers are fewer in numbers than average readers but also vary in ability and IQ just as their average counterparts. They possess advanced reading skills and continue to refine the tools and techniques by which they read and learn, and their reading successes offer confidence to approach the unknown. Superior readers do not need special reading classes or skills practice lessons; they simply need guidance and support to hone their advanced reading skills.

Middle school readers have also been characterized as having negative views of reading. Their poor reading attitudes, lack of motivation, and general resistance to reading has been widely documented (Bintz, 1997; Ivey & Broaddus, 2000; Lenters, 2006; Morrow, 1991; Ley et al., 1994; Worthy & McKool, 1996). It is at this time that reading in school shifts from learning to read and seeking out those materials which are enlightening and pleasurable, to reading to learn across the content areas. This change is often referred to as the “fourth grade slump” (Chall, 1983) and forever changes the act of reading, causing some readers to lose interest in reading as a literate activity.

Baker (2002) and Beers (1996) sought to explain the reasons students become aliterate and resistant by incorporating students’ individual voices into their research. Baker interviewed a middle school student who read at or above grade level throughout elementary but who had become less engaged in reading upon entry into middle school in order to document his thoughts on reading. The young man explained that whether or not he liked to read depended on the subject of the text. He enjoyed reading about basketball, Kobe Bryant, and animals, but at school he was given little choice and forced to read

“short stories, poetry, novels from way back when” (p. 364). He explained that although he would rather play basketball or spend time with friends, if he was given some choice in selecting the reading materials, he would be more likely to spend time reading. Baker concluded that middle school students should have choice in their reading materials and have accessibility to reading materials that are relevant to their personal experiences.

Beers observed two seventh-grade classrooms for a year and talked with students who had negative attitudes toward reading. She described these “aliterate” readers using three categories: dormant, uncommitted, and unmotivated. Dormant readers considered themselves readers and liked to read but simply did not make the time to read. One student compared himself to the plants they were studying in science who went dormant for a particular season. The uncommitted readers did not enjoy reading and viewed it as a skill, a means of understanding words and comprehending. Despite their negative views of reading, these students did remain open about their future reading habits. Unmotivated readers shared the same view of reading as uncommitted readers, but they had negative views of people who enjoyed reading, and they did not plan to read in the future. Beers determined that there is no singular description of an aliterate reader, rather they differ on how they view themselves, others, and reading.

McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth (1995), in a nationwide study, documented the reading attitudes of students in first through sixth grades by using the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) (McKenna & Kear, 1990). The survey consisted of 20 questions that disclosed students’ recreational and academic reading attitudes. The study revealed that by grade six, students’ reading attitudes were “indifferent,” although they began rather positively in grade one. Also, negative recreational reading attitudes were

related to ability, and the least able readers experienced the most rapid decline in attitude. The study also showed that girls had more positive recreational and academic reading attitudes than boys, and ethnicity did not affect reading attitudes. Overall, the study noted a negative trend in children's reading attitudes as they progressed through the elementary grades.

Throughout their extensive work in the field, researchers have examined young adolescents to develop a holistic portrait of their cognitive and reading development, as well as their unique characteristics as readers upon entry into the middle school.

History of the Middle School

Researchers (Lounsbury, 1992; MacIver & Epstein, 1992) note the first attempt at educational reform in the United States began in 1888 with Harvard University President Charles Eliot, who sought to restructure primary and secondary schools. From just after the Civil War through the turn of the 19th century, public schools were organized eight grades for elementary and four for high school. Charles Eliot chaired The Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies, which was organized by the National Education Association (NEA) and created to propose reforms in secondary schooling. The committee's report suggested that the age at which students were entering college (18) should be lower, and one way of encouraging that would be to incorporate college preparatory classes before high school. This could be accomplished by altering the grade structure of both elementary and high school to accommodate six grade levels each, thus allowing college-bound students to progress quickly and complete the six years of secondary school in four. The committee believed this would render better prepared

students and also allow them to enter college when they were ready, as well as eliminate the overcrowding of elementary schools and the high dropout rate after grade eight.

As grades seven and eight became part of the secondary school rather than the elementary, schools with varying grade structures appeared. Some schools combined grades seven through twelve or grades seven through nine, while others paired grades seven and eight. In 1909-1910, the first junior high schools were established in Ohio and California, respectively, and by 1920, the number of junior high schools in America reached 880 (Lounsbury, 1992). According to Briggs (1920), the junior high school and its program were intended to serve several purposes. First, they were designed to offer an earlier beginning to secondary education, especially for those students who planned to continue their education beyond high school; second, junior highs were to provide vocational training for students who would enter the work force after the completion of the compulsory education period; and third, they were to offer a time of exploration during which students examined their interests, talents, and capabilities as part of the curriculum in order to determine future career fields. And presumably, these things were offered according to the unique developmental needs of young adolescents who were not completely ready for the high school program but had surpassed the childhood program of the elementary school.

Junior highs were also a source of various educational innovations (Lounsbury, 1992; MacIver & Epstein, 1992; Mac Iver & Ruby, 2003). In addition to revolutionizing the organization of public schools in the United States, these schools were the first to offer an enhanced and extended curriculum for young adolescents through the introduction of courses in foreign languages, home economics, lab sciences, and

industrial arts. Junior highs also introduced teacher advisor programs and homerooms, and expanded student activities and clubs to involve various avenues of service and explore students' interests. They also implemented core curriculum approaches that emphasized the interconnection of subject areas, block scheduling, resource units, and learning across the disciplines with a focus on the affective factors of education.

According to Beane and Brodhagen (2001), the junior high school persisted in this manner until the late 1950s when elementary schools experienced overcrowding due to the influx of the "baby boomers," at which point leaders within the junior high schools began to seek a restructuring that would relieve the overcrowding and also improve other facets of education at this level. Mac Iver and Ruby (2003) noted that at this time, the junior high was also being criticized for mimicking the curriculum, scheduling, class structure, and grading system of the high school. Furthermore, there were concerns about having ninth grade educational programs in the same building as seventh and eighth grade programs due to the constraints placed on the ninth grade programs by the Carnegie unit requirements for high school graduation and entrance into college. The Carnegie requirements influenced decisions regarding staff and scheduling, which affected the educational programs offered to seventh and eighth grade students in junior high schools. The suggestion made by leaders and educators within the junior high schools was to move grade six into the junior high and move grade nine to the high school, thus creating a new school—the middle school.

This new middle school would eliminate overcrowding and be distinct from the high school, as well as address a prevailing concern that junior high schools were not providing developmentally responsive programs that allowed for a gradual transition

between elementary and high school (Mac Iver & Epstein, 1992; Mac Iver & Ruby, 2003). Educators who supported the concept of the middle school believed that the needs of the early adolescent should drive the content and structure of the school. Various publications and professional organizations emerged which focused specifically on the educational needs of the young adolescent and thus, the middle school movement began.

Donald Eichhorn (1966) published the first professional book supporting the development of grades 6-8 middle schools that would offer educational programs suitable for the unique needs of adolescents based on Piaget's theories concerning adolescent development. Eichhorn coined the term "transescence," which is "the stage of development which begins prior to the onset of puberty and extends through the early stages of adolescence" (p. 3). This term characterizes middle school students' stage of development and is based on the various physical, emotional, social, and intellectual changes that begin to appear before puberty through the time at which the body balances these complex changes. Based on this unique stage of development, Eichhorn proposed that middle schools should offer transescents flexible and friendly learning environments that provide maximum opportunities for them to acquire the mental, physical, and emotional structures necessary for them to progress in their maturation.

In 1969, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) established the Council on the Emerging Adolescent Learner. After years of research by various groups within the Council, the Executive Council of ASCD appointed a group to create a paper that would identify the importance of the middle school and focus on appropriate programs for emerging adolescents. Thus, in 1975, ASCD published *The Middle School We Need* which emphasized the need for schools that focus on young

adolescents' unique needs and characteristics. The recommendations within this document were based on Eichhorn's (1966) definition of transescence and its implications for the educational environment, which considered the distinct physical, emotional, cognitive and social needs of the transescent learner.

As the middle school movement progressed, a national organization dedicated to the unique needs of the adolescent learner emerged. The National Middle School Association (NMSA), formerly the Midwest Middle School Association, was established in 1973. Currently known as the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE), it remains the first and only national education association dedicated to students in the middle grades. In 1982 (revised in 1995), the NMSA published a position paper entitled *This We Believe* that presented 10 essential characteristics of a successful school for students ages 10 to 15. These characteristics ensured developmentally responsive programs, academic excellence, and social equality for all young adolescent learners.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Council on Middle Level Education released a similar publication in 1985 known as *An Agenda for Excellence at the Middle Level*. This document presented 12 elements of schooling at the middle level that should receive priority. The goal of these elements was to establish educational programs that are developmentally responsive to the needs of middle level students and to foster their development of intellectual and adaptive skills necessary throughout their lives.

In 1989, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development published *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century*. This report examined the status of America's young adolescents and their middle schools in order to recommend new

structures for middle level education which would provide a strong foundation for the nation's future. The report listed eight areas that collectively could improve middle level education. It indicated that:

A volatile mismatch exists between the organization and curriculum of middle grade schools and the intellectual and emotional needs of young adolescents.

Caught in a vortex of changing demands, the engagement of many youth in learning diminished, and their rates of alienation, substance abuse, absenteeism, and dropping out of school begin to rise. (p. 8)

Williamson (1996) noted that although a large number of middle level schools were embracing the concept of the middle school when *Turning Points* was issued, this document helped raise an awareness of these efforts and provided support and reinforcement for middle level schools to meet the developmental needs of adolescent learners. Thus, *Turning Points* provided a framework for middle level reform.

Anfara (2005) explained that many middle level educators and researchers did not fully understand and/or implement the reform initiatives as defined by *Turning Points* (1989). A majority of middle level professionals had been utilizing the reform initiative in parts rather than as a whole. The structure of many school programs was changed with regard to specific initiatives; however, few schools completely reformed, addressing *all* initiatives. Consequently, in 2000, the Carnegie Corporation of New York issued an updated report entitled *Turning Points 2000: Educating Adolescents for the 21st Century* (Jackson, Davis, Abeel, & Bordonaro, 2000). In contrast to the original publication, which was simply a framework for reform, this updated document served as a guide for those attempting to implement the middle school model.

A few years later in 2003, the NMSA published the third version of *This We Believe* with the subtitle of “Successful Schools for Young Adolescents.” Similar to its predecessors, this document discussed 14 characteristics necessary for a successful middle school, eight of which focused on the school culture and six that described the programmatic characteristics that result from such school culture. The unifying theme of these characteristics was their interdependence. The NMSA referenced their 30 years of middle school advocacy and research as support for the implementation of these characteristics.

Most recently, *This We Believe* was expanded and published a fourth time in 2010 with the subtitle of “Keys to Educating Young Adolescents.” This document was divided into three categories: Major Goals of Middle Level Educators, Essential Attributes, and Characteristics. The first category described what each young adolescent should become and be able to do within a successful middle school program. The second category outlined four attributes that the educational programs of a middle school should possess, and the last category offered 16 characteristics to which the practices and programs of the middle school must align. The characteristics were discussed in terms of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; leadership and organization; and culture and community. This document further called for a commitment (or recommitment for some) to the middle level philosophy and emphasized the extensive research that supports the ideas presented in this publication.

A century of reform, research, policies, and practices have created the middle school of today. It is responsible for the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of young adolescents. Throughout its history, the middle school and the

concepts on which it was developed have incited the creation of organizations and publications specific to the needs of young adolescents, thus solidifying their unique position in the educational system. In the future, the middle school will remain a key entity of America's public school system, serving as a platform for young adolescents' maturation within and contribution to society.

Studies of Middle School Readers

There are few studies of middle school readers in grades six through eight. Much of the available literature describes readers in only one age group within the middle school category or considers younger middle school students as part of the elementary school and older middle school students as part of the high school.

Two of the earliest studies available are dissertations that were completed in the 1980s by Dismukes (1989) and Talan (1980), both of which involved an examination of the reading attitudes of middle school students using the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure (MBRAM) (Mikulecky, 1976). Talan's study also included a correlative analysis of reading attitudes, reading achievement, home literary environment, and self-concept, while Dismukes' work focused on rural middle school students' reading attitudes as assessed by the MBRAM as well as the Teale-Lewis Reading Attitude Scales.

Talan found that females had more positive attitudes toward reading than males and that reading attitude becomes less positive as students progress from sixth through eighth grade. There were also significant correlations between reading attitude and reading achievement, as well as reading attitude and certain aspects of the home literacy environment (i.e., the amount students were read to as a child and the number of nonschool required books students read in the last year). Talan, however, did not find

significant correlations between self-concept and reading achievement or self-concept and reading attitude, which did not support previous studies.

Dismukes found significant differences between gender for scores on both attitude scales. Females had more positive attitudes according to the MBRAM, and males had more positive attitudes according to the Teale-Lewis. Significant differences also existed between the grade levels according to both instruments. Sixth grade students held more positive reading attitudes than seventh and eighth grade students on the MRBRAM, whereas the opposite was true according to the Teale-Lewis. Dismukes further examined both instruments to determine whether or not they are related and found that the MBRAM and Teale-Lewis measure different constructs of reading attitude. Thus, Dismukes suggested that future studies should be conducted with both instruments using a larger number of subjects and that teachers should be aware of attitude differences between gender and among grade levels.

Isaacs (1990) discussed the independent reading choices of middle school students from The Park School in Brooklandville, Maryland. Students at this school spent at least 70 minutes each week reading self-selected materials and were strongly encouraged to read during their leisure time. As part of the curriculum, students were also required to select at least three readings to annotate, which then made up the summer reading list. Isaacs reviewed the 20 most favorite (most annotated) books and included students' comments for each. She discovered that the interests and reading abilities of middle school readers ranged from children to young adult based on the variety of subjects and complexity of the selected texts. While students annotated fiction and

fantasy books most often, Isaacs described them as readers of multiple genres, including science fiction, sports, and non-fiction.

Ley et al. (1994), over a three-year period of time, investigated middle school students' reading attitudes and behaviors using the Teale-Lewis Reading Attitude Scales and the Reading Behavior Profile. Students responded to these instruments at the beginning of their sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade years. Data confirmed a statistically significant positive relationship between students' reading attitudes and reading behaviors. As this group of students progressed through middle school, their reading attitudes and voluntary reading diminished. The implications of this study supported previous research that suggested there is a decline in reading attitudes and voluntary reading as students progress through middle school. Unlike earlier studies, the findings did not indicate notable gender differences. Females did not have significantly more positive reading attitudes than males, nor did females indicate a significantly higher level of voluntarily reading than males.

Higginbotham's (1999) master's thesis explored the reading interests and reading preferences of sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students by gender. Students indicated their levels of interest in fiction and nonfiction categories using a researcher-developed survey with fictitious titles and annotations, similar to an instrument created by Harkrader and Moore (1997). Higginbotham's findings were consistent with previous interest studies. There were gender differences in literature preferences. Males and females preferred different categories and sometimes fit common stereotypes. For example, females indicated a strong interest in romance, but males selected the categories of sports and science. Overall, students were more interested in fiction than nonfiction, which also

corresponds with previous studies. The results of Higginbotham's study suggest that in order to motivate students to read, teachers need to be aware of their interests and provide access to such materials.

The most recent examination of middle school readers is McKenna et al. (2012) nationwide survey of middle school students' reading attitudes by purpose (recreational and academic) and medium (print and digital settings), as well as by gender and grade level. Researchers used classroom observations in both middle and high school, research on adolescent recreational reading, and a review of surveys on related topics to develop the 21-item survey instrument. Students responded to Likert scaled items designed to elicit attitudes toward recreational and academic reading using print and digital settings in given scenarios. The findings revealed that females had more positive academic reading attitudes than males in both print and digital settings. Similar to previous research, females also had more positive recreational reading attitudes in print settings. McKenna et al. noted an interesting finding—that males held more positive recreational reading attitudes than females in digital settings, a discovery they indicated as promising for future study of reading and male adolescents. The findings of this study also revealed a gradual decline in reading attitudes from sixth to eighth grade with the exception of academic print, for which attitudes were consistent across the grade levels.

Reader Self-Perception

Bandura (1993) described self-efficacy as a belief in one's capability to function at a level commensurate with the demands of the given situation. "Unless people believe that they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act" (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprar, & Pastorelli, 1996, p. 1206). The role of self-efficacy in

the classroom setting, specifically as it relates to reading, has been addressed in terms of motivation (Gambrell et al., 1996; Wigfield, Guthrie, & McGough, 1996), confidence (Wang, 2000), competence (Smith & Wilhelm, 2004), and affect (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

Henk and Melnick (1995) developed the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) to measure how children feel about themselves as readers. The RSPS is based on the psychological construct of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and patterned after McKenna and Kear's (1990) Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS). The RSPS focuses on intermediate level readers and similar to the ERAS, "has been validated systematically and measures a dimension of affect that almost certainly influences attitudes toward reading" (p. 471). Children's responses to the statements yield a raw score that is then compared to the norming data (p. 474). Higher raw scores indicate a more positive reader self-perception. Data from the RSPS can be used for assessment and intervention with individual students or groups of students, monitoring students over time, as well as in identifying at risk students.

Smith and Wilhelm (2004) interviewed young men in middle and high school about their favorite activities, reactions to different kinds of literacy, and their literacy logs to discover the activities in which the young men felt most competent. The data established the significance of competency as it relates to self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993) and optimal experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). "The activities favored by the boys tended to be ones in which they could receive clear and immediate feedback on their competence" (p. 467). Thus, the boys' feelings of competence and self-efficacy

motivated their involvement in certain literacy activities, as well as their avoidance of those activities in which they felt least capable.

In a discussion of children's reading attitudes and their literacy development, Wang (2000) addressed self-efficacy in terms of student confidence and success with past literacy experiences. He purported that "children's confidence determines whether they can succeed or not...and positive feedback about children's reading from teachers, peers, and parents make children confident in reading" (p. 2). Likewise, negative experiences such as failure to comprehend a text can result in a loss of confidence. He suggested ways that teachers and parents can promote children's confidence in their literate abilities, which ultimately ensures their future success as readers.

Wigfield et al. (1996) developed the Motivations for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) to see how children describe their motivations for reading. They began with a list of constructs that defined reading motivation and then wrote statements to measure each construct. The first two constructs, Reading Efficacy and Reading Challenge, assess children's belief that they can be successful at reading and their satisfaction of mastering the text. These dimensions are grounded in Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy and Wigfield's (1994) expectancy-value theory. Both theorists propose "that individuals are more likely to do tasks or activities when they think they can master the activity. Therefore, to succeed in reading children need to believe they can read" (as cited in Wigfield et al., 1996, p. 2). The MRQ considers reader self-efficacy to be a key component in understanding students' overall motivation to read.

A similar instrument developed by Gambrell et al. (1996) also links reading motivation and reader self-efficacy. The authors extended the work of Henk and Melnick

(1995) by addressing two components of motivation theory: self-concept and task value. The Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) evaluates children's self concepts and their value of reading, and consists of two components—a survey that can be administered individually or in a group setting and a one-on-one interview. The survey measures a reader's self-concept and value of reading through a list of items with a 4-point response scale. The items designed to measure reader self-concept reveal students' feelings of competence and ability to perform similarly to peers. Based on the results of the MRP, teachers can implement activities and provide meaningful reading experiences to promote more positive reading self-concepts and reading values.

Reading Achievement

Studies have investigated the relationship between reading achievement and reading behavior (Anderson et al., 1988; Foertsch, 1992; Greaney, 1980; Stanovich, 1986; Walberg & Tsai, 1984), reading achievement and reading attitude (Beach, 1985; Estes, Richards, & Wetmore-Rogers, 1989), as well as reading achievement and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994; Chapman & Tunmer, 1995; Cloer & Rumbold, 2006; Waleff, 2010).

Anderson et al. (1988) and Greaney (1980) examined how children spent their leisure time outside of school with a specific focus on the amount of time spent reading. Both studies also looked at the correlation between leisure reading and reading achievement. Greaney subdivided students' leisure reading into three categories for the purpose of analysis: book, comic, and newspaper reading. Each of these categories was then correlated with students' reading attainment, with the exception of newspaper reading, as its proportion was considered minor. Book reading, along with several other

variables considered, had the highest correlation with reading attainment, although comic reading had a smaller but still positive correlation. Similarly, Anderson et al. found that students' reading behaviors outside of school correlated positively with the change in their reading proficiency from second to fifth grade. "Time spent reading books was the best predictor of a child's growth as a reader from the second to the fifth grade" (p. 297). Their data revealed a rise in reading comprehension for students who read 0 to 10 minutes per day. Both studies evidenced the positive relationship between reading behavior and reading achievement.

Estes et al. (1989) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP), a reading assessment developed by Touchstone Applied Science Associates (TASA) and used by the state of Virginia to identify children with reading difficulties. The DRP and several criterion measures were given to 54 sixth-grade students at two rural middle schools in central Virginia. Half of the students were identified by their teachers as poor readers, and the other half were categorized as above average readers either by their teachers or because they attended an enrichment class. The study proved the DRP to be moderately effective in identifying struggling readers, and it also showed that children with higher scores on the DRP had more positive reading attitudes.

Bandura (1994) defined self-efficacy as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (p. 71). He explained that self-efficacy beliefs decide people's thoughts, feelings, motivations, and behaviors. People who believe in their capabilities approach tasks in a more positive manner and set goals for themselves and remain

committed to them. In contrast, those who doubt their abilities avoid difficult tasks because such tasks seem threatening, and these individuals have low ambition and lack commitment to any goals they do have. Bandura explained that the school functions as an agency for nurturing students' cognitive self-efficacy, which involves the development of the knowledge and problem-solving skills necessary for success in society as a whole. As students become adept at various cognitive skills, they develop an intellectual efficacy that affects how they approach future educational tasks. Bandura stated, "Students' belief in their capabilities to master academic activities affects their aspirations, their level of interest in academic activities, and their academic accomplishments" (p. 78). Thus, a students' self-efficacy beliefs have the potential to affect their achievement in reading.

Summary

Chapter two reviewed the literature relevant to this study in the areas of adolescent literacy, young adolescents, the middle school, middle school readers, reader self-perception, and reading achievement. The literature review defined adolescent literacy and discussed key research on the reading behaviors of adolescents. The research established that there is concern regarding adolescents' reading achievement and that self-perception, as well as reading behaviors, are related to reading achievement.

The literature reviewed suggested that young adolescents possess unique needs, both developmentally and as readers. Studies indicated that at the beginning of adolescence, children experience profound physical, social, and psychological changes that affect their overall development. The research also revealed that young adolescents are multi-dimensional as readers, with inconsistencies and complexities in their abilities and attitudes toward reading.

According to the literature, today's middle school is a result of over a century of education reform that was initiated in 1894 by The Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies. The junior high schools that were first established in 1909-1910 gave rise to an innovative and unique educational environment for young adolescents. As a result of criticism, however, junior high schools transformed into middle schools, which were intended to be more developmentally responsive to the unique needs of young adolescents.

Studies of middle school readers indicated that there is a relationship between reading attitudes and reading achievement, as well as between reading attitudes and reading behaviors. Middle school students' reading interests and behaviors are affected by multiple factors including their reading attitudes, self-perceptions as readers, and gender. The research also cited the relationship between self-perception and motivation. Students who believe in their reading abilities are more likely to engage in literacy behaviors, which also impact reading achievement. Researchers revealed the relationship between reading behavior and reading achievement.

Chapter three will specify the methodology that guided this study and will discuss the research design, participants, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter 3

Method of the Study

This chapter describes the methodology employed to gather and analyze data for this study. The chapter contains the following sections: purpose of the study, design, participants, instruments, procedures for data collection and analysis, and summary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to create a description of the reading experiences and behaviors of middle school students from a rural middle school campus in South Texas and to investigate the relationship between these characteristics and students' self-perceptions as readers, their reading achievement, gender, and ethnicity.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors?
2. What are middle school students' self-perceptions as readers?
3. What is the relationship between middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors, self-perceptions, and reading achievement?
4. Do the characteristics of middle school readers differ because of gender or ethnicity?

Design

This study was a quantitative examination of the reading experiences and behaviors of middle school students, grades six through eight, enrolled in a rural middle school in a South Texas farming community. The study investigated the relationship between these characteristics and students' self-perceptions as readers, their reading achievement as measured by the state's standardized reading assessment, gender, and

ethnicity. The sources of data were two different questionnaires and scores from the state's standardized reading assessment, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

Participants

The research participants were 243 middle school students, grades six through eight, enrolled in a rural middle school in a South Texas farming community. According to 2009-2010 demographic data, the middle school campus consisted of a total of 427 students: 159 in sixth grade, 132 in seventh grade, and 136 in eighth grade. Of these students, 11% received special education services, 2% were English Language Learners, and 59% were eligible for the free and reduced lunch program. Hispanic students accounted for 56% of the student population, and Caucasian students made up the remaining 44%.

The subject of reading was taught separately from language arts; thus, students in all grade levels attended a 45-minute reading class each day. The students classified as honors or gifted and talented within each grade level attended a class designated specifically for honors/gifted and talented students. Students who received special education services attended a reading class taught by the campus special education reading teacher. The reading curriculum was based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state standards for education in Texas public schools, and included textbook-adopted materials from Glencoe Publishing, as well as other teacher-selected literature and materials.

Standardized test scores in reading from the 2009-2010 school year revealed that a majority of students were reading and comprehending grade-level texts at a proficient

level. Of the 388 students who took the state-mandated standardized test known as the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), 86.3% achieved the minimum standard required to pass. The 13.7% who did not achieve the minimum passing standard consisted of approximately 16% of the sixth graders, 16% of the seventh graders, and 8% of the eighth graders.

Prior to the commencement of this study, permission was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of Texas A & M University—Corpus Christi (IRB# 21-10), as well as from the school district’s superintendent and campus principal. Also, only those students who returned signed parent consent forms participated in the study.

Instruments

Reading Experiences and Behaviors Questionnaire.

A review of related literature revealed a questionnaire developed and administered by The National Literacy Trust (Clark & Foster, 2005) to more than 8,000 primary and secondary students in England. The National Literacy Trust sought to collect data regarding students’ reading preferences and behaviors “with the aim of supporting parents, teachers, and other literacy professionals in promoting wider reading” (Clark & Foster, 2005, p. 7). Their questionnaire was developed according to questions asked in previous studies of students’ reading habits, practices, and attitudes and also included additional questions designed to address family reading practices. The questionnaire also contained demographic information such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status.

The researcher contacted The National Literacy Trust to obtain permission to use and make modifications to their questionnaire. The researcher shared with The National Literacy Trust the modifications she felt were needed in order for the survey to best meet

the needs of the student population at the selected middle school campus. The National Literacy Trust granted the researcher permission to use and modify their questionnaire with the understanding that the researcher would credit The National Literacy Trust and share the findings of her study.

The modifications to the questionnaire involved spelling, word choice, and format. Because the original version was developed and administered in England, some of the spelling and terminology would be unfamiliar to American students. Thus, terms such as *carer*, *teletext*, and *encyclopaedias* were either omitted, as they did not apply, or altered in order to parallel the experiences of the student participants. The researcher changed the layout of the survey by inserting more space within and between the questions and answer choices.

Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS).

Henk and Melnick (1992, 1995) developed the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) to measure a child's self-perception of reading ability. The need for such an instrument grew out of the recognition of the affective factors—the values, beliefs, and attitudes—that influence children's reading behaviors (Alvermann & Guthrie, 1993). The more positive associations children make with reading, the more likely they are to read frequently and with intensity. This is similar to Bandura's (1977) theory of perceived self-efficacy, which explains that people's judgment of their ability to complete an activity determines future involvement in that activity.

The RSPS consists of 33 statements based on the four factors of the basic self-efficacy model (Bandura, 1977; Schunk, 1984): performance, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states. The authors redefined and renamed the

performance factor as *progress*, a more narrow and applicable term according to their research, and use the term to refer to the comparison children make between their past and present reading performance. Observational comparison deals with a child's perception of his or her reading performance as compared to other students, and social feedback refers to any input the child receives regarding reading, which may come from home, school, and/or peers.

To complete the survey, students respond to a 5-point Likert scale to indicate to what extent they agree with the given statements. Their responses are then converted to a numerical score and added to get a raw score for each of the four factors of the self-efficacy model. Students' raw scores, when compared with the norming data, indicate whether or not the child's self-perceptions are above, below, or right at the normal range (Henk & Melnick, 1995). The RSPS was normed extensively and is recommended for use in fourth through sixth grades only; however, the authors of the study said that "it might prove to be functional at higher grade levels" (p. 476). Based on original norming and subsequent use of the survey with eighth grade students (McNair, 2011), the researcher chose to use this survey instrument with sixth through eighth grades.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

Students in grades three through eleven who are enrolled in the Texas public school system are required each school year to take a standardized reading test designed to assess their reading comprehension skills and mastery of the state standards. Testing begins in third grade and continues each year until the eleventh grade, after which students are no longer tested unless, during the eleventh grade, they fail to meet the minimum passing standard. Such students continue taking the assessment during their

twelfth-grade year in order to achieve the minimum passing standard and also meet the testing component required for high school graduation. At the time of this study, the test was known as the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, or TAKS.

The TAKS Reading test for sixth through eighth grades consisted of a minimum of 42 questions based on four-to-five different fiction and nonfiction reading passages. All questions were multiple choice with four answer choices and addressed grade appropriate reading skills as defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state standards for education in Texas public schools. Students were given a vertical scale score which was calculated from the number of questions they answered correctly. The vertical scale scores could then be compared across grade levels for reading, thus showing the academic progress students made over time. For the purpose of this study, students' reading achievement was defined by their 2010 reading TAKS scale scores.

Procedures for Data Collection

The researcher spent one week visiting all sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade reading classes to explain the research study and elicit student participation. All students who showed an interest in participating received copies of the student assent and parent consent forms to be returned to their reading teachers. The classroom reading teachers had a list of students' names and school identification numbers by class period so that they could keep track of those students who returned the signed forms. Students were given one week to return the forms and were reminded about the study by their reading teacher each day. All signed consent forms were coded according to students' identification numbers and kept in the counselor's office.

At the start of the following week, classroom reading teachers administered the Reader Self-Perception Scale (Henk & Melnick, 1995) using a set of instructions developed by the researcher. Students wrote their school identification numbers at the top of the page to ensure confidentiality. The reading teachers collected all questionnaires and retained only those belonging to the students who had returned signed consent forms. These questionnaires were then given to the researcher for analysis. The questionnaires that belonged to students without consent forms were destroyed. After the researcher entered the data from the self-perception scale, the questionnaires were stored in the counselor's office along with the consent forms.

Throughout that week, as the reading classes completed the RSPS, the researcher scheduled a time to go into each class and administer the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire (Clark & Foster, 2005). Again, students wrote their identification numbers at the top of the page to ensure confidentiality. The researcher displayed the questionnaire using a document camera and pointed to each question and the possible answer choices as she read them aloud. The researcher also answered any questions that students had regarding the questionnaire. The classroom teacher collected the questionnaires and removed those which did not have corresponding signed consent forms on file. The teacher then gave the questionnaires to the researcher, and upon completion of the data entry, the researcher turned the questionnaires over to the counselor to be filed.

The researcher also obtained students' standardized test scores from the campus counselor. The counselor shared this data with the researcher using students' identification numbers and for only those students with signed consent forms on file.

Procedures for Data Analysis

Data for this study was collected over a four-week period during the spring semester of 2010. The reading experiences and beliefs questionnaire, the RSPS, and the TAKS scores provided quantitative data regarding students' reading experiences and habits, their self-perceptions as readers, and their reading achievement.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 was used to manage and analyze data from the reading experiences and beliefs questionnaire and the RSPS, as well as students' TAKS scores. Several statistical analyses were used; the first was descriptive statistics, which addressed research questions one and two, and also reported the demographic composition of the students. The second was analysis of variance (ANOVA), which addressed research question three and explored students' reading experiences and beliefs, their self-perceptions as readers, and their TAKS scores. The third was independent-samples *t*-tests that addressed research question four and evaluated the difference between two different and independent groups on the basis of students' reading experiences and beliefs and TAKS scores: males and females, as well as Caucasian students and Hispanic students. The fourth was a series of Mann-Whitney tests that also addressed research question four and evaluated the difference between males and females, as well as between Caucasian students and Hispanic students, on the basis of students' reading experiences and beliefs and reader self-perceptions.

Summary

This chapter described the methodology employed to gather and analyze data for this study and answer the research questions. A description of the purpose of the study,

the research design, the participants involved, the instruments used to collect the data, and the procedures for data collection and analysis were included in this chapter.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter presents the findings of the study of middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors, reader self-perceptions, and the relationship between these factors and students' TAKS scores, gender, and ethnicity in one rural middle school in South Texas. Three sources of data were used in this study: a reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS), and 2010 TAKS Reading scores from a sample of middle school students. These data sets were analyzed to determine the significance of the relationships that existed between students' reading experiences and behaviors, self-perceptions as readers, their reading achievement, gender, and ethnicity.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors?
2. What are middle school students' self-perceptions as readers?
3. What is the relationship between middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors, self-perceptions, and reading achievement?
4. Do the characteristics of middle school readers differ because of gender or ethnicity?

This study was conducted in the spring of 2010. The research participants were 243 middle school students, grades six through eight, enrolled in a rural middle school in South Texas. Parent consent and student assent forms were received prior to data collection. A modified version of the questionnaire developed and administered by The National Literacy Trust (Clark & Foster, 2005) was used; the survey took students

approximately 25 minutes to complete. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix C. Also, the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) developed by Henk & Melnik (1992, 1995) was used; it took students approximately 15 minutes to complete. A copy of the RSPS is included in Appendix E. Students' TAKS scores were provided by the campus counselor and were also used as part of the analysis.

Reading Experiences and Behaviors Questionnaire

Part I: Student Demographics and Description.

The first part of the questionnaire addressed the students' gender, age, ethnicity, and grade level. The demographic distribution of the students is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Distribution: Gender, Age, Ethnicity, and Grade Level

Category	N	%
Gender		
Female	147	60.5
Male	96	39.5
Age		
11	27	11.1
12	79	32.5
13	71	29.2
14	61	25.1
15	5	2.1
Ethnicity		
African American	1	0.4
Caucasian	119	49.0
Hispanic	105	43.2
Other	18	7.4
Grade		
Sixth	100	41.2
Seventh	66	27.2
Eighth	77	31.7

There were 243 student participants, and a majority of the students were female, representing approximately 60% of the sample. The students' ages ranged from 11 to 15, with the majority of students (86%) identifying themselves as 12, 13, or 14 years of age.

A slightly higher percentage of Caucasian students, 49%, elected to participate than any other ethnic group. The grade level with the most participants was sixth grade, followed by eighth grade, and finally seventh grade.

This section of the questionnaire also covered general information about students as readers. Students responded to questions about their abilities as readers, whether or not they enjoy reading, as well as questions about the books in their homes and how often they read outside of school.

Responses to the question, “How much do you enjoy reading?” are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

How Much Students Enjoy Reading

	Not at all		Some		A lot		Very much	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All students	25	10.3	127	52.3	46	18.9	45	18.5
Gender								
Female	9	6.1	78	53.1	28	19.0	32	21.8
Male	16	16.7	49	51.0	18	18.8	13	13.5
Ethnicity								
Caucasian	9	7.6	59	49.6	23	19.3	28	23.5
Hispanic	11	10.5	61	58.1	19	18.1	14	13.3
Other	5	26.3	7	36.8	4	21.1	3	15.8

When students were asked how much they enjoy reading, approximately 37% responded positively by selecting “a lot” and “very much,” while 52% selected “some” and 10% selected “not at all.” Females responded more positively than males, and more males (16.7%) than females (6.1%) indicated that they did not enjoy reading at all. A majority of students in each ethnicity, Caucasian (49.6%), Hispanic (58.1%), and Other

(36.8%), noted that they enjoyed reading at least “some.” Almost 24% of Caucasian students selected “very much” compared to 13.3% of Hispanic students and 15.8% of Other students. Approximately 26% of Other students chose “not at all” compared to 10.5% of Hispanic students and 7.6% of Caucasian students.

Responses to the question, “How good a reader do you think you are?” are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Students Rate Their Reading Abilities

	Scale 1-10	N	%
Not a very good reader	1	6	2.5
	2	2	.8
	3	4	1.6
Average reader	4	17	7.0
	5	37	15.2
	6	39	16.0
	7	48	19.8
Excellent reader	8	41	16.9
	9	24	9.9
	10	24	9.9

When students were asked to evaluate their reading abilities on a scale of 1 to 10, a majority of students identified themselves as average readers, which is represented by the range of numbers from 4 to 7. The remaining percentage of students—36%—classified themselves as excellent readers, while 4% classified themselves as not very good readers.

Responses by gender to the question, “How good a reader do you think you are?” are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Students (by gender) Rate Their Reading Abilities

	Scale 1-10	Females		Males	
		N	%	N	%
Not a very good reader	1	3	2.0	3	3.2
	2	0	0.0	2	2.1
	3	2	1.4	2	2.1
Average reader	4	11	7.5	6	6.3
	5	21	14.3	16	16.8
	6	18	12.2	21	22.1
	7	31	21.1	17	17.9
Excellent reader	8	27	18.4	14	14.7
	9	19	12.9	5	5.3
	10	15	10.2	9	9.5

A higher percentage of females classified themselves as excellent readers (41.5%) compared to males (29.5%); a majority of males identified themselves as average readers (63.1%). Fewer females (3.4%) than males (7.4%) believed they were not very good readers.

Responses by ethnicity to the question, “How good a reader do you think you are?” are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Students (by ethnicity) Rate Their Reading Abilities

	Scale 1-10	Caucasian		Hispanic		Other	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Not a very good reader	1	1	.8	4	3.8	1	5.3
	2	2	1.7				
	3	2	1.7	2	1.9		
Average reader	4	5	4.2	11	10.5	1	5.3
	5	18	15.3	17	16.2	2	10.5
	6	18	15.3	20	19.0	1	5.3
	7	24	20.3	17	16.2	7	36.8
Excellent reader	8	21	17.8	16	15.2	4	21.1
	9	10	8.5	11	10.5	3	15.8
	10	17	14.4	7	6.7		

A higher percentage of Caucasian students (40.7%) classified themselves as excellent readers compared to Hispanic (32.4%) and Other students (36.9%). More Hispanic students (61.9%) identified themselves as average readers compared to Caucasian (55.1%) and Other students (57.9%). Few students, regardless of ethnicity, believed they were not very good readers.

Responses to the question, “How often do you read outside of school?” are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

How Often Students Read Outside of School

	Never/almost never		Once/twice a month		Once/twice a week		Every day/almost every day	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All students	62	25.5	44	18.1	74	30.5	63	25.9
Gender								
Female	31	21.1	27	18.4	49	33.3	40	27.2
Male	31	32.3	17	17.7	25	26.0	23	24.0
Ethnicity								
Caucasian	32	26.9	12	10.0	38	31.9	37	31.1
Hispanic	23	21.9	31	29.5	29	27.6	22	21.0
Other	7	36.8	1	5.3	7	36.8	4	21.1

Slightly over half of the students indicated that they read anywhere from once/twice a week to every day/almost every day. The remaining 43% of students read either once/twice a month or almost never outside of school. A large percentage of females (60.5%) indicated that they read either every day/almost every day or once/twice a week. Exactly 50% of males also noted that they read either daily or weekly, while 32.3% noted that they never/almost never read. A majority of Caucasian students (63%) indicated that they read either every day/almost every day or once/twice a week compared to 48.6% of Hispanic students and 57.9% of Other students. Slightly more than half of Hispanic students (51.4%) noted that they read once/twice a month or never/almost never compared to 42.1% of Other students and 36.9% of Caucasian students.

Responses to the question, “Do you think you read enough?” are presented in

Table 7.

Table 7

Students Read Enough

	No, and I don't want to read more		No, but I would like to read more		Yes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All students	59	24.3	91	37.4	92	37.9
Gender						
Female	27	18.5	59	40.4	60	41.1
Male	32	33.3	32	33.3	32	33.3
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	28	23.7	36	30.5	54	45.8
Hispanic	25	23.8	47	44.8	33	31.4
Other	6	31.6	8	42.1	5	26.3

Over 60% of students did not believe they read enough, and a little over half of those students indicated that they would like to read more. Approximately 37% of students believed they read enough. Similar percentages of females noted that they read enough (41.1%) and would like to read more (40.4%). Males were evenly divided across all three responses. More Caucasian students (45.8%) than Hispanic (31.4%) and Other students (26.3%) believed they read enough. More Hispanic students (44.8%) indicated that they would like to read more compared to Caucasian (30.5%) and Other students (42.1%).

Responses to the question, “How many books do you think there are in your home?” are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Number of Books in Students' Homes

Category	N	%
None	13	5.3
1-10	43	17.7
11-50	89	36.6
51-100	51	21.0
101-250	32	13.2
251-500	10	4.1
> 500	5	2.1

A very small percentage of students indicated that they had no books at home, and an even smaller percentage indicated that they had more than 500. A majority of students noted that they had anywhere from 11 to 50 books in their homes. Few students had more than 100 books in their homes.

Responses by gender to the question, “How many books do you think there are in your home?” are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Number of Books (by gender) in Students' Homes

	Females		Males	
	N	%	N	%
None	6	4.1	7	7.3
1-10	24	16.3	19	19.8
11-50	63	42.9	26	27.1
51-100	26	17.7	25	26.0
101-250	23	15.6	9	9.4
251-500	3	2.0	7	7.3
>500	2	1.4	3	3.1

A small percentage of female and male students indicated that they had no books in their home, and an even smaller percentage indicated that they had more than 500. Approximately 43% of female students noted that they had 11-50 books in their homes. Similar percentages of male students stated that they had either 11-50 books in their homes (27.1%) or 51-100 books in their homes (26%).

Responses by ethnicity to the question, "How many books do you think there are in your home?" are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Number of Books (by ethnicity) in Students' Homes

	Caucasian		Hispanic		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	4	3.4	8	7.6	1	5.3
1-10	14	11.8	26	24.8	3	15.8
11-50	44	37.0	35	33.3	10	52.6
51-100	30	25.2	17	16.2	4	21.1
101-250	17	14.3	15	14.3		
251-500	7	5.9	3	2.9		
>500	3	2.5	1	1.0	1	5.3

Small percentages of students in each ethnic group noted that they had no books at home or that they had more than 500 books at home. The majority of students in each ethnic group, Caucasian (37%), Hispanic (33.3%), and Other (52.6%), had 11-50 books at home. Around 25% of Caucasian students indicated that they had 51-100 books at home, and almost 25% of Hispanic students noted that they had 1-10 books at home.

Responses to the question, “How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading?” are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Students Talk With Family About Reading Materials

	Never/almost never		Once/twice a month		Once/twice a week		Every day/almost every day	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All students	133	54.7	50	20.6	39	16.0	21	8.6
Gender								
Female	74	50.3	29	19.7	28	19.0	16	10.9
Male	59	61.5	21	21.9	11	11.5	5	5.2
Ethnicity								
Caucasian	58	48.7	23	19.3	22	18.5	16	13.4
Hispanic	64	61.0	25	23.8	12	11.4	4	3.8
Other	11	57.9	2	10.5	5	26.3	1	5.3

A substantial number of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, never or almost never talked with their families about their reading materials. Higher percentages of females talked with their families either every day/almost every day (10.9%) or once/twice a week (19%) than males. Slightly more males (21.9%) than females (19.7%) talked with their family members once or twice a month. A higher percentage of Caucasian students (13.4%) talked with their families every day or almost every day than Hispanic (3.8%) or Other (5.3%) students. More of the Other students (27.8%) talked with their families once or twice a week than Hispanic (11.4%) or Caucasian (18.5%) students.

Part II: Students' Reading Attitudes and Habits.

The second part of the questionnaire addressed students' reading attitudes and habits. Students responded to questions about their views of and reasons for reading, preferred types of reading materials and reading locations, in addition to circumstances that would encourage their reading. At the beginning of this second section, students were asked, "What do you think about reading?" They responded to nine statements about reading by selecting one of five phrases ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Responses to the nine statements are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

What Students Think about Reading

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Reading is more for girls than boys	58	23.9	64	26.3	90	37.0	18	7.4	13	5.3
Reading is boring	76	31.3	59	24.3	49	20.2	35	14.4	24	9.9
Reading is hard for me	110	45.3	85	35.0	23	9.5	17	7.0	8	3.3
Reading is important	10	4.1	9	3.7	31	12.8	107	44.0	86	35.4
I can't find books that interest me	56	23.0	75	30.9	35	14.4	47	19.3	30	12.3
I read outside of school	39	16.0	33	13.6	24	9.9	94	38.7	53	21.8
I like going to the library	19	7.8	30	12.3	58	23.9	83	34.2	53	21.8
I would be happy if someone gave me a book as a present	44	18.1	45	18.5	58	23.9	60	24.7	36	14.8
I do not read as well as other students in my class	63	25.9	71	29.2	61	25.1	28	11.5	20	8.2

Approximately half of students disagreed with the statement “Reading is more for girls than boys.” A large percentage of students (37%) were undecided, while very few students agreed with the statement. Slightly more than half of students disagreed with the statement “Reading is boring.” The remaining 44% of students either had no opinion or agreed with the statement that reading is boring. A large percentage of students (80%) disagreed that “Reading is hard for me.” A small percentage of students remained neutral or agreed with the statement. Approximately 80% of students indicated that “Reading is important.” Few students disagreed or had no opinion. Slightly more than half of students (54%) disagreed with the statement “I can’t find books that interest me,” while 31% agreed. A small number of students had no opinion. Over half of the students agreed with “I read outside of school.” About 10% had no opinion, and 30% disagreed with the statement. A little more than half of students (56%) agreed with “I like going to the library,” whereas about 20% of students disagreed. Approximately 24% of students remained neutral. Roughly 40% of students agreed with the statement “I would be happy if someone gave me a book as a present.” A slightly smaller percentage of students (37%) disagreed, and 24% had no opinion. More than half of students disagreed with the statement “I do not read as well as other students in my class,” and a small percentage (20%) agreed. Approximately 25% of students were undecided.

Responses by gender and ethnicity to each of the nine statements about reading are presented in Tables 13 through 21.

Table 13

Reading is More For Girls Than Boys

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	32	21.8	42	28.6	54	36.7	13	8.8	6	4.1
Male	26	27.1	22	22.9	36	37.5	5	5.2	7	7.3
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	30	25.2	36	30.3	38	31.9	8	6.7	7	5.9
Hispanic	24	22.9	24	22.9	42	40.0	9	8.6	6	5.7
Other	4	21.1	5	26.3	9	47.4	1	5.3		

A substantial percentage of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, had no opinion regarding the statement “Reading is more for girls than boys.” Small percentages of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Slightly more females (28.6%) than males (22.9%) disagreed, and more males (27.1%) than females (21.8%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Caucasian students disagreed (30.3%) or strongly disagreed (25.2%) more often than Hispanic and Other students.

Table 14

Reading is Boring

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	52	35.4	36	24.5	29	19.7	21	14.3	9	6.1
Male	24	25.0	23	24.0	20	20.8	14	14.6	15	15.6
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	44	37.0	22	18.5	25	21.0	19	16.0	9	7.6
Hispanic	29	27.6	31	29.5	21	20.0	13	12.4	11	10.5
Other	3	15.8	6	31.6	3	15.8	3	15.8	4	21.1

Sizable percentages of females (35.4%) and males (25%) strongly disagreed with the statement “Reading is boring.” A higher percentage of males (15.6%) than females (6.1%) strongly agreed, and similar percentages of both genders agreed, had no opinion, or disagreed. More Caucasian students (37%) strongly disagreed with the statement than Hispanic (27.6%) or Other students (15.8%). Higher percentages of Hispanic (29.5%) and Other students (31.6) disagreed than Caucasian students (18.5%). Similar percentages of Caucasian and Hispanic students had no opinion regarding the statement.

Table 15

Reading is Hard for Me

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	71	48.3	53	36.1	8	5.4	10	6.8	5	3.4
Male	39	40.6	32	33.3	15	15.6	7	7.3	3	3.1
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	59	49.6	41	34.5	7	5.9	9	7.6	3	2.5
Hispanic	43	41.0	38	36.2	13	12.4	7	6.7	4	3.8
Other	8	42.1	6	31.6	3	15.8	1	5.3	1	5.3

Small percentages of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Reading is hard for me.” Fewer females (5.4%) than males (15.6%) had no opinion, and fewer Caucasian students (5.9%) compared to Hispanic (12.4%) and Other students (15.8%) had no opinion. More females disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement than males. A slightly higher percentage of Hispanic students (36.2%) disagreed than Caucasian (34.5%) and Other students (31.6%). Almost half of Caucasian students (49.6%) strongly disagreed, while 42.1% of Other and 41% of Hispanic students strongly disagreed.

Table 16

Reading is Important

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	5	3.4	7	4.8	16	10.9	65	44.2	54	36.7
Male	5	5.2	2	2.1	15	15.6	42	43.8	32	33.3
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	1	.8	2	1.7	13	10.9	52	43.7	51	42.9
Hispanic	7	6.7	5	4.8	17	16.2	46	43.8	30	28.6
Other	2	10.5	2	10.5	1	5.3	9	47.4	5	26.3

Small percentages of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement “Reading is important.” A slightly higher percentage of males (15.6%) than females (10.9%) had no opinion. Females agreed (44.2%) and strongly agreed (36.7%) somewhat more than males agreed (43.8%) and strongly agreed (33.3%). More Hispanic students (16.2%) had no opinion compared to Caucasian (10.9%) and Other students (5.3%). Almost 44% of Caucasian and Hispanic students agreed with the statement, and a little more than 47% of Other students also agreed. More Caucasian students (42.9%) strongly agreed than Hispanic (28.6%) and Other students (26.3%).

Table 17

I Can't Find Books That Interest Me

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	32	21.8	52	35.4	18	12.2	31	21.1	14	9.5
Male	24	25.0	23	24.0	17	17.7	16	16.7	16	16.7
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	28	23.5	39	32.8	18	15.1	24	20.2	10	8.4
Hispanic	25	23.8	30	28.6	12	11.4	21	20.0	17	16.2
Other	3	15.8	6	31.6	5	26.3	2	10.5	3	15.8

A generality of females and males disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I can’t find books that interest me.” Females disagreed (35.4%) more often than males (24%), and males strongly disagreed (25%) more often than females (21.8%). Approximately 12% of females had no opinion compared to almost 18% of males. More females (21.1%) agreed with the statement than males (16.7%), while more males (16.7%) strongly agreed than females (9.5%). A majority of students in all ethnicities disagreed with the statement. Almost 24% of both Caucasian and Hispanic students strongly disagreed compared to 15.8% of Other students. A higher percentage of Other students (26.3%) had no opinion. Around 20% of both Caucasian and Hispanic students agreed with the statement, while a little more than 10% of Other students agreed. Hispanic students strongly agreed most often (16.2%) when compared to Other (15.8%) and Caucasian students (8.4%).

Table 18

I Read Outside of School

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	18	12.2	19	12.9	16	10.9	60	40.8	34	23.1
Male	21	21.9	14	14.6	8	8.3	34	35.4	19	19.8
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	19	16.0	15	12.6	8	6.7	40	33.6	37	31.1
Hispanic	14	13.3	17	16.2	14	13.3	47	44.8	13	12.4
Other	6	31.6	1	5.3	2	10.5	7	36.8	3	15.8

A substantial percentage of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, agreed with the statement “I read outside of school.” Females strongly agreed (23.1%) more often than males (19.8%), and Caucasian students (31.1%) strongly agreed more often than Hispanic (12.4%) and Other students (15.8%). Almost 11% of females had no opinion compared to 8.3% of males. More Hispanic students (13.3%) had no opinion than Caucasian (6.7%) or Other students (10.5%). Males disagreed (14.6%) and strongly disagreed (21.9%) more often than females. A higher percentage of Hispanic students (16.2%) disagreed with the statement compared to Caucasian (12.6%) or Other students (5.3%). Almost 32% of Other students strongly disagreed with the statement compared to Hispanic (13.3%) and Caucasian students (16%).

Table 19

I Like Going to the Library

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	7	4.8	23	15.6	34	23.1	52	35.4	31	21.1
Male	12	12.5	7	7.3	24	25.0	31	32.3	22	22.9
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	11	9.2	15	12.6	26	21.8	38	31.9	29	24.4
Hispanic	6	5.7	14	13.3	29	27.6	34	32.4	22	21.0
Other	2	10.5	1	5.3	3	15.8	11	57.9	2	10.5

A majority of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, agreed with the statement “I like going to the library.” Slightly more males (22.9%) than females (21.1%) strongly agreed, and more Caucasian students (24.4%) than Hispanic (21%) or Other students (10.5) also strongly agreed. Males had no opinion (25%) or strongly disagreed (12.5%) more often than females, and females disagreed (15.6%) more often than males (7.3%). Other students had no opinion (15.8%) less often than Caucasian (21.8%) or Hispanic students (27.6%). Other students also disagreed (5.3%) less often than Caucasian (12.6%) or Hispanic students (13.3%). Similar percentages of Caucasian (9.2%) and Other students (10.5%) strongly disagreed with the statement compared with 5.7% of Hispanic students.

Table 20

I Would be Happy if Someone Gave Me a Book as a Present

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	23	15.6	26	17.7	35	23.8	39	26.5	24	16.3
Male	21	21.9	19	19.8	23	24.0	21	21.9	12	12.5
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	19	16.0	23	19.3	28	23.5	28	23.5	21	17.6
Hispanic	21	20.0	17	16.2	25	23.8	30	28.6	12	11.4
Other	4	21.1	5	26.3	5	26.3	2	10.5	3	15.8

Higher percentages of females agreed (26.5%) and strongly agreed (16.3%) with the statement “I would be happy if someone gave me a book as a present” compared to males. Males disagreed (19.8%) and strongly disagreed (21.9%) more often than females. Both genders had similar percentages for “neutral,” females (23.8%) and males (24%). Other students had no opinion (26.3%), disagreed (26.3%), or strongly disagreed (21.1%) more often than Caucasian and Hispanic students. More Caucasian students strongly agreed (17.6%) than Other (15.8%) and Hispanic students (11.4%). More Hispanic students (28.6%) agreed than Caucasian (23.5%) and Other students (10.5%).

Table 21

I do not Read as Well as Other Students in My Class

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	44	29.9	45	30.6	33	22.4	13	8.8	12	8.2
Male	19	19.8	26	27.1	28	29.2	15	15.6	8	8.3
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	31	26.1	35	29.4	33	27.7	13	10.9	7	5.9
Hispanic	25	23.8	31	29.5	25	23.8	13	12.4	11	10.5
Other	7	36.8	5	26.3	3	15.8	2	10.5	2	10.5

Approximately 8% of both males and females strongly agreed with the statement “I do not read as well as other students in my class.” More males than females agreed or had no opinion regarding the statement. Females disagreed (30.6%) and strongly disagreed (29.9%) more often than males disagreed (27.1%) and strongly disagreed (19.8%). A substantial percentage of students in each ethnicity indicated that they had no opinion, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement. Caucasian students were the most neutral (27.7%), more Hispanic (29.5%) and Caucasian students (29.4%) disagreed than Other students (26.3%), and a higher percentage of Other students (36.8%) strongly disagreed compared to Hispanic (23.8%) and Caucasian students (26.1%).

Students were then asked, “I read because:” They were given nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The reasons varied from reading out of necessity to reading for entertainment and personal growth. Responses to the nine reasons for reading are presented in Table 22.

Table 22

Students’ Reasons For Reading

Category	N	%
It is fun	128	52.7
It is a skill for life	126	51.9
It helps me find out what I want/need to know	120	49.4
It gives me a break	103	42.4
It helps me understand more of the world	102	42.0
It teaches me how other people live and feel	97	39.9
I have to	80	32.9
It will help me get a job	62	25.5
It helps me understand more about myself	53	21.8

A majority of students (52.7%) indicated that they read because “it is fun,” and slightly more than half (51.9%) of students indicated that they read because “it is a skill for life.” In contrast, 25.5 % of students indicated that they read because they believed it would help them get a job, and only 21.8% of students read in order to better understand themselves.

Female students' responses to the nine reasons for reading are presented in Table 23.

Table 23

Female Students' Reasons For Reading

Category	N	%
It is fun	83	56.5
It is a skill for life	80	54.4
It helps me find out what I want/need to know	70	47.6
It gives me a break	66	44.9
It teaches me how other people live and feel	60	40.8
It helps me understand more of the world	59	40.1
I have to	44	29.9
It helps me understand more about myself	35	23.8
It will help me get a job	30	20.4

More than half of females noted that they read because "it is fun" (56.5%) and because "it is a skill for life" (54.4%). Small percentages of females indicated that they read because "it will help me get a job" (20.4%) and because "it helps me understand more about myself" (23.8%).

Male students' responses to the nine reasons for reading are presented in Table 24.

Table 24

Male Students' Reasons For Reading

Category	N	%
It helps me find out what I want/need to know	50	52.1
It is a skill for life	46	47.9
It is fun	45	46.9
It helps me understand more of the world	43	44.8
It gives me a break	37	38.5
It teaches me how other people live and feel	37	38.5
I have to	36	37.5
It will help me get a job	32	33.3
It helps me understand more about myself	18	18.8

Slightly more than half of males (52.1%) indicated that they read because "it helps me find out what I want/need to know." A sizable percentage of males also noted that they read because "it is a skill for life" (47.9%) and "it is fun" (46.9%). Few males (18.8%) read in order to better understand themselves.

Caucasian students' responses to the nine reasons for reading are presented in

Table 25.

Table 25

Caucasian Students' Reasons For Reading

Category	N	%
It is a skill for life	67	56.3
It is fun	64	53.8
It helps me find out what I want/need to know	58	48.7
It gives me a break	57	47.9
It teaches me how other people live and feel	52	43.7
It helps me understand more of the world	49	41.2
I have to	35	29.4
It will help me get a job	32	26.9
It helps me understand more about myself	27	22.7

Caucasian students read most often because “it is a skill for life” (56.3%) and “it is fun” (53.8%). A large percentage of Caucasian students also indicated that they read because “it helps me find out what I want/need to know” (48.7%) and “it gives me a break” (47.9%). A small percentage (22.7%) read in order to better understand themselves.

Hispanic students' responses to the nine reasons for reading are presented in

Table 26.

Table 26

Hispanic Students' Reasons For Reading

Category	N	%
It is fun	56	53.3
It helps me find out what I want/need to know	53	50.5
It is a skill for life	49	46.7
It helps me understand more of the world	45	42.9
It gives me a break	41	39.0
It teaches me how other people live and feel	37	35.2
I have to	36	34.3
It will help me get a job	26	24.8
It helps me understand more about myself	22	21.0

A majority of Hispanic students noted that they read because “it is fun” (53.3%) and “it helps me find out what I want/need to know” (50.5%). Almost 47% read because it is a life skill, and 42.9% read because it helped them understand the world. Few (21%) noted that they read in order to better understand themselves.

Other students' responses to the nine reasons for reading are presented in Table 27.

Table 27

Other Students' Reasons For Reading

Category	N	%
It is a skill for life	10	52.6
It helps me find out what I want/need to know	9	47.7
I have to	9	47.7
It is fun	8	42.1
It helps me understand more of the world	8	42.1
It teaches me how other people live and feel	8	42.1
It gives me a break	5	26.3
It will help me get a job	4	21.1
It helps me understand more about myself	4	21.1

Slightly more than half of Other students noted that they read because it is a life skill (52.6%). Almost 48% read because "it helps me find out what I want/need to know" and because "I have to." Only 21% indicated that they read in order to get a job and to better understand themselves.

The questionnaire also asked students to indicate various types of reading materials they preferred, including both fiction and nonfiction. Responses to the question, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" are presented in Table 28.

Table 28

Students' Reading Materials

Category	N	%
Text messages	214	88.1
Magazines	164	67.5
Jokes	154	63.4
Websites	151	62.1
Social networking sites	147	60.5
Song lyrics	147	60.5
Posters/signs	144	59.3
Fiction	144	59.3
Emails	117	48.1
Comics	106	43.6
Books/magazines about TV	82	33.7
Newspapers	81	33.3
Graphic novels	79	32.5
Manuals	67	27.6
Poetry	55	22.6
Catalogs	54	22.2
Factual books	53	21.8
Cook books	50	20.6
Plays	43	17.7
Audio books	32	13.2
Annuals	31	12.8
Books/magazines in another language	30	12.3
Travel books	24	9.9
Encyclopedias	12	4.9

The majority of students (88.1%) selected text messages as their preferred reading material. More than half of students also indicated that they read magazines (67.5%), jokes (63.4%), websites (62.1%), social networking sites (60.5%), and song lyrics (60.5%). In contrast, few students selected annuals (12.8%), books/magazines in another language (12.3%), travel books (9.9%), and encyclopedias (4.9%).

Female students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" are presented in Table 29.

Table 29

Female Students' Reading Materials

Category	N	%
Text messages	139	94.6
Magazines	112	76.2
Posters/signs	102	69.4
Song lyrics	99	67.3
Social networking sites	98	66.7
Jokes	97	66.0
Websites	96	65.3
Fiction	88	59.9
Emails	80	54.4
Comics	63	42.9
Books/magazines about TV	58	39.5
Graphic novels	46	31.3
Poetry	43	29.3
Newspapers	42	28.6
Catalogs	39	26.7
Cook books	38	25.9
Manuals	32	21.8
Plays	30	20.4
Factual books	24	16.3
Annuals	21	14.3
Books/magazines in another language	21	14.3
Audio books	18	12.2
Travel books	16	10.9
Encyclopedias	4	2.7

A large majority of females selected text messages (94.6%) and magazines (76.2%) as their preferred reading materials. More than half of females also chose posters/signs (69.4%), song lyrics (67.3%), jokes (66.7%), and websites (65.3%) as reading materials. Few females read books/magazines in another language, audio and travel books, or encyclopedias.

Male students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" are presented in Table 30.

Table 30

Male Students' Reading Materials

Category	N	%
Text messages	75	78.1
Jokes	57	59.4
Fiction	56	58.3
Websites	55	57.3
Magazines	52	54.2
Social networking sites	49	51.0
Song lyrics	48	50.0
Comics	43	44.8
Posters/signs	42	43.8
Newspapers	39	40.6
Emails	37	38.5
Manuals	35	36.5
Graphic novels	33	34.4
Factual books	29	30.2
Books/magazines about TV	24	25.0
Catalogs	15	15.6
Audio books	14	14.6
Plays	13	13.5
Poetry	12	12.5
Cook books	12	12.5
Annuals	10	10.4
Books/magazines in another language	9	9.4
Travel books	8	8.3
Encyclopedias	8	8.3

Approximately 78% of males selected text messages as their preferred reading material. More than half also preferred to read jokes (59.4%), fiction (58.3%), websites (57.3%), magazines (54.2%), and social networking sites (51%). Less than 10% of males read books/magazines in another language, travel books, or encyclopedias.

Caucasian students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" are presented in Table 31.

Table 31

Caucasian Students' Reading Materials

Category	N	%
Text messages	102	85.7
Magazines	75	63.0
Social networking sites	74	62.2
Websites	73	61.3
Fiction	71	59.7
Posters/signs	69	58.0
Jokes	68	57.1
Song lyrics	68	57.1
Emails	57	47.9
Comics	49	41.2
Newspapers	38	31.9
Books/magazines about TV	35	29.4
Manuals	34	28.6
Graphic novels	31	26.1
Catalogs	28	23.7
Factual books	25	21.0
Cook books	25	21.0
Plays	24	20.2
Poetry	19	16.0
Annuals	17	14.3
Audio books	14	11.8
Travel books	11	9.2
Books/magazines in another language	8	6.7
Encyclopedias	8	6.7

A large majority (85.7%) of Caucasian students noted that text messages were their preferred reading material. More than half also chose magazines (63%), social networking sites (62.2%), websites (61.3%), and fiction (59.7%). Few Caucasian students selected audio books (11.8%), travel books (9.2%), books/magazines in another language (6.7%), or encyclopedias (6.7%).

Hispanic students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" are presented in Table 32.

Table 32

Hispanic Students' Reading Materials

Category	N	%
Text messages	94	89.5
Magazines	76	72.4
Jokes	73	69.5
Song lyrics	66	62.9
Websites	63	60
Fiction	63	60
Social networking sites	60	57.1
Posters/signs	60	57.1
Comics	52	49.5
Emails	50	47.6
Graphic novels	43	41
Books/magazines about TV	40	38.1
Newspapers	38	36.2
Poetry	32	30.5
Manuals	29	27.6
Factual books	24	22.9
Catalogs	22	21
Books/magazines in another language	21	20
Cook books	20	19
Plays	17	16.2
Audio books	16	15.2
Travel books	12	11.4
Annuals	11	10.5
Encyclopedias	4	3.8

Almost 90% of Hispanic students noted that they preferred to read text messages. A majority also selected magazines (72.4%), jokes (69.5%), song lyrics (62.9%), websites (60%), and fiction (60%). Approximately 11% chose travel books and annuals; only 3.8% chose encyclopedias.

Other students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" are presented in Table 33.

Table 33

Other Students' Reading Materials

Category	N	%
Text messages	18	94.7
Posters/signs	15	78.9
Websites	15	78.9
Magazines	13	68.4
Social networking sites	13	68.4
Song lyrics	13	68.4
Jokes	13	68.4
Fiction	10	52.6
Emails	10	52.6
Books/magazines about TV	7	36.8
Comics	5	26.3
Newspapers	5	26.3
Graphic novels	5	26.3
Cook books	5	26.3
Manuals	4	21.1
Poetry	4	21.1
Factual books	4	21.1
Catalogs	4	21.1
Annuals	3	15.8
Plays	2	10.5
Audio books	2	10.5
Books/magazines in another language	1	5.3
Travel books	1	5.3
Encyclopedias		

Almost 95% of Other students indicated that they preferred to read text messages. A large majority also chose posters/signs (78.9%) and websites (78.9%). Approximately 68% selected magazines, social networking sites, song lyrics, and jokes. Few Other students selected books/magazines in another language (5.3%) or travel books (5.3%), and none chose encyclopedias.

Students were asked to reveal the type(s) of fiction they read. Responses to the question, “What types of fiction do you like reading?” are presented in Table 34.

Table 34

Students' Fiction Reading Materials

Fiction Materials	N	%
Adventure	165	67.9
Horror/ghost	150	61.7
Comedy	149	61.3
Crime/detective	105	43.2
Realistic teen fiction	104	42.8
War/spy	95	39.1
Romance	94	38.7
Animal related	80	32.9
Science-fiction/fantasy	79	32.5
Sports related	62	25.5
Poems	45	18.5
I don't read fiction	11	4.5

A substantial percentage of students preferred adventure (67.9%), horror/ghost (61.7%), and comedy (61.3%). Few students indicated that they did not read fiction (4.5%).

Female students' responses to the question, "What types of fiction do you like reading?" are presented in Table 35.

Table 35

Female Students' Fiction Reading Materials

Fiction Materials	N	%
Horror/ghost	98	66.7
Adventure	96	65.3
Realistic teen fiction	86	58.5
Comedy	84	57.1
Romance	83	56.5
Crime/detective	66	44.9
Animal related	48	32.7
Science-fiction/fantasy	40	27.2
Poems	36	24.5
War/spy	34	23.1
Sports related	20	13.6
I don't read fiction	4	2.7

More than half of females indicated that they read horror/ghost (66.7%), adventure (65.3%), realistic teen fiction (58.5%), comedy (57.1%), and romance (56.5)

fiction materials. Few females selected sports-related fiction (13.6%), and 2.7% indicated that they did not read fiction.

Male students' responses to the question, "What types of fiction do you like reading?" are presented in Table 36.

Table 36

Male Students' Fiction Reading Materials

Fiction Materials	N	%
Adventure	69	71.9
Comedy	65	67.7
War/spy	61	63.5
Horror/ghost	52	54.2
Sports related	42	43.8
Crime/detective	39	40.6
Science-fiction/fantasy	39	40.6
Animal related	32	33.3
Realistic teen fiction	18	18.8
Romance	11	11.5
Poems	9	9.4
I don't read fiction	7	7.3

More than half of males indicated that they read adventure (71.9%), comedy (67.7%), war/spy (63.5%), and horror/ghost (54.2%) fiction materials. Few males chose romance (11.5%) and poems (9.4%), and 7.3% indicated that they did not read fiction.

Caucasian students' responses to the question, "What types of fiction do you like reading?" are presented in Table 37.

Table 37

Caucasian Students' Fiction Reading Materials

Fiction Materials	N	%
Adventure	87	73.1
Comedy	70	58.8
Horror/ghost	64	53.8
Crime/detective	50	42.0
War/spy	46	38.7
Animal related	44	37.0
Realistic teen fiction	42	35.3
Science-fiction/fantasy	40	33.6
Romance	38	31.9
Sports related	29	24.4
Poems	15	12.6
I don't read fiction	4	3.4

Approximately 73% of Caucasian students chose adventure as a preferred fiction reading material. More than half selected comedy (58.8%) and horror/ghost (53.8%). A small percentage of Caucasian students chose poems (12.6%), and only 3.4% noted that they did not read fiction.

Hispanic students' responses to the question, "What types of fiction do you like reading?" are presented in Table 38.

Table 38

Hispanic Students' Fiction Reading Materials

Fiction Materials	N	%
Horror/ghost	75	71.4
Comedy	72	68.6
Adventure	70	66.7
Realistic teen fiction	54	51.4
Romance	50	47.6
Crime/detective	46	43.8
War/spy	43	41.0
Science-fiction/fantasy	34	32.4
Animal related	33	31.4
Sports related	27	25.7
Poems	26	24.8
I don't read fiction	4	3.8

A large majority of Hispanic students chose horror/ghost (71.4%) as a preferred fiction reading material. More than half indicated that they liked comedy (68.8%), adventure (66.7%), and realistic teen fiction (51.4%). Only 3.8% noted that they did not read fiction.

Other students' responses to the question, "What types of fiction do you like reading?" are presented in Table 39.

Table 39

Other Students' Fiction Reading Materials

Fiction Materials	N	%
Horror/ghost	11	57.9
Crime/detective	9	47.4
Adventure	8	42.1
Realistic teen fiction	8	42.1
Comedy	7	36.8
Romance	6	31.6
War/spy	6	31.6
Science-fiction/fantasy	6	31.6
Sports related	5	26.3
Poems	4	21.1
Animal related	3	15.8
I don't read fiction	3	15.8

A majority of Other students (57.9%) selected horror/ghost fiction reading materials. Large percentages of students also chose crime/detective (47.4%), adventure (42.1%), and realistic teen fiction (42.1%). Almost 16% of Other students noted that they did not read fiction.

Students were also asked to specify preferred reading locations. The questionnaire offered three primary locations: home, school, and community. Within each of these locations, students selected specific rooms or places where they like to read. Responses to the question, “Where do you like reading?” are presented in Table 40.

Table 40

Students’ Preferred Locations for Reading

Category		N	%
Home	Bedroom	203	83.5
	Outside	116	47.7
	Living room	108	44.4
	Toilet	24	9.9
	Bath	6	2.5
School	Classroom	208	85.6
	School library	84	34.6
	School yard	40	16.5
Community	Traveling	155	63.8
	Public library	90	37.0
	Outside, e.g. park	73	30.0
	Friend’s house	45	18.5
	Restaurant	43	17.7

Students preferred to read in their bedrooms, outside, or in the living room. A small percentage of students (2.5%) indicated that they read in the bath. A large majority

of students (85.6%) indicated that they read in classrooms at school. Students also marked the school library as a common locale for reading. Few students (16.5%) selected the school yard. More than half of students (63.8%) indicated that they read while traveling, and few students would read while at a friend's house (18.5%) or a restaurant (17.7%). A large percentage of students designated that they read in the public library (37.0%) or in an outside location (30.0%).

Female students' responses to the question, "Where do you like reading?" are presented in Table 41.

Table 41

Female Students' Preferred Locations for Reading

Category		N	%
Home	Bedroom	131	89.1
	Outside	78	53.1
	Living room	70	47.6
	Toilet	10	6.8
	Bath	3	2.0
School	Classroom	129	87.8
	School library	44	29.9
	School yard	23	15.6
Community	Traveling	95	64.6
	Public library	56	38.1
	Outside (park)	50	34.0
	Friend's house	33	22.4
	Restaurant	29	19.7

Females preferred to read in their bedrooms (89.1%), the classroom (87.8%), and when traveling (64.6%). A large number also indicated that they liked to read outside (53.1%) and in the living room (47.6%). Almost 30% read in the school library, and 38%

read in a public library. Few females designated the toilet (6.8%) and bath (2.0) as preferred reading locations.

Male students' responses to the question, "Where do you like reading?" are presented in Table 42.

Table 42

Male Students' Preferred Locations for Reading

Category		N	%
Home	Bedroom	72	75.0
	Outside	38	39.6
	Living room	38	39.6
	Toilet	14	14.6
	Bath	3	3.1
School	Classroom	79	82.3
	School library	40	41.7
	School yard	17	17.7
Community	Traveling	60	62.5
	Public library	34	35.4
	Outside (park)	23	24.0
	Restaurant	14	14.6
	Friend's house	12	12.5

Males preferred to read in their bedrooms (75%), the classroom (82.3%), and while traveling (62.5%). Males also indicated that they liked to read outside (39.6%), in

the living room (39.6%), and in the school library (41.7%). Few marked a friend's house (12.5%) and the bath (3.1%) as favorable reading locations.

Caucasian students' responses to the question, "Where do you like reading?" are presented in Table 43.

Table 43

Caucasian Students' Preferred Locations for Reading

Category		N	%
Home	Bedroom	102	85.7
	Living room	53	44.5
	Outside	52	43.7
	Toilet	13	10.9
	Bath	3	2.5
School	Classroom	103	86.6
	School library	42	35.3
	School yard	22	18.5
Community	Traveling	76	63.9
	Public library	41	34.5
	Outside (park)	35	29.4
	Friend's house	23	19.3
	Restaurant	20	16.8

Caucasian students preferred to read in their bedrooms (85.7%), the classroom (86.6%), and while traveling (63.9%). They also designated the living room (44.5%) and outside (43.7%) as places for reading. Around 35% of Caucasian students chose both the school and public library. Few liked to read in the bath (2.5%).

Hispanic students' responses to the question, "Where do you like reading?" are presented in Table 44.

Table 44

Hispanic Students' Preferred Locations for Reading

Category		N	%
Home	Bedroom	87	82.9
	Outside	57	54.3
	Living room	49	46.7
	Toilet	11	10.5
	Bath	1	1.0
School	Classroom	88	83.8
	School library	37	35.2
	School yard	17	16.2
Community	Traveling	68	64.8
	Public library	43	41.0
	Outside (park)	34	32.4
	Friend's house	18	17.1
	Restaurant	17	16.2

Hispanic students preferred to read in their bedrooms (82.9%), the classroom (83.8%), and while traveling (64.8%). More than half liked to read outside. They also selected the living room (46.7%), public library (41%), and school library (35.2%). Few Hispanic students chose to read in the toilet (10.5%), and only one student chose the bath.

Other students' responses to the question, "Where do you like reading?" are presented in Table 45.

Table 45

Other Students' Preferred Locations for Reading

Category		N	%
Home	Bedroom	14	73.7
	Outside	7	36.8
	Living room	6	31.6
	Bath	2	10.5
	Toilet	2	10.5
School	Classroom	17	89.5
	School library	5	26.3
	School yard	1	5.3
Community	Traveling	11	57.9
	Restaurant	6	31.6
	Public library	6	31.6
	Outside (park)	4	21.1
	Friend's house	4	21.1

Other students preferred to read in their bedrooms (73.7%), the classroom (89.5%), and while traveling (57.9%). Almost 37% enjoyed reading outside, and 31.6% enjoyed reading in the living room, a restaurant, and the public library. A small percentage of Other students (5.3%) chose the school yard.

The questionnaire also offered students various scenarios in which they would be more likely to read. Students were given 15 different situations from which they could select as many as they liked. These scenarios were preceded by the prompt, "I would be

more likely to read if:” Students’ responses to the different situations are presented in Table 46.

Table 46

I Would Be More Likely To Read If

Category	N	%
It was about subjects I am interested in	138	56.8
I had more time	127	52.3
I enjoyed it more	103	42.4
Books had more pictures	65	26.7
I knew what to read	55	22.6
The stories were shorter	46	18.9
Books were cheaper	44	18.1
Libraries were better	39	16.0
I had better eyesight	33	13.6
Someone read aloud to me	30	12.3
I found reading easier	30	12.3
Libraries were closer	29	11.9
My parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged me more	16	6.6
My friends read more	15	6.2
My school encouraged me more	15	6.2

More than half of students indicated that they would read more if it was about subjects they were interested in (56.8%) or if they had more time (52.3%).

Approximately 42% of students noted that they would read more if they enjoyed it more. Few students designated their friends (6.2%) and parents or guardians (6.6%) as sources of motivation for reading.

Female students' responses to the 15 different situations are presented in Table 47.

Table 47

Female Students Would Be More Likely To Read If

Category	N	%
I had more time	88	59.9
It was about subjects I am interested in	85	57.8
I enjoyed it more	65	44.2
I knew what to read	40	27.2
Books had more pictures	33	22.4
Libraries were better	28	19
The stories were shorter	26	17.7
Books were cheaper	22	15
I had better eyesight	21	14.3
Libraries were closer	19	12.9
Someone read aloud to me	17	11.6
I found reading easier	13	8.8
My friends read more	11	7.5
My school encouraged me more	9	6.1
My parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged me more	8	5.4

Females would be more likely to read if they had more time (59.9%) and if it was about subjects in which they were interested (57.8%). Approximately 44% noted that they would read more if they enjoyed it more. Less than 10% of females would be more

likely to read if they found it easier, their friends read more, the school encouraged them more, and if their parents or guardians encouraged them more.

Male students' responses to the 15 different situations are presented in Table 48.

Table 48

Male Students Would Be More Likely To Read If

Category	N	%
It was about subjects I am interested in	53	55.2
I had more time	39	40.6
I enjoyed it more	38	40
Books had more pictures	32	33.3
Books were cheaper	22	22.9
The stories were shorter	20	20.8
I found reading easier	17	17.7
I knew what to read	15	15.6
Someone read aloud to me	13	13.5
I had better eyesight	12	12.5
Libraries were better	11	11.5
Libraries were closer	10	10.4
My parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged me more	8	8.3
My school encouraged me more	6	6.3
My friends read more	4	4.2

Males would be more likely to read if it was about subjects in which they were interested (55.2%), they had more time (40.6%), and if they enjoyed it more (40%). Approximately 33% noted they would read more if books had more pictures. Few males designated their parents or guardians, the school, and friends as sources for reading motivation.

Caucasian students' responses to the 15 different situations are presented in Table 49.

Table 49

Caucasian Students Would Be More Likely To Read If

Category	N	%
It was about subjects I am interested in	62	52.1
I had more time	62	52.1
I enjoyed it more	50	42
Books had more pictures	24	20.2
I knew what to read	23	19.3
Books were cheaper	22	18.5
Libraries were better	18	15.1
The stories were shorter	16	13.4
Libraries were closer	15	12.6
Someone read aloud to me	13	10.9
I found reading easier	11	9.2
I had better eyesight	10	8.4
My friends read more	9	7.6
My school encouraged me more	7	5.9
My parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged me more	4	3.4

Approximately 52% of Caucasian students noted that they would read more if it was about subjects in which they were interested and if they had more time. They stated

they would also be more likely to read if they enjoyed it more (42%). A small percentage of Caucasian students noted friends, school, and parents or guardian as sources of reading motivation.

Hispanic students' responses to the 15 different situations are presented in Table 50.

Table 50

Hispanic Students Would Be More Likely To Read If

Category	N	%
It was about subjects I am interested in	64	61
I had more time	55	52.4
I enjoyed it more	45	43.3
Books had more pictures	34	32.4
I knew what to read	26	24.8
The stories were shorter	25	23.8
I had better eyesight	22	21
Books were cheaper	20	19
Libraries were better	19	18.1
I found reading easier	16	15.2
Someone read aloud to me	14	13.3
Libraries were closer	12	11.4
My parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged me more	11	10.5
My school encouraged me more	8	7.6
My friends read more	6	5.7

Hispanic students noted that they would be more likely to read if it was about subjects in which they were interested (61%), if they had more time (52.4%), and if they enjoyed it more (43.3%). Some said they would read more if books had more pictures (32.4%), if they knew what to read (24.8%), and if the stories were shorter (23.8%). Few Hispanic students would read more if their school and friends encouraged them.

Other students' responses to the 15 different situations are presented in Table 51.

Table 51

Other Students Would Be More Likely To Read If

Category	N	%
It was about subjects I am interested in	12	63.2
I had more time	10	52.6
I enjoyed it more	8	42.1
Books had more pictures	7	36.8
I knew what to read	6	31.2
The stories were shorter	5	26.3
Someone read aloud to me	3	15.8
I found reading easier	3	15.8
Books were cheaper	2	10.5
Libraries were better	2	10.5
Libraries were closer	2	10.5
I had better eyesight	1	5.3
My parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged me more	1	5.3
My friends read more		
My school encouraged me more		

Other students noted that they would be more likely to read if it was about subjects in which they were interested (63.2%), they had more time (52.6%), and if they enjoyed it more (42.1%). Some would read more if books had more pictures (36.8%), if they knew what to read (31.2%), and if the stories were shorter (26.3%). Few Other

students would read if they had better eyesight (5.3%) and if their parents or guardians encouraged them, and none indicated that friends and school would motivate them to read.

Students were also provided with a list of activities from which to choose those they would like to do to help themselves and others read more. Students' responses to the question, "Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?" are presented in Table 52.

Table 52

Students' Activities To Help Themselves And Others Read More

Activities	N	%
Helping younger children with their reading	103	42.4
Designing websites/magazines	97	39.9
Reading games	96	39.5
Meeting authors/celebrity readers	87	35.8
Reading groups with friends	85	35.0
Helping choose books for the library	85	35.0
Talking about my favorite reads	83	34.2
Reading for charity/sponsorship	75	30.9
Reading for a competition/prizes	69	28.4
Designing displays for the library	63	25.9
Rating books for your peers	59	24.3
Writing book reviews	27	11.1

Approximately 42% of students selected “helping younger children with their reading” as an activity that would help them and others read more. Few students (11.1%) chose “writing book reviews” as a preferred activity.

Female students’ responses to the question, “Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?” are presented in Table 53.

Table 53

Female Students’ Activities To Help Themselves And Others Read More

Activities	N	%
Helping younger children with their reading	76	51.7
Designing websites/magazines	63	42.9
Meeting authors/celebrity readers	62	42.2
Helping choose books for the library	61	41.5
Reading groups with friends	59	40.1
Reading for charity/sponsorship	59	40.1
Talking about my favorite reads	56	38.1
Reading games	54	36.7
Designing displays for the library	46	31.3
Rating books for your peers	41	27.9
Reading for a competition/prizes	39	26.5
Writing book reviews	19	12.9

Slightly more than half of females chose “helping younger children with their reading” as an activity to help them and others read more. Almost 43% indicated that

they would design websites or magazines. Few females chose “writing book reviews” as a preferred activity.

Male students’ responses to the question, “Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?” are presented in Table 54.

Table 54

Male Students’ Activities To Help Themselves And Others Read More

Activities	N	%
Reading games	42	43.8
Designing websites/magazines	34	35.4
Reading for a competition/prizes	30	31.3
Helping younger children with their reading	27	28.1
Talking about my favorite reads	27	28.1
Reading groups with friends	26	27.1
Meeting authors/celebrity readers	25	26
Helping choose books for the library	24	25
Rating books for your peers	18	18.8
Designing displays for the library	17	17.7
Reading for charity/sponsorship	16	16.7
Writing book reviews	8	8.3

Males frequently selected “reading games” (43.8%) as an activity to help them and others read more. They also noted that they would like to design websites and

magazines (35.4%) and read for a competition/prize (31.3%). Few males designated “writing book reviews” as a preferred activity.

Caucasian students’ responses to the question, “Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?” are presented in Table 55.

Table 55

Caucasian Students’ Activities To Help Themselves And Others Read More

Activities	N	%
Helping younger children with their reading	51	42.9
Reading games	43	36.1
Meeting authors/celebrity readers	43	36.1
Designing websites/magazines	42	35.3
Helping choose books for the library	41	34.5
Reading groups with friends	40	33.6
Talking about my favorite reads	40	33.6
Reading for charity/sponsorship	35	29.4
Reading for a competition/prizes	35	29.4
Designing displays for the library	33	27.7
Rating books for your peers	29	24.4
Writing book reviews	12	10.1

Almost 43% of Caucasian students indicated that “helping younger children with their reading” would be an activity that would help them and others read more. They also

selected “reading games” (36.1%) and “meeting authors/celebrity readers” (36.1%). Only 10.1% chose “writing book reviews” as a preferred activity.

Hispanic students’ responses to the question, “Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?” are presented in Table 56.

Table 56

Hispanic Students’ Activities To Help Themselves And Others Read More

Activities	N	%
Designing websites/magazines	50	47.6
Helping younger children with their reading	48	45.7
Reading games	45	42.9
Meeting authors/celebrity readers	40	38.1
Helping choose books for the library	38	36.2
Talking about my favorite reads	38	36.2
Reading for charity/sponsorship	37	35.2
Reading groups with friends	36	34.3
Designing displays for the library	28	26.7
Reading for a competition/prizes	27	25.7
Rating books for your peers	25	23.8
Writing book reviews	13	12.4

Hispanic students selected “designing websites/magazines” (47.6%), “helping younger children with their reading” (45.7%), and “reading games” (42.9%) as activities

that would help them and others read more. Few students liked the activity of “writing book reviews” (12.4%).

Other students’ responses to the question, “Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?” are presented in Table 57.

Table 57

Other Students’ Activities To Help Themselves And Others Read More

Activities	N	%
Reading groups with friends	9	47.4
Reading games	8	42.1
Helping choose books for the library	7	36.8
Reading for a competition/prizes	6	31.2
Designing websites/magazines	5	26.3
Talking about my favorite reads	5	26.3
Rating books for your peers	5	26.3
Helping younger children with their reading	4	21.1
Meeting authors/celebrity readers	4	21.1
Reading for charity/sponsorship	3	15.8
Designing displays for the library	2	10.5
Writing book reviews	2	10.5

Other students chose “reading groups with friends” (47.4%) and “reading games” (42.1%) as activities that would help them and others read more. They also indicated that they would like to help choose books for the library (36.8%) and read for

competitions/prizes (31.2%). Only 11% of Other students liked the idea of creating displays for the library and writing book reviews.

Part III: Students' Reading With Other People.

The last section of the questionnaire revealed information about students' reading experiences as they related to and involved various people in their lives. Students responded to questions about how different people are involved in their lives as readers. To begin with, students were asked to identify the person(s) responsible for teaching them to read. The questionnaire offered various choices ranging from family and friends to teachers, tutor, and even an option of "other." Students' responses to the question, "Who taught you to read?" are presented in Table 58.

Table 58

Who Taught Students To Read

People	N	%
Teacher	192	79.0
Mom/guardian	191	78.6
Dad/guardian	118	48.6
Grandparent	63	25.9
Brother/sister	58	23.9
Other	27	11.1
Reading tutor	19	7.8
Friend	14	5.8

A majority of students selected teacher (79%) or mom/guardian (78.6%) as the individual(s) responsible for teaching them to read. Few students selected other (11.1%), reading tutor (7.8%), and/or friend (5.8%).

Female students' responses to the question, "Who taught you to read?" are presented in Table 59.

Table 59

Who Taught Female Students To Read

People	N	%
Teacher	120	81.6
Mom/guardian	117	79.6
Dad/guardian	67	45.6
Grandparent	40	27.4
Brother/sister	35	23.8
Other	15	10.2
Reading tutor	11	7.5
Friend	9	6.1

A large majority of females chose teacher (81.6%) and mom/guardian (79.6%) as individual(s) responsible for teaching them to read. Almost 46% selected dad/guardian. Few females chose reading tutor (7.5%) and friend (6.1%).

Male students' responses to the question, "Who taught you to read?" are presented in Table 60.

Table 60

Who Taught Male Students To Read

People	N	%
Mom/guardian	74	77.1
Teacher	72	75.0
Dad/guardian	51	53.1
Grandparent	23	24.0
Brother/sister	23	24.0
Other	12	12.5
Reading tutor	8	8.3
Friend	5	5.2

Males designated mom/guardian (77.1%) and teacher (75%) as the individual(s) responsible for teaching them to read. More than half also selected dad/guardian. Few males chose reading tutor (8.3%) and friend (5.2%).

Caucasian students' responses to the question, "Who taught you to read?" are presented in Table 61.

Table 61

Who Taught Caucasian Students To Read

People	N	%
Mom/guardian	102	85.7
Teacher	90	75.6
Dad/guardian	65	54.6
Grandparent	33	28.0
Brother/sister	25	21.0
Other	13	10.9
Reading tutor	8	6.7
Friend	5	4.2

A majority of Caucasian students indicated that their mom/guardian (85.7%) and teacher (75.6%) were the individual(s) responsible for teaching them to read. More than half also selected dad/guardian. Few Caucasian students chose reading tutor (6.7%) and friend (4.2%).

Hispanic students' responses to the question, "Who taught you to read?" are presented in Table 62.

Table 62

Who Taught Hispanic Students To Read

People	N	%
Teacher	88	83.8
Mom/guardian	75	71.4
Dad/guardian	42	40.0
Brother/sister	30	28.6
Grandparent	23	21.9
Other	11	10.5
Reading tutor	10	9.5
Friend	6	5.7

A large majority of Hispanic students chose teacher (83.8%) and mom/guardian (71.4%) as the individual(s) responsible for teaching them to read. Forty percent of students selected dad/guardian. Few Hispanic students chose reading tutor (9.5%) and friend (5.7%).

Other students' responses to the question, "Who taught you to read?" are presented in Table 63.

Table 63

Who Taught Other Students To Read

People	N	%
Teacher	14	73.7
Mom/guardian	14	73.7
Dad/guardian	11	57.9
Grandparent	7	36.8
Brother/sister	3	15.8
Other	3	15.8
Friend	3	15.8
Reading tutor	1	5.3

A substantial percentage of Other students chose teacher (73.7%), mom/guardian (73.7%), and dad/guardian (57.9%) as the individual(s) responsible for teaching them to read. Few selected reading tutor (5.3%).

Students were also asked to identify with whom they read and talked about reading. Again, the questionnaire offered various choices ranging from family and friends to teachers, librarian, tutor, and even an option of “other.” Students’ responses to the question, “Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?” are presented in Table 64.

Table 64

With Whom Students Read and Talk about Reading

Category		N	%
Read with	teacher	106	43.6
	brother/sister	57	23.5
	other	50	20.6
	mom/guardian	47	19.3
	friend	45	18.5
	dad/guardian	35	14.4
	grandparent	29	11.9
	reading tutor	19	7.8
	librarian	18	7.4
Talk about reading with	mom/guardian	133	54.7
	friend	127	52.3
	teacher	103	42.4
	brother/sister	96	39.5
	dad/guardian	94	38.7
	grandparent	67	27.6
	librarian	63	25.9
	other	52	21.4
	reading tutor	19	7.8

Almost half of the students indicated that they read with their teacher (43.6%), and approximately 24% indicated that they read with a sibling. Few students reported that they read with a tutor (7.8%) and librarian (7.4%). More than half of the students (54.7%) selected “mom/guardian” as the person with whom they talked about reading. Approximately 52% also selected friend. A small percentage (7.8%) reported talking about reading with a “reading tutor.”

Female students’ responses to the question, “Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?” are presented in Table 65.

Table 65

With Whom Female Students Read and Talk about Reading

Category		N	%
Read with	teacher	67	45.6
	brother/sister	42	28.6
	mom/guardian	36	24.5
	friend	35	23.8
	other	29	19.7
	dad/guardian	21	14.3
	grandparent	21	14.3
	reading tutor	14	9.5
	librarian	7	4.8
Talk about reading with	friend	83	56.5
	mom/guardian	82	56.2
	brother/sister	63	42.9
	teacher	61	41.5
	dad/guardian	58	39.5
	librarian	38	25.9
	grandparent	35	23.8
	other	29	19.7
	reading tutor	13	8.8

Females indicated that they read most often with a teacher (45.6%) and sometimes with a sibling (28.6%) or mom/guardian (24.5%). Few read with a reading tutor (9.5%) or librarian (4.8%). More than half of females noted that they talked about reading with a friend and with their mom/guardian. A small percentage (8.8%) selected reading tutor.

Male students' responses to the question, "Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?" are presented in Table 66.

Table 66

With Whom Male Students Read and Talk about Reading

Category		N	%
Read with	teacher	39	40.6
	other	21	21.9
	brother/sister	15	15.8
	dad/guardian	14	14.6
	mom/guardian	11	11.5
	librarian	11	11.5
	friend	10	10.4
	grandparent	8	8.3
	reading tutor	5	5.2
Talk about reading with	mom/guardian	51	53.1
	friend	44	45.8
	teacher	42	43.8
	dad/guardian	36	37.5
	brother/sister	33	34.4
	grandparent	32	33.3
	librarian	25	26.0
	other	23	24.0
	reading tutor	6	6.3

Males selected a teacher (40.6%) as the person with whom they most frequently read. They also noted that they read with "other" people (21.9%). Only 5.2% indicated that they read with a reading tutor. More than half of males selected mom/guardian as

someone they talk to about reading. Approximately 46% chose friend, and almost 44% chose teacher. Few males indicated that they talked with a reading tutor (6.3%).

Caucasian students' responses to the question, "Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?" are presented in Table 67.

Table 67

With Whom Caucasian Students Read and Talk about Reading

Category		N	%
Read with	teacher	50	42.0
	other	23	19.3
	friend	22	18.5
	mom/guardian	21	17.6
	dad/guardian	14	11.8
	brother/sister	14	11.8
	grandparent	9	7.6
	librarian	7	5.9
	reading tutor	6	5.0
Talk about reading with	mom/guardian	71	60.2
	friend	59	49.6
	teacher	54	45.4
	dad/guardian	51	42.9
	brother/sister	42	35.3
	grandparent	36	30.3
	librarian	30	25.2
	other	26	21.8
	reading tutor	9	7.6

Caucasian students designated a teacher (42%) as the person with whom they read most frequently. Few read with a librarian (5.9%) or reading tutor (5%). Caucasian

students noted that their mom/guardian (60.2%) was the primary person with whom they talked about reading. They also talked with a friend (49.6%), teacher (45.4%), and dad/guardian (42.9%). A small percentage of Caucasian students (7.6%) talked about reading with a reading tutor.

Hispanic students' responses to the question, "Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?" are presented in Table 68.

Table 68

With Whom Hispanic Students Read and Talk about Reading

Category		N	%
Read with	teacher	47	44.8
	brother/sister	39	37.5
	other	25	23.8
	mom/guardian	24	22.9
	friend	21	20.0
	dad/guardian	18	17.1
	grandparent	15	14.3
	reading tutor	11	10.5
	librarian	10	9.5
Talk about reading with	friend	52	49.5
	mom/guardian	48	45.7
	brother/sister	44	41.9
	teacher	40	38.1
	dad/guardian	33	31.4
	librarian	26	24.8
	grandparent	24	22.9
	other	22	21.0
	reading tutor	7	6.7

Hispanic students most often read with a teacher (44.8%) or with a sibling (37.5%). Few indicated that they read with a librarian (9.5%). Hispanic students selected friend (49.5%), mom/guardian (45.7%), and sibling (41.9%) as the individuals with whom they talked about reading. A small percentage (6.7%) talked with a reading tutor.

Other students' responses to the question, "Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?" are presented in Table 69.

Table 69

With Whom Other Students Read and Talk about Reading

Category		N	%
Read with	teacher	9	47.4
	grandparent	5	26.3
	brother/sister	4	21.1
	dad/guardian	3	15.8
	other	2	10.5
	mom/guardian	2	10.5
	friend	2	10.5
	reading tutor	2	10.5
	librarian	1	5.3
Talk about reading with	friend	16	84.2
	mom/guardian	14	73.7
	teacher	10	52.6
	brother/sister	10	52.6
	dad/guardian	10	52.6
	librarian	7	36.8
	grandparent	6	31.6
	other	4	21.1
	reading tutor	3	15.8

Other students indicated that they read most often with a teacher (47.4%) and sometimes with a grandparent (26.3%) or a sibling (21.1%). Few read with a librarian (5.3%). A large majority of Other students talked about reading with a friend (84.2%) or their mom/guardian (73.7%). More than half talked with a teacher, sibling, or dad/guardian. A small percentage of Other students (15.8%) talked about reading with a reading tutor.

The questionnaire also asked students to reveal the extent to which their parents/guardians encouraged them to read. Students were given three choices: yes (a lot), yes (sometimes), and no (not at all). Students' responses to the question, "Does your mom, dad, or guardian encourage you to read?" are presented in Tables 70 and 71.

Table 70

Mom/Guardian Encourages Students To Read

	No, not at all		Yes, sometimes		Yes, a lot	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	58	23.9	123	50.6	62	25.5
Gender						
Female	30	20.4	81	55.1	36	24.5
Male	28	29.2	42	43.8	26	27.1
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	23	19.3	57	47.9	39	32.8
Hispanic	26	24.8	58	55.2	21	20.0
Other	9	47.4	8	42.1	2	10.5

Approximately 50% of students indicated that their mom or guardian "Yes, sometimes" encouraged them to read. Males (27.1%) noted more often than females (24.5%) that their mom or guardian encouraged them "a lot." Caucasian students (32.8%)

also noted more often than Hispanic (20%) and Other students (10.5%) that their mom or guardian encouraged them “a lot.” Approximately 47% of Other students indicated that their mom or guardian did not encourage them at all to read.

Table 71

Dad/Guardian Encourages Students To Read

	No, not at all		Yes, sometimes		Yes, a lot	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	92	37.9	107	44.0	43	17.7
Gender						
Female	55	37.4	69	46.9	23	15.6
Male	38	39.6	38	39.6	20	20.8
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	37	31.1	58	48.7	24	20.2
Hispanic	45	42.9	42	40.0	18	17.1
Other	11	57.9	7	36.8	1	5.3

Forty-four percent of students indicated that their dad or guardian encouraged them to read “sometimes.” Males (20.8%) noted more often than females (15.6%) that their dad or guardian encouraged them “a lot.” Caucasian students also indicated more often than Hispanic and Other students that their dad or guardian encouraged them “a lot” and “sometimes.” Almost 43% of Hispanic students noted that their dad or guardian did not encourage them at all to read.

The questionnaire also asked students to reveal the extent to which their parents/guardians spent time reading. Again, students were given three choices: yes (a lot), yes (sometimes), and no (not at all). Students’ responses to the question, “Does your mom, dad, or guardian spend time reading?” are presented in Tables 72 and 73.

Table 72

Mom/Guardian Spends Time Reading

	No, not at all		Yes, sometimes		Yes, a lot	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	62	25.5	117	48.1	64	26.3
Gender						
Female	40	27.2	68	46.3	39	26.5
Male	22	22.9	49	51.0	25	26.0
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	26	21.8	48	40.3	45	37.8
Hispanic	30	28.6	58	55.2	17	16.2
Other	6	31.6	11	57.9	2	10.5

Approximately 48% of students specified that their mom or guardian “sometimes” spent time reading. Males (51%) noted more often than females (46.3%) that their mom or guardian sometimes read. Almost 38% of Caucasian students indicated that their mom or guardian read a lot, compared to 16.2% of Hispanic students and 10.5% of Other students. Approximately 32% of Other students specified that their mom or guardian did not read at all, which was more often than Hispanic (28.6%) and Caucasian students (21.8%).

Table 73

Dad/Guardian Spends Time Reading

	No, not at all		Yes, sometimes		Yes, a lot	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	112	46.1	104	42.8	27	11.1
Gender						
Female	74	50.3	56	38.1	17	11.6
Male	38	39.6	48	50.0	10	10.4
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	59	49.6	48	40.3	12	10.1
Hispanic	46	43.8	46	43.8	13	12.4
Other	7	36.8	10	52.6	2	10.5

Approximately 46% of students indicated that their dad or guardian did not spend time reading. Slightly more than 50% of females noted that their dad or guardian did not read, and 50% of males noted that their dad or guardian sometimes read. The majority of Caucasian students (49.6%) specified that their dad or guardian did not read, and equal percentages of Hispanic students (43.8%) specified that their dad or guardian either did not read or sometimes read. More than half of Other students (52.6%) noted that their dad or guardian sometimes read.

Students were also asked to select whom they believed should encourage them to enjoy reading. Students could select only one answer from the five that were offered. Students' responses to the question, "Who should encourage you to enjoy reading?" are presented in Table 74.

Table 74

Who Should Encourage You To Enjoy Reading

	School		Home		Both		Neither		Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	36	14.8	23	9.5	108	44.4	18	7.4	58	23.9
Gender										
Female	21	14.3	15	10.2	71	48.3	2	1.4	38	25.9
Male	15	15.6	8	8.3	37	38.5	16	16.7	20	20.8
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	23	19.3	11	9.2	57	47.9	10	8.4	18	15.1
Hispanic	9	8.6	12	11.4	44	41.9	7	6.7	33	31.4
Other	4	21.1			7	36.8	2	10.5	6	31.2

Approximately 45% of students specified that both home and school should encourage them to enjoy reading. Some students (14.8%) suggested that only school should encourage them to read, and a smaller group of students (9.5%) suggested that reading encouragement should come only from their homes. The majority of males (38.5%) and females (48.3%) also specified that both home and school should encourage them to enjoy reading. Large percentages of students in each ethnic group also believed that both home and school should encourage them to enjoy reading.

Students were then asked whom they believed should teach them to read. Again, they could select only one answer from the five that were offered. Students' responses to the question, "Who should teach you to read?" are presented in Table 75.

Table 75

Who Should Teach You To Read

	School		Home		Both		Neither		Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	47	19.3	14	5.8	122	50.2	17	7.0	43	17.7
Gender										
Female	30	20.4	8	5.4	79	53.7	5	3.4	25	17.0
Male	17	17.7	6	6.3	43	44.8	12	12.5	18	18.8
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	23	19.3	10	8.4	67	56.3	5	4.2	14	11.8
Hispanic	22	21.0	4	3.8	44	41.9	10	9.5	25	23.8
Other	2	10.5			11	57.9	2	10.5	4	21.1

About half of the students indicated that both home and school should teach them to read. Approximately 19% of students specified that only the school should teach them to read, and 17.7% of students were not sure. The majority of males (44.8%) and females (53.7%) also specified that both home and school should teach them to read. A substantial percentage of students in each ethnic group also believed that both home and school should teach them to read.

The final question asked students to reveal the type(s) of educational resources available in their homes. Students could select as many as necessary. Students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you have at home?" are presented in Table 76.

Table 76

Educational Resources At Home

Category	N	%
A computer	216	88.9
Books of your own	188	77.4
A desk of your own	151	62.1
Access to magazines	150	61.7
Access to a daily newspaper	87	35.8

A large majority of students had access to a computer (88.9%) and books of their own (77.4%), and more than half of students had their own desks (62.1%) and access to magazines (61.7%). A small group of students (35.8%) had access to a daily newspaper.

Female students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you have at home?" are presented in Table 77.

Table 77

Female Students' Educational Resources At Home

Category	N	%
A computer	135	91.8
Books of your own	117	79.6
A desk of your own	92	62.6
Access to magazines	93	63.3
Access to a daily newspaper	52	35.4

A large majority of females indicated that they had a computer (91.8%) and books of their own (79.6%) at home. A small percentage (35.4%) specified that they had access to a daily newspaper.

Male students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you have at home?" are presented in Table 78.

Table 78

Male Students' Educational Resources At Home

Category	N	%
A computer	81	84.4
Books of your own	71	74.0
A desk of your own	59	61.5
Access to magazines	57	59.4
Access to a daily newspaper	35	36.5

A large majority of males indicated that they had a computer (84.4%) and books of their own (74%) at home. A small percentage (36.5%) specified that they had access to a daily newspaper.

Caucasian students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you have at home?" are presented in Table 79.

Table 79

Caucasian Students' Educational Resources At Home

Category	N	%
A computer	110	92.4
Books of your own	97	81.5
A desk of your own	77	64.7
Access to magazines	74	62.2
Access to a daily newspaper	44	37.0

A large majority of Caucasian students indicated that they had a computer (92.4%) and books of their own (81.5%) at home. A small percentage (37%) specified that they had access to a daily newspaper.

Hispanic students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you have at home?" are presented in Table 80.

Table 80

Hispanic Students' Educational Resources At Home

Category	N	%
A computer	91	86.7
Books of your own	77	73.3
A desk of your own	63	60.0
Access to magazines	61	58.1
Access to a daily newspaper	37	35.2

A large majority of Hispanic students indicated that they had a computer (86.7%) and books of their own (73.3%) at home. A small percentage (35.2%) specified that they had access to a daily newspaper.

Other students' responses to the question, "Which of the following do you have at home?" are presented in Table 81.

Table 81

Other Students' Educational Resources At Home

Category	N	%
A computer	15	78.9
Books of your own	14	73.7
Access to magazines	14	73.7
A desk of your own	11	57.9
Access to a daily newspaper	7	36.8

A large majority of Other students indicated that they had a computer (86.7%) and books of their own (73.3%) at home. A small percentage (35.2%) specified that they had access to a daily newspaper.

Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS)

In order to determine the reader self-perceptions of student participants, the data from the RSPS was analyzed by frequencies. Students' responses to the 33 statements of the RSPS are presented according to the factor of self-efficacy to which the given statements belong. These four factors are progress, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states. There is also an additional factor, general perception, that utilizes student responses to only the first question of the RSPS, "I think I am a good reader." This question prompts students to evaluate their reading ability. See Tables 82 through 86.

Table 82

General Perception

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All students	8	3.3	13	5.3	37	15.2	116	47.7	69	28.4
Gender										
Female	5	3.4	8	5.4	17	11.6	70	47.6	47	32.0
Male	3	3.1	5	5.2	20	20.8	46	47.9	22	22.9
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	3	2.5	5	4.2	13	10.9	58	48.7	40	33.6
Hispanic	3	2.9	7	6.7	20	19.0	50	47.6	25	23.8
Other	2	10.5	1	5.3	4	21.1	8	42.1	4	21.1

More than half (47.7%) of students agreed with the statement, and 28.4% strongly agreed. Approximately 15% were neutral, while few students disagreed (5.3%) or strongly disagreed (3.3%). Almost the same percentages of males (47.9%) and females (47.6%) agreed with the statement, and few students from either gender disagreed or strongly disagreed. A majority of students from each ethnicity also agreed with the statement, and few disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Table 83

Progress

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
When I read, I don't have to try as hard as I used to.	7	2.9	17	7.0	37	15.2	102	42.0	80	32.9
I am getting better at reading.	5	2.1	4	1.6	34	14.0	101	41.6	99	40.7
When I read, I need less help than I used to.	10	4.1	8	3.3	22	9.1	107	44.0	96	39.5
Reading is easier for me than it used to be.	4	1.6	6	2.5	22	9.1	114	46.9	97	39.9
I read faster than I could before.	6	2.5	12	4.9	22	9.1	106	43.6	97	39.9
I understand what I read better than I could before.	7	2.9	13	5.3	33	13.6	124	51.0	66	27.2
I can figure out words better than I could before.	5	2.1	9	3.7	31	12.8	120	49.4	78	32.1
I read better now than I could before	5	2.1	10	4.1	25	10.3	134	55.1	69	28.4
When I read, I recognize more words than I used to.	8	3.3	5	2.1	32	13.2	123	50.6	75	30.9

A large number of students agreed (42%) or strongly agreed (32.9%) that they did not have to try as hard as they used to. Approximately 15% had no opinion, and 7% disagreed or strongly disagreed (2.9%). About 42% of students agreed or strongly agreed (40.7%) that they were getting better at reading, and 14% had no opinion. A small percentage disagreed (1.6%) or strongly disagreed (2.1%). A large number of students agreed (44%) or strongly agreed (39.5%) that they needed less help than they used to. A smaller percentage of students disagreed (3.3%) or strongly disagreed (4.1%) than those who had no opinion (9.1%). Almost 47% of students agreed or strongly agreed (40%) that reading was easier for them than it used to be. Approximately 9% had no opinion, 2.5% disagreed, and 1.6% strongly disagreed. About 44% of students agreed or strongly agreed (40%) that they read faster than they could before. Only 4.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed (2.5%), and 9% had no opinion. A majority of students agreed (51%) or strongly agreed (27.2%) that they understood what they read better than before. A small number disagreed (5.3%) or strongly disagreed (2.9%), and almost 14% had no opinion. Around 49% of students agreed or strongly agreed (32.1%) that they could figure out words better than before, and approximately 4% disagreed or strongly disagreed (2.1%). Almost 13% of students had no opinion. A large number of students agreed (55.1%) or strongly agreed (28.4%) that they read better than they could before, and only 4.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed (2.1%). About 10% of students had no opinion. Half of students agreed (50.6%) or strongly agreed (30.9%) that they recognized more words than they used to, and only a few disagreed (2.1%) or strongly disagreed (3.3%). A small group of students (13.2%) had no opinion.

Table 84

Observational Comparison

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I read faster than other kids.	35	14.4	62	25.5	55	22.6	65	26.7	26	10.7
When I read, I can figure out words better than other kids.	18	7.4	44	18.1	75	30.9	75	30.9	31	12.8
I seem to know more words than other kids when I read.	12	4.9	43	17.7	81	33.3	74	30.5	33	13.6
I understand what I read as well as other kids do.	7	2.9	17	7.0	38	15.6	109	44.9	72	29.6
I read better than other kids in my class.	22	9.1	39	16.0	96	39.5	64	26.3	22	9.1
I read more than other kids.	50	20.6	63	25.9	49	20.2	44	18.1	37	15.2

Approximately 27% of students agreed or strongly agreed (10.7%) that they read faster than other kids. Almost 26% disagreed or strongly disagreed (14.4%), while close to 23% had no opinion. Nearly 40% of students agreed or strongly agreed (12.8%) that they could figure out words better than other kids, and about 31% had no opinion. Approximately 18% disagreed or strongly disagreed (7.4%). Close to 31% of students agreed or strongly agreed (13.6%) that they knew more words than other kids when they read. Around 33% had no opinion, and 17.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed (4.9%). Almost 45% of students agreed or strongly agreed (29.6%) that they understood what they read as well as other kids. Almost 16% of students had no opinion, and 7% disagreed or strongly disagreed (2.9%). A little more than 26% of students agreed or strongly agreed (9.1%) that they read better than other kids in their class. Almost 40% had no opinion, and 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed (9.1%). More students disagreed (25.9%) or strongly disagreed (20.6%) that they read more than other kids compared to those who agreed (18.1%) or strongly agreed (15.2%). Around 20% of students had no opinion.

Table 85

Social Feedback

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I can tell that my teacher likes to listen to me read.	8	3.3	25	10.3	155	63.8	40	16.5	15	6.2
My teacher thinks that my reading is fine.	3	1.2	3	1.2	104	42.8	102	42.0	31	12.8
My classmates like to listen to me read.	32	13.2	35	14.4	152	62.6	20	8.2	4	1.6
My classmates think that I read pretty well.	8	3.3	17	7.0	138	56.8	64	26.3	16	6.6
People in my family think I am a good reader.	9	3.7	15	6.2	70	28.8	84	34.6	65	26.7
My teacher thinks I am a good reader.	3	1.2	10	4.1	147	60.5	66	27.2	17	7.0
Other kids think I am a good reader.	11	4.5	20	8.2	139	57.2	56	23.0	17	7.0
People in my family think I read pretty well.	6	2.5	14	5.8	75	30.9	94	38.7	54	22.2
People in my family like to listen to me read.	25	10.3	35	14.4	115	47.3	41	16.9	27	11.1

More than half of students (63.8%) had no opinion about whether or not their teacher liked to listen to them read. Almost 17% agreed or strongly agreed (6.2%) with the statement, while 10.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed (3.3%). Right at 42% of students agreed or strongly agreed (12.8%) that their teacher thought their reading was fine, and close to 43% had no opinion. Few students disagreed (1.2%) or strongly disagreed (1.2%) with the statement. A substantial percentage of students (62.6%) had no opinion about whether or not their classmates liked to listen to them read. A little more than 8% agreed and close to 2% strongly agreed, while 14.4% disagreed and 13.2% strongly disagreed. A majority of students (56.8%) had no opinion about whether or not their classmates thought they were good readers. Fewer students disagreed (7%) or strongly disagreed (3.3%) with the statement than those who agreed (26.3%) or strongly agreed (6.6%). Almost 35% of students agreed or strongly agreed (26.7%) that people in their families thought they were good readers. A small percent disagreed (6.2%) or strongly disagreed (3.7%), and almost 29% of students had no opinion. Approximately 61% of students had no opinion about whether or not their teacher thought they were good readers. Few students disagreed (4.1%) or strongly disagreed (1.2%), while 27.2% of students agreed and 7% strongly agreed. Slightly more than half of students (57.2%) had no opinion about whether or not other kids thought they were good readers. Exactly 23% agreed and 7% strongly agreed, while 8.2% disagreed and 4.5% strongly disagreed. Almost 39% of students agreed or strongly agreed (22.2%) that people in their families thought they read pretty well. Approximately 31% of students had no opinion, and 8% disagreed or strongly disagreed (2.5%). Almost half of students (47.3%) had no opinion about whether or not people in their families liked to listen to them read. Slightly more

students agreed (16.9%) or strongly agreed (11.1%) with the statement than those who disagreed (14.4%) or strongly disagreed (10.3%).

Table 86

Physiological States

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I like to read aloud.	63	25.9	79	32.5	27	11.1	49	20.2	25	10.3
I feel good inside when I read.	24	9.9	38	15.6	62	25.5	71	29.2	48	19.8
Reading makes me feel happy inside.	29	11.9	37	15.2	63	25.9	64	26.3	50	20.6
I feel calm when I read.	10	4.1	33	13.6	46	18.9	95	39.1	59	24.3
I feel comfortable when I read.	16	6.6	28	11.5	54	22.2	87	35.8	57	23.5
I think reading is relaxing.	29	11.9	28	11.5	45	18.5	70	28.8	71	29.2
Reading makes me feel good.	21	8.6	38	15.6	69	28.4	66	27.2	49	20.2
I enjoy reading.	36	14.8	27	11.1	35	14.4	66	27.2	79	32.5

Approximately 20% of students agreed or strongly agreed (10.3%) that they liked to read aloud, while 11.1% had no opinion. A little more than 32% of students disagreed, and 25.9% strongly disagreed. Slightly more than 29% of students agreed or strongly agreed (19.8%) that they felt good inside when they read. Almost 26% of students had no opinion, and 15.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed (9.9%) with the statement. About 26% of students agreed or strongly agreed (20.6%) that reading made them feel happy inside. Around 26% of students had no opinion, and 15.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed (11.9%). Almost 40% of students agreed or strongly agreed (24.3%) that they felt calm when they read. Approximately 19% had no opinion, and 13.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed (4.1%). Close to 36% of students agreed or strongly agreed (23.5%) that they felt comfortable when they read. Around 12% disagreed or strongly disagreed (6.6%), and 22.2% of students had no opinion. Right at 29% of students agreed or strongly agreed (29.2%) that reading was relaxing, while 11.5% disagreed and 11.9% strongly disagreed. Approximately 19% had no opinion. Slightly more than 27% of students agreed or strongly agreed (20.2%) that reading made them feel good. Some students (28.4%) had no opinion, and 15.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed (8.6%) with the statement. Slightly more than 27% of students agreed or strongly agreed (32.5%) that they enjoyed reading, and about 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed (14.8%). Roughly 14% of students had no opinion.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Scores

In order to determine the levels of student achievement, students' TAKS Reading scores were analyzed by frequencies. Students' scores were divided into the three performance level descriptors utilized by the state of Texas: Did Not Meet the Standard,

Met the Standard, and Commended Performance. Students who Did Not Meet the Standard did not correctly answer the minimum number of questions needed to earn a passing score, and students who Met the Standard, correctly answered at least the minimum number of questions needed to earn a passing score. Students who earned Commended Performance exceeded the passing standard considerably, incorrectly answering no more than three questions on the exam. Table 87 presents students' achievement levels.

Table 87

Students' Achievement Levels on the TAKS Test

	Did not meet the standard		Met the standard		Commended performance	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	27	11.1	94	38.7	122	50.2
Gender						
Female	12	8.2	56	38.1	79	53.7
Male	15	15.6	38	39.6	43	44.8
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	11	9.2	39	32.8	69	58.0
Hispanic	14	13.3	44	41.9	47	44.8
Other	2	10.5	11	57.9	6	31.6

Approximately 11% of students Did Not Meet the Standard, and almost 39% of the students Met the Standard. Right at 50% of the students earned Commended Performance. A higher percentage of females (53.7%) earned Commended Performance than males (44.8%); more males (15.6%) than females (8.2%) Did Not Meet the Standard. More Caucasian students earned Commended Performance (58%) compared to

Hispanic (44.8%) and Other students (31.6%). Hispanic students Did Not Meet the Standard (13.3%) more often than Caucasian (9.2%) and Other students (10.5%).

Reading Experiences and Behaviors, Reader Self-Perception, and TAKS Scores

In order to determine the significance of the relationships that existed between students' reading experiences and behaviors, self-perceptions, and TAKS scores, two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted. Students' TAKS scores, which were reported as scale scores, were used as the dependent variable and cross-classified by reader self-perception and various questions from the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire. The self-perception factor was determined by students' responses to the first statement of the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS), "I think I am a good reader." Students were given one to five points depending on how much they disagreed or agreed with the statement. The questions from the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire were also assigned numerical values according to students' responses. Depending on the question, numerical values were either categorical representations of students' responses or assigned based on an ordinal scale, whereby the numbers represented levels of agreement or disagreement and positive or negative feelings regarding students' reading experiences and behaviors. The .05 level of significance was used for all analyses.

The results of the two-way ANOVAs showed that there were statistically significant differences between the TAKS scores and self-perception; however, there was only one statistically significant interaction effect between the TAKS scores, self-perception, and the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire. Upon the examination of the means and standard deviations for the given item on the questionnaire,

it was determined that small group size accounted for the statistically significant interaction. A recoding of the variable associated with the question was performed in attempt to control for group size. A two-way ANOVA was conducted again, at which point, there was no longer a statistically significant interaction between the TAKS scores, self-perception, and the questionnaire.

Therefore, the researcher conducted one-way ANOVAs in order to report the statistically significant differences that existed between the TAKS scores and the RSPS, as well as the TAKS scores and various questions from the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire. Once again, the TAKS scores were used as the dependent variable, and the students' reader self-perceptions and responses to questions from the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire were used as independent variables. The .05 level of significance was used for all analyses.

Relationship of Reader Self-Perception with TAKS Scores

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between reader self-perception and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, self-perception, was determined by students' responses to the first statement of the RSPS, "I think I am a good reader." Students selected one of five levels to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the five groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(4, 238) = 12.31, p < .05, \eta^2 = .171$. ANOVA summary results are presented in Table 88.

Table 88

ANOVA Summary

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Between Groups	501330.788	4	125332.697	12.305*
Within Groups	2424231.508	238	0185.847	
Total	2925562.296	242		

* $p < .05$

Following the statistically significant differences among the five groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed significant differences between the strongly agree group and all other groups ($p < .05$). There were also significant differences between the agree group and the disagree group, as well as the agree group and the undecided group ($p < .05$). Tukey HSD results are presented in Table 89.

Table 89

Tukey HSD Comparison for TAKS Scale Scores

(I) self-perception	(J) self-perception	Mean Diff (I-J)	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
agree	disagree	81.58*	29.52	.44	162.72
	undecided	67.42*	19.06	15.04	119.79
strongly agree	strongly disagree	126.14*	37.69	22.52	229.75
	disagree	136.26*	30.52	52.38	220.14
	undecided	122.10*	20.57	65.57	178.63
	agree	54.68*	15.34	12.51	96.86

 $p < .05$

Relationship of Reading Experiences and Behaviors with TAKS Scores

In order to determine the significance of the relationships that existed between students' reading experiences and behaviors and TAKS scores, one-way ANOVAs were conducted. Students' TAKS scores, which were reported as scale scores, were used as the dependent variable. The questions from the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire were used as the independent variables and were assigned numerical values according to students' responses. Depending on the question, numerical values were either categorical representations of students' responses or assigned based on an ordinal scale whereby the numbers represented levels of agreement or disagreement and positive or negative feelings regarding students' reading experiences and behaviors. The .05 level of significance was used for all analyses.

Relationship of Reading Enjoyment with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between reading enjoyment and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, reading enjoyment, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "How much do you enjoy reading?" Students selected one of four levels: not at all, some, a lot, or very much. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the four groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(3, 239) = 8.51, p < .05, \eta^2 = .096$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference ($M = 107.44$) in TAKS scale score between the very much group and the not at all group was statistically significant at the .05 level. Results also showed a

statistically significant mean difference ($M = 81.64$) in TAKS scale score between the very much group and the some group.

Relationship of Reading Frequency with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between reading frequency and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, reading frequency, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "How often do you read outside of school?" Students selected one of four levels: never or almost never, once or twice a month, once or twice a week, or every day or almost every day. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the four groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(3, 239) = 5.15, p < .05, \eta^2 = .061$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference ($M = 55.01$) in TAKS scale score between the once or twice a week group and the once or twice a month group was statistically significant at the .05 level. Results also showed a statistically significant mean difference ($M = 77.80$) in TAKS scale score between the every day or almost every day group and the once or twice a month group.

Relationship of Read Enough with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between read enough and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, read enough, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Do you think you read enough?" Students selected one of three levels: no, and I don't want to read more; no, but

I would like to read more; or yes. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the four groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(2, 239) = 6.55, p < .05, \eta^2 = .052$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference ($M = 63.49$) in TAKS scale score between the yes group and the no, and I don't want to read more group was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Relationship of Books in Home with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between book in home and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, books in home, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "How many books do you think there are in your home?" Students selected one of seven levels: none, 1-10, 11-50, 51-100, 101-250, 251-500, or more than 500. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the seven groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(6, 236) = 3.50, p < .05, \eta^2 = .082$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference ($M = 115.71$) in TAKS scale score between the none group and the 51-100 group was statistically significant at the .05 level. Results also showed a statistically significant mean difference ($M = 130.47$) in TAKS scale score between the none group and the 101-250 group, as well as between the none group and the 251-500 group ($M = 146.79$).

Relationship of Talk with Family with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between talk with family and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, talk with family, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading?" Students selected one of four levels: never or almost never, once or twice a month, once or twice a week, or every day or almost every day. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were no statistically significant differences among the four groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(3, 239) = 1.57$, $p = .19$.

Relationship of Reading is More for Girls with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between reading is more for girls and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, reading is more for girls, was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Reading is more for girls than boys." Students selected one of five levels: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the five groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(4, 238) = 2.66$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .043$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean differences between the five groups were not statistically significant at the .05 level.

Relationship of Reading is Hard with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between reading is hard and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, reading is hard, was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Reading is hard for me." Students selected one of five levels: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the five groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(4, 238) = 12.99, p < .05, \eta^2 = .179$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference ($M = 115.55$) in TAKS scale score between the strongly disagree group and the neither agree nor disagree group was statistically significant at the .05 level, as well as the mean difference ($M = 145.23$) in TAKS scale score between the strongly disagree group and the agree group. Results also showed a statistically significant mean difference ($M = 93.20$) in TAKS scale score between the disagree group and the neither agree nor disagree group, in addition to the disagree group and the agree group ($M = 122.88$).

Relationship of Can't Find Books with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between can't find books and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, can't find books, was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I can't find books that interest me." Students selected one of five levels: strongly agree, agree, neither agree

nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the five groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(4, 238) = 2.93, p < .05, \eta^2 = .047$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean differences between the five groups were not statistically significant at the .05 level.

Relationship of Read Outside of School with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between read outside of school and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, read outside of school, was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I read outside of school." Students selected one of five levels: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the five groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(4, 238) = 4.93, p < .05, \eta^2 = .077$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed statistically significant mean differences in TAKS scale scores between the strongly agree group and all other groups: strongly disagree ($M = 79.57$), disagree ($M = 75.59$), neither agree nor disagree ($M = 79.07$), and agree ($M = 66.71$).

Relationship of Don't Read Well with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between don't read well and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The

independent variable, don't read well, was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I do not read as well as other students in my class." Students selected one of five levels: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the five groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(4, 238) = 10.61, p < .05, \eta^2 = .151$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed statistically significant mean differences in TAKS scale scores between the agree group and the strongly disagree group ($M = 126.80$), the agree group and the disagree group ($M = 97.71$), and the agree group and the neither agree nor disagree group ($M = 81.36$). Results also showed statistically significant mean differences in TAKS scale scores between the strongly agree group and the strongly disagree group ($M = 119.09$), the strongly agree group and the disagree group ($M = 90.00$), and the strongly agree group and the neither agree nor disagree group ($M = 73.65$).

Relationship of Mom Encourage with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between mom encourage and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, mom encourage, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Does your mom, dad, or guardian encourage you to read?" Students selected one of three levels: yes, a lot; yes, sometimes; and no, not at all. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were no

statistically significant differences among the three groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(2, 240) = .778, p = .46$.

Relationship of Mom Reads with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between mom reads and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, mom reads, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Does your mom, dad, or guardian spend time reading?" Students selected one of three levels: yes, a lot; yes, sometimes; and no, not at all. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the three groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(2, 240) = 4.60, p < .05, \eta^2 = .037$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference ($M = 57.98$) in TAKS scale score between the no, not at all group and the yes, a lot group was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Relationship of Dad Reads with TAKS Scores.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between dad reads and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The independent variable, dad reads, was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Does your mom, dad, or guardian spend time reading?" Students selected one of three levels: yes, a lot; yes, sometimes; and no, not at all. The dependent variable was the TAKS scale score, which ranged from 527 to 1002. The results of the ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences among the three groups on the basis of TAKS scale scores, $F(2, 240) = 3.85,$

$p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .031$. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey HSD procedure.

Results showed that the mean difference ($M = 59.82$) in TAKS scale score between the no, not at all group and the yes, a lot group was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Relationship of Reading Experiences and Behaviors with TAKS Scores

In order to determine whether a relationship existed between students' reading experiences and behaviors and TAKS scores, independent-samples t -tests were conducted. The t -tests investigated whether one group of students had higher TAKS scores than the other.

Relationship of Life Skill with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between life skill and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The life skill variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I read because..." The questionnaire offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The life skill group indicated they read because it was a life skill. The t -test investigated whether the life skill group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test was significant, $t(241) = 3.01$, $p < .05$; the life skill group ($M = 813.23$, $SD = 103.25$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 771.47$, $SD = 113.23$). The effect size was small, $r = .19$.

Relationship of Teach About Others with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between teach about others and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The teach about others variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on

the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, “I read because...” The questionnaire offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The teach about others group indicated they read because it taught them how other people lived and felt. The *t*-test investigated whether the teach about others group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test was significant, $t(241) = 2.56, p < .05$; the teach about others group ($M = 815.04, SD = 108.34$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 778.56, SD = 108.95$). The effect size was small, $r = .17$.

Relationship of Understand World with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between understand world and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The understand world variable was determined by students’ responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, “I read because...” The questionnaire offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The understand world group indicated they read because it helped them understand more of the world. The *t*-test investigated whether the understand world group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test was significant, $t(241) = 2.32, p < .05$; the understand world group ($M = 812.21, SD = 105.06$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 779.32, SD = 111.70$). The effect size was small, $r = .15$.

Relationship of Fun with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between fun and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The fun variable

was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I read because..." The questionnaire offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The fun group indicated they read because it was fun. The *t*-test investigated whether the fun group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test was significant, $t(241) = 2.75, p < .05$; the fun group ($M = 811.23, SD = 102.70$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 772.97, SD = 114.61$). The effect size was small, $r = .17$.

Relationship of Find Out Information with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between find out information and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The find out information variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I read because..." The questionnaire offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The find out information group indicated they read because it helped them find out what they wanted or needed to know. The *t*-test investigated whether the find out information group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test was significant, $t(241) = 3.33, p < .05$; the find out information group ($M = 816.43, SD = 102.26$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 770.39, SD = 112.81$). The effect size was small, $r = .20$.

Relationship of Break with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between break and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The break variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences

and behaviors questionnaire, “I read because...” The questionnaire offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The break group indicated they read because it gave them a break. The *t*-test investigated whether the break group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test was significant, $t(241) = 4.24, p < .05$; the break group ($M = 826.83, SD = 102.55$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 768.33, SD = 108.94$). The effect size was small, $r = .26$.

Relationship of I Have To with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between I have to and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The I have to variable was determined by students’ responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, “I read because...” The questionnaire offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The I have to group indicated they read because they had to. The *t*-test investigated whether the I have to group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test indicated no significant difference, $t(241) = .57, p = .57$; the I have to group ($M = 798.86, SD = 116.84$) on the average had slightly higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 790.31, SD = 106.67$). The effect size was small, $r = .04$.

Relationship of Understand Me with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between understand me and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The understand me variable was determined by students’ responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, “I read because...” The questionnaire

offered students nine different reasons for reading from which they could select as many as they liked. The understand me group indicated they read because it helped them understand more about themselves. The *t*-test investigated whether the understand me group had higher TAKS scores than the other group. The test indicated no significant difference, $t(241) = 1.34, p = .18$; the understand me group ($M = 811.04, SD = 106.35$) on the average had slightly higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 788.13, SD = 110.69$). The effect size was small, $r = .10$.

Relationship of Fiction with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between fiction and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The fiction variable was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" The questionnaire offered students 24 different types of reading materials from which they could select as many as they liked. The fiction group indicated they read fiction outside of class. The test was significant, $t(241) = 4.61, p < .05$; the break group ($M = 819.01, SD = 100.90$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 755.46, SD = 112.16$). The effect size was moderate, $r = .29$.

Relationship of Social Networking with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between social networking and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The social networking variable was determined by students' responses to a question on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "Which of the following do you read outside of class?" The questionnaire offered students 24 different types of reading

materials from which they could select as many as they liked. The social networking group indicated they read social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, and Twitter outside of class. The test indicated no significant difference, $t(241) = .68, p = .50$; the social networking group ($M = 796.98, SD = 109.44$) on the average had slightly higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 787.22, SD = 111.05$). The effect size was small, $r = .04$.

Relationship of Interesting Subject with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between interesting subject and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The interesting subject variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I would be more likely to read if..." The questionnaire offered students 15 different scenarios from which they could select as many as they liked. The interesting subject group indicated that they would be more likely to read if it was about subjects in which they were interested. The test indicated no significant difference, $t(241) = 1.55, p = .12$; the interesting subject group ($M = 802.65, SD = 108.61$) on the average had slightly higher TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 780.60, SD = 110.96$). The effect size was small, $r = .09$.

Relationship of Enjoyed it More with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between enjoyed it more and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The enjoyed it more variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I would be more likely to read if..." The questionnaire offered students 15 different scenarios from which they could select as

many as they liked. The enjoyed it more group indicated that they would be more likely to read if they enjoyed it more. The test indicated no significant difference, $t(240) = 1.94$, $p = .06$; the enjoyed it more group ($M = 777.95$, $SD = 104.52$) on the average had slightly lower TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 805.42$, $SD = 112.45$). The effect size was small, $r = .13$.

Relationship of Knew What to Read with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between knew what to read and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The knew what to read variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I would be more likely to read if..." The questionnaire offered students 15 different scenarios from which they could select as many as they liked. The knew what to read group indicated that they would be more likely to read if they knew what to read. The test indicated no significant difference, $t(241) = .08$, $p = .94$; the knew what to read group ($M = 792.11$, $SD = 107.76$) on the average had slightly lower TAKS scores than the other group ($M = 793.42$, $SD = 110.87$). The effect size was small, $r = .01$.

Relationship of Reading Was Easier with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between reading was easier and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The reading was easier variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I would be more likely to read if..." The questionnaire offered students 15 different scenarios from which they could select as many as they liked. The reading was easier group indicated that they would be

more likely to read if it was easier for them. The test was significant, $t(241) = 4.94$, $p < .05$; the other group ($M = 805.62$, $SD = 105.39$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the reading was easier group ($M = 704.40$, $SD = 101.96$). The effect size was moderate, $r = .44$.

Relationship of School Encourage with TAKS Scores.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between school encourage and how students performed on their grade level TAKS assessment. The school encourage variable was determined by students' responses to a statement on the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, "I would be more likely to read if..." The questionnaire offered students 15 different scenarios from which they could select as many as they liked. The school encourage group indicated that they would be more likely to read if their school encouraged them more. The test was significant, $t(241) = 2.31$, $p < .05$; the other group ($M = 797.26$, $SD = 107.63$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than the school encourage group ($M = 730.20$, $SD = 128.96$). The effect size was small, $r = .27$.

Relationship of Gender and Ethnicity with TAKS Scores

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to determine whether a relationship existed between gender and TAKS scores. The t -test investigated whether one gender had higher TAKS scores than the other. The test was significant, $t(241) = 2.18$, $p < .05$; females ($M = 805.46$, $SD = 109.28$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than males ($M = 774.24$, $SD = 108.85$). The effect size was small, $r = .14$.

An independent-samples t -test was conducted to determine whether a relationship existed between ethnicity and TAKS scores. The t -test investigated whether one ethnicity

had higher TAKS scores than the other. The test was significant, $t(222) = 2.61, p < .05$; Caucasian students ($M = 812.10, SD = 112.21$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than Hispanic students ($M = 773.68, SD = 107.00$). The effect size was small, $r = .17$.

Relationship of Gender and Ethnicity with Reader Self-Perception

In order to determine whether a relationship existed between students' reader self-perceptions and their gender, as well as between students' reader self-perceptions and their ethnicity, a series of Mann-Whitney tests were performed.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on their reader self-perceptions. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.74, p = .08$. Females had an average rank of 127.89, while males had an average rank of 112.97. A small effect size was noted, $r = .11$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on their reader self-perceptions. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 2.09, p = .06$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 120.39, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 103.55. A small effect size was noted, $r = .13$.

Relationship of Gender and Ethnicity with Reading Experiences and Behaviors

In order to determine whether a relationship existed between students' reading experiences and behaviors and their gender, as well as between students' reading experiences and behaviors and their ethnicity, a series of Mann-Whitney tests were performed.

Relationship of Reading Enjoyment with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on how much they enjoyed reading. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.259$, $p < .05$. Females had an average rank of 129.56, while males had an average rank of 110.43. A small effect size was noted, $r = .14$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on how much they enjoyed reading. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 1.968$, $p < .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 119.80, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 104.22. A small effect size was noted, $r = .13$.

Relationship of Reading Frequency with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on how often they read outside of school. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.616$, $p > .05$. Females had an average rank of 127.68, while males had an average rank of 113.30. A small effect size was noted, $r = .10$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on how often they read outside of school. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.419$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 118.08, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 106.18. A small effect size was noted, $r = .09$.

Relationship of Read Enough with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they believed they read enough. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.116$, $p < .05$. Females had an average rank of 128.73, while males had an average rank of 110.50. A small effect size was noted, $r = .13$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they believed they read enough. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.511$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 117.76, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 105.52. A small effect size was noted, $r = .10$.

Relationship of Books in Home with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on the number of books they have in their homes. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = .334$, $p > .05$. Females had an average rank of 120.82, while males had an average rank of 123.80. A small effect size was noted, $r = .02$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on the number of books they had in their homes. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.718$, $p < .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 123.21, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 100.37. A small effect size was noted, $r = .18$.

Relationship of Talk with Family with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on how often they talked with their family about reading. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.125$, $p < .05$. Females had an average rank of 129.02, while males had an average rank of 111.24. A small effect size was noted, $r = .14$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on how often they talked with their family about reading. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.517$, $p < .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 121.79, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 101.97. A small effect size was noted, $r = .16$.

Relationship of Reading is More for Girls with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they believed reading is more for girls. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = .307$, $p > .05$. Females had an average rank of 123.07, while males had an average rank of 120.36. A small effect size was noted, $r = .02$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they believed reading is more for girls. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.076$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 108.30, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 117.26. A small effect size was noted, $r = .07$.

Relationship of Reading is Boring with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they believed reading was boring. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.212$, $p < .05$. Females had an average rank of 114.17, while males had an average rank of 133.98. A small effect size was noted, $r = .14$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they believed reading was boring. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = .661$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 109.89, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 115.45. A small effect size was noted, $r = .04$.

Relationship of Reading is Hard with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they believed reading was hard. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.529$, $p > .05$. Females had an average rank of 116.82, while males had an average rank of 129.93. A small effect size was noted, $r = .09$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they believed reading was hard. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.421$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 107.14, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 118.58. A small effect size was noted, $r = .09$.

Relationship of Reading is Important with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they believed reading was important. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = .692$, $p > .05$. Females had an average rank of 124.35, while males had an average rank of 118.40. A small effect size was noted, $r = .04$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they believed reading was important. The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.964$, $p < .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 123.72, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 99.78. A small effect size was noted, $r = .19$.

Relationship of Can't Find Books with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they could find books that interest them. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = .697$, $p > .05$. Females had an average rank of 119.53, while males had an average rank of 125.78. A small effect size was noted, $r = .05$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they could find books that interest them. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = .881$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 109.02, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 116.45. A small effect size was noted, $r = .05$.

Relationship of Read Outside of School with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they read outside of school. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.612$, $p > .05$. Females had an average rank of 127.65, while males had an average rank of 113.35. A small effect size was noted, $r = .10$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they read outside of school. The difference was not statistically significant, $z = 1.960$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 120.16, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 103.82. A small effect size was noted, $r = .13$.

Relationship of Don't Read Well with Gender and with Ethnicity.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 147 females and 96 males on whether or not they agreed with the statement "I do not read as well as other students in my class." The difference was statistically significant, $z = 2.119$, $p < .05$. Males had an average rank of 133.46, while females had an average rank of 114.51. A small effect size was noted, $r = .13$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to examine the difference in average ranks between 119 Caucasian students and 105 Hispanic students on whether or not they agreed with the statement "I do not read as well as other students in my class." The difference was not statistically significant, $z = .742$, $p > .05$. Caucasian students had an average rank of 109.58, while Hispanic students had an average rank of 115.81. A small effect size was noted, $r = .05$.

Table 90

Statistical Analyses

		Sig.	<i>p</i>	α
ANOVA	Reader Self-Perception with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Reading Enjoyment with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Reading Frequency with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Read Enough with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Books in Home with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Talk with Family with TAKS Score		.19	.05
	Reading is More for Girls with TAKS Score	*	.03	.05
	Reading is Hard with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Can't Find Books with TAKS Score	*	.02	.05
	Read Outside of School with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Don't Read Well with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Mom Encourage with TAKS Score		.46	.05
	Mom Reads with TAKS Score	*	.01	.05
	Dad Reads with TAKS Score	*	.02	.05
T-Test	Read Because it is a Life Skill with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Read Because it Teaches About Others with TAKS Score	*	.01	.05
	Read Because it Helps me Understand World with TAKS Score	*	.02	.05
	Read Because it is Fun with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Read Because I Find out Information with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Read Because it is a Break with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Read Because I Have to with TAKS Score		.57	.05
	Read Because it Helps me Understand Myself with TAKS Score		.18	.05
	Read Fiction with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Read Social Networking with TAKS Score		.50	.05
	Read More if Interesting Subject with TAKS Score		.12	.05
	Read More if Enjoyed it More with TAKS Score		.06	.05
	Read More if Knew What to Read with TAKS Score		.93	.05
	Read More if Reading was Easier with TAKS Score	*	.00	.05
	Read More if School Encouraged with TAKS Score	*	.02	.05
	Gender with TAKS Score	*	.03	.05

	Ethnicity with TAKS Score	*	.01	.05
Mann-Whitney	Reader Self-Perception with Gender		.08	.05
	Reader Self-Perception with Ethnicity		.06	.05
	Reading Enjoyment with Gender	*	.02	.05
	Reading Enjoyment with Ethnicity	*	.04	.05
	Reading Frequency with Gender		.10	.05
	Reading Frequency with Ethnicity		.15	.05
	Read Enough with Gender	*	.03	.05
	Read Enough with Ethnicity		.13	.05
	Books in Home with Gender		.73	.05
	Books in Home with Ethnicity	*	.00	.05
	Talk with Family with Gender	*	.03	.05
	Talk with Family with Ethnicity	*	.01	.05
	Reading is More for Girls with Gender		.75	.05
	Reading is More for Girls with Ethnicity		.28	.05
	Reading is Boring with Gender	*	.02	.05
	Reading is Boring with Ethnicity		.50	.05
	Reading is Hard with Gender		.12	.05
	Reading is Hard with Ethnicity		.15	.05
	Reading is Important with Gender		.48	.05
	Reading is Important with Ethnicity	*	.00	.05
	Can't Find Books with Gender		.48	.05
	Can't Find Books with Ethnicity		.37	.05
	Read Outside of School with Gender		.10	.05
	Read Outside of School with Ethnicity		.75	.05
	Don't Read Well with Gender	*	.03	.05
	Don't Read Well with Ethnicity		.45	.05

Summary

This chapter presented a descriptive analysis of the reading experiences and behaviors of middle school students, as well as their self-perceptions as readers and their levels of reading achievement as measured by the state's standardized reading assessment. This chapter also presented an analysis of the relationship between these characteristics, and whether or not these characteristics differed because of gender or ethnicity. The next chapter summarizes this study, discusses the findings, and suggests implications that arose from the study. Chapter five also includes limitations of this study and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter presents a discussion of the study in five parts. The first part is a summary of the study. The second part is a discussion of the descriptive data obtained by the two surveys that were administered to the middle school students. The third part is a discussion of the findings whereby the descriptive data was analyzed and compared to the students' reader self-perceptions, TAKS Reading scores, gender, and ethnicity. The fourth part describes the limitations of this study. The fifth part offers recommendations for future studies.

Summary

This study was a quantitative examination of the reading experiences and behaviors of middle school students, grades six through eight, enrolled in a rural middle school in a South Texas farming community. The study investigated the relationship between these characteristics and students' self-perceptions as readers, their reading achievement as measured by the state's standardized reading assessment, gender, and ethnicity. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors?
2. What are middle school students' self-perceptions as readers?
3. What is the relationship between middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors, self-perceptions, and reading achievement?
4. Do the characteristics of middle school readers differ because of gender or ethnicity?

A framework for this study established that within the discussion of adolescent literacy, middle school readers exist as a unique subset of individuals with literacy behaviors that distinguish them from older adolescents. At the same time, there are limited discussions of middle school readers in grades six through eight, especially in rural Texas schools. The framework established the need to examine the reading experiences and behaviors of students enrolled in a South Texas rural middle school. A review of the literature described the current state of adolescent literacy, discussed the characteristics of young adolescents, offered a history of the middle school, described studies of middle school readers, defined reader self-perception and related studies, and discussed reading achievement.

This study was a quantitative examination of the reading experiences and behaviors of 243 students in grades six through eight from one South Texas rural middle school. Two different questionnaires were administered to the students, the RSPS (Henk & Melnick, 1995) and a reading experiences and behaviors survey from the National Literacy Trust in the United Kingdom (Clark & Foster, 2005) which was modified for use with students in the United States. The questionnaires yielded descriptive data on students' self-perceptions as readers and on their reading experiences and behaviors. In addition, TAKS Reading scores, gender, and ethnicity were analyzed.

Research Question One: What are middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors?

The descriptive data gathered on the reading experiences and behaviors of sixth through eighth grade students in a rural middle school of South Texas indicated that approximately 37% of all students enjoyed reading a lot, and 52% somewhat enjoyed

reading. The data also revealed that 40% of females enjoyed reading compared to 32% of males, and 43% of Caucasian students enjoyed reading compared to 37% of Other students and 31% of Hispanic students. When asked to rate their reading abilities, 58% of students identified themselves as average readers, and 37% categorized their reading abilities as excellent. The majority of both males and females rated themselves as average readers, and more than half of students from each ethnicity also labeled themselves as average readers. Students were asked how often they read outside of school, and their responses showed that slightly more than half read anywhere from once or twice a week to every day or almost every day. Females read outside of school more often than males, as did Caucasian students compared to Hispanic students.

The data also revealed that 60% of students did not believe they read enough, and 37% indicated that they would like to read more. Students' responses showed that 40% of females wanted to read more compared to 33% of males, and 45% of Hispanic students wanted to read more than 42% of Other students and 31% of Caucasian students.

Students were asked to estimate the number of books in their homes and a majority of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, indicated they had anywhere from 11 to 50 books at home. Students were also asked how often they talked with family about their reading materials, and while most rarely talked with their families about reading, 30% of females indicated that they talked with their families either daily or weekly compared to 17% of males, and 32% of both Caucasian and Other students also talked with their families either daily or weekly compared to 15% of Hispanic students.

When students were asked what they thought about reading, 79% believed that reading was important. Students' responses also showed that the majority believed they

could read as well as their peers and most also disagreed that reading was hard, boring, and more for girls than boys. A higher percentage of females than males believed reading was important, could find interesting books, and engaged in reading outside of school. A higher percentage of Caucasian students compared to Hispanic and Other students believed reading was important, that reading was more for girls than boys, and engaged in reading outside of school.

Students were asked to identify the reason(s) why they read, and over half of students indicated they read because it was fun and because it was a life skill. Females read primarily because it was fun, a life skill, and it helped them find out what they needed to know; males read because it helped them find out what they needed to know, it was a life skill, and because it was fun. Caucasian and Other students read because it was a life skill more often than Hispanic students, and more Hispanic students read to find out what they needed to know compared to Caucasian and Other students. The data also revealed that regardless of gender or ethnicity, text messages were students' most preferred reading material.

When asked what type(s) of fiction they liked to read, more than 60% of students chose adventure, horror/ghost, and comedy. Only 5% of students indicated that they did not read fiction. More than 50% of females and males shared an interest in adventure, horror/ghost, and comedy; however, 59% of females liked to read realistic teen fiction compared to 19% of males, and 64% of males liked to read war/spy compared to 23% of females. More than 50% of Caucasian and Hispanic students also shared an interest in adventure, horror/ghost, and comedy.

The data also revealed scenarios in which students would be more likely to read, and at least 50% of all students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, indicated they would read more if it was about subjects in which they were interested. More than 40% of all students would also read more if they had more time and enjoyed it more. Students were asked to identify activities that would help them and others read more, and 40% of students chose helping younger children with their reading, and designing websites or magazines as preferred activities. Students were also asked to identify the person(s) responsible for teaching them to read, and 70% of all students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, indicated that a teacher and/or their mom or guardian taught them to read. More than 40% of students also indicated that their dad or guardian was responsible for teaching them to read.

When asked with whom they read and talk about reading, at least 40% of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, noted that they read with a teacher and talked about reading with either a friend or their mom or guardian. Students were also asked to reveal the extent to which their parents or guardians encouraged them to read. Most students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, noted that their mom or guardian did encourage them to read. A majority of both genders, as well as a substantial percentage of Caucasian and Hispanic students, noted that their dad or guardian also encouraged them to read.

When asked how much time their parents or guardians spent reading, at least 50% of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, indicated that both parents or guardians spent at least some time reading. Students' responses revealed that their dad or guardian was less likely to spend time reading than their mom or guardian. Students were also

asked who should encourage them to enjoy reading, and a majority of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, believed that both the school and home should encourage them to enjoy reading. Both genders, as well as Caucasian and Other students believed that the school had more responsibility than the home. Students were then asked who should teach them to read. A majority of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, believed that both the school and home should teach them to read and that the school had more responsibility than the home. The data also revealed the educational resources available in students' homes, and at least 70% of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, had a computer and books of their own at home. Few students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, had access to a daily newspaper.

Research Question Two: What are middle school students' self-perceptions as readers?

The descriptive data gathered on the students' self-perceptions as readers indicated that 76% of students believed they were good readers. The data revealed that 80% of females believed they were good readers compared to 71% of males, and 82% of Caucasian students believed they were good readers compared to 71% of Hispanic students and 63% of Other students. A small percentage of students, regardless of gender or ethnicity, did not believe they were good readers. More males than females had no opinion regarding their reading ability, and more Other students had no opinion regarding their reading ability compared to Hispanic and Caucasian students.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between middle school students' reading experiences and behaviors, self-perceptions, and reading achievement?

In order to evaluate the relationship between students' reader self-perceptions and their TAKS scores, an ANOVA was conducted. Students who reported more positive reader self-perceptions scored higher on the TAKS than those who reported negative reader self-perceptions. The ANOVA was significant, $F(4, 238) = 12.31, p < .05, \eta^2 = .171$. Post hoc analysis was conducted utilizing the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the strongly agree group and the strongly disagree group ($M = 126.14$), between the strongly agree group and the disagree group ($M = 136.26$), between the strongly agree group and the undecided group ($M = 122.10$), and between the strongly agree group and the agree group ($M = 54.68$) was statistically significant at the .05 level. Results also showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the agree group and the disagree group ($M = 81.58$) and between the agree group and the undecided group ($M = 67.42$) was statistically significant at the .05 level.

In order to evaluate the relationship between students' reading experiences and behaviors and their TAKS scores, ANOVAs were conducted. Students who enjoyed reading scored higher on the TAKS than those who did not enjoy reading. The ANOVA was significant, $F(3, 239) = 8.51, p < .05, \eta^2 = .096$. Post hoc analysis was conducted utilizing the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the students who liked to read very much and the students who did not like to read at all ($M = 107.44$), as well as between the students who liked to read very

much and the students who somewhat liked to read ($M = 81.64$) was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students who read more frequently outside of school scored higher on the TAKS than those who did not read frequently outside of school. The ANOVA was significant, $F(3, 239) = 5.15, p < .05, \eta^2 = .061$. Post hoc analysis was conducted utilizing the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the students who read once or twice a week outside of school and the students who read once or twice a month outside of school ($M = 55.01$), as well as between the students who read every day or almost every day and the students who read once or twice a month ($M = 77.80$) was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students who believed they read enough scored higher on the TAKS than those who did not believe they read enough. The ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 239) = 6.55, p < .05, \eta^2 = .052$. Post hoc analysis was conducted utilizing the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the students who believed they read enough and the students who did not believe they read enough and had no desire to read more ($M = 63.49$) was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students who had books in their homes scored higher on the TAKS than those who did not have books in their homes. The ANOVA was significant, $F(6, 236) = 3.50, p < .05, \eta^2 = .082$. Post hoc analysis was conducted utilizing the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the students who had no books at home and the students who had 51-100 books at home ($M = 115.71$), between the students who had no books at home and the students who had 101-250 books at home ($M = 130.47$), as well as between the students who had no books at home and the

students who had 251-500 books at home ($M = 146.79$) was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students who disagreed that reading was hard scored higher on the TAKS than those who had no opinion or agreed that reading was hard. The ANOVA was significant, $F(4, 238) = 12.99, p < .05, \eta^2 = .179$. Post hoc analysis was conducted utilizing the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the students who strongly disagreed that reading was hard and the students who had no opinion ($M = 115.55$) and between the students who strongly disagreed that reading was hard the students who agreed that reading was hard ($M = 145.23$) was statistically significant at the .05 level. Results also showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the students who disagreed that reading was hard and the students who had no opinion ($M = 93.20$) and between the students who disagreed that reading was hard the students who agreed that reading was hard ($M = 122.88$) was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students who strongly agreed that they read outside of school scored higher on the TAKS than those who agreed, had no opinion, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that they read outside of school. The ANOVA was significant, $F(4, 238) = 4.93, p < .05, \eta^2 = .077$. Post hoc analysis was conducted utilizing the Tukey HSD procedure. Results showed that the mean difference in TAKS scores between the students who strongly agreed that they read outside of school and the students who agreed ($M = 66.71$), between the students who strongly agreed that they read outside of school and the students who had no opinion ($M = 79.07$), between the students who strongly agreed that they read outside of school and the students who disagreed ($M = 75.59$), as well as between the

students who strongly agreed that they read outside of school and the students who strongly disagreed ($M = 79.57$) was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students who disagreed with or had no opinion toward the statement, “I do not read as well as others in my class” scored higher on the TAKS than students who agreed with the statement. The ANOVA was significant, $F(4, 238) = 10.61, p < .05, \eta^2 = .151$. Students who indicated that they read for the following reasons scored higher on the TAKS than students who did not: it is a life skill, it teaches me about others, it helps me understand the world, it is fun, it helps me find out what I want or need to know, and it gives me a break. Students who noted that they read fiction scored higher on the TAKS than students who did not note that they read fiction. The ANOVA was significant, $F(1, 241) = 21.24, p < .05, \eta^2 = .081$.

The findings also revealed that students who indicated that they would not read more often if it was easier scored higher on the TAKS than students who indicated that they would read more if it was easier. The ANOVA was significant, $F(1, 241) = 24.45, p < .05, \eta^2 = .092$. Similarly, the students who noted that they would not read more often if the school encouraged them more scored higher on the TAKS than students who noted that they would read more if the school encouraged them more. The ANOVA was significant, $F(1, 241) = 5.33, p < .05, \eta^2 = .022$. Students who indicated that their mom reads scored higher on the TAKS than students who did not. The ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 240) = 4.60, p < .05, \eta^2 = .037$. Likewise, students who indicated that their dad reads scored higher on the TAKS than students who did not. The ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 240) = 3.85, p < .05, \eta^2 = .031$.

Research Question Four: Do the characteristics of middle school readers differ because of gender or ethnicity?

The relationship between students' gender and ethnicity and students' TAKS scores was tested using an independent samples *t*-test. Females ($M = 805.46$, $SD = 109.28$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than males ($M = 774.24$, $SD = 108.85$). Caucasian students ($M = 812.10$, $SD = 112.21$) on the average had higher TAKS scores than Hispanic students ($M = 773.68$, $SD = 107.00$).

The relationship between students' gender and ethnicity and students' reading experiences and behaviors was tested using a Mann-Whitney *U* test. Females, on the average, ranked higher than males in their enjoyment of reading and in the belief that they read enough. Females also ranked higher than males on how often they talked with their family about reading. Males, on the average, ranked higher than females in their belief that reading is boring and that they do not read well.

Caucasian students, on the average, ranked higher than Hispanic students in their enjoyment of reading, in the number of books they had in their homes, and in their belief that reading is important. Caucasian students also ranked higher than Hispanic students on how often they talked with their family about reading.

Discussion

Gender.

Analysis of the data indicated that female students had higher levels of proficiency and more positive involvement with reading compared to male students. There were statistically significant differences between females and males on the TAKS, although the effect size was small. This finding aligns with the NCES (2011) data, which

showed that females in the eighth- and twelfth-grades scored higher than their male counterparts on the NAEP. Internationally, females have been shown to outperform males on literacy tasks in most countries (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2002; Twist, Sainsbury, Woodthorpe, & Whetton, 2003). Females in this study also had more positive self-perceptions as readers, as evidenced by their responses on the RSPS, and there were also statistically significant differences between females and males regarding whether or not they believed they read enough and how they perceived themselves as readers compared to their peers. Clark and Foster (2005) found similar differences between the genders regarding whether or not they believed they read enough, but little difference between the genders on how they perceived themselves as readers compared to their peers. Pitcher et al. (2007) did not find statistically significant differences on self-perception between gender groups, but their survey and interview data did reveal that students' reader self-perceptions and value of reading align with their reading choices and enjoyment of reading. This supports the findings of this study, as female students indicated with statistical significance, that they enjoyed reading more than males and similarly demonstrated more positive self-perceptions as readers.

Other studies (Clark & Foster, 2005; Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; McKenna et al., 2012; Pitcher et al., 2007) have also shown that females enjoy reading more than males. Through the use of survey data, these researchers revealed that a higher percentage of females enjoyed and valued reading compared to males. The fact that female students in this study enjoyed reading significantly more than males also indicates that females had more positive attitudes toward reading, which is supported by Talan (1980) and Dismukes (1989), who revealed that females held more positive reading

attitudes than males as evidenced by their scores on the MBRAM, an instrument designed specifically to measure reading attitude. McKenna et al. (2012) found similar results in their nationwide study of middle school students' reading attitudes. By contrast, Ley et al. (1994), in their study of middle school students' reading attitudes, did not find females to have significantly more positive reading attitudes than males. They also did not find that females read more voluntarily than males, unlike females in this study who read voluntarily and for enjoyment more often than males, a finding evidenced by past research (Clark & Foster, 2005; Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; Johnson-Smaragdi & Jonsson, 2006; Moje et al., 2008; Nippold, 2005). More than half of females in this study read at least once or twice a week outside of school and indicated that the primary reason they read was for fun.

Ethnicity.

The results of this study revealed that Caucasian students had higher levels of proficiency and more positive involvement with reading compared to Hispanic students. There were statistically significant differences between Caucasian students and Hispanic students on the TAKS, although the effect size was small. While Moje et al. (2008) did not find ethnicity to be a predictor of reading achievement, the NCES (2011) data showed that from 1992 to 2009, the NAEP reading scores of Caucasian students in the fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grades were higher than those of their Hispanic peers. Additionally, the achievement gap between ethnicities has been previously documented (Barton & Coley, 2009; Lee, J., 2002, 2006; Ushomirsky, Hall, & Haycock, 2011).

The findings did not show significant differences between ethnicities on the basis of their self-perceptions as readers, although Caucasian students' reader self-perceptions

on the average were slightly higher than that of Hispanic students. Similarly, Pitcher et al. (2007) did not find significant differences in the self-concepts of ethnic groups.

Caucasian students did reveal, with statistical significance, that they enjoyed and valued reading more than their Hispanic peers, and that they had more books in their homes and engaged in more conversations with their families about reading. Each of these characteristics has the potential to impact students' levels of reading achievement as evidenced by this study and others (Clark & Foster, 2005; Cox & Guthrie, 2001; National Endowment for the Arts, 2007; Pitcher et al., 2007; Talan, 1980).

Reading Motivation.

By definition, reading motivation is “the individual’s personal goals, values and beliefs with regard to the topics, processes, and outcomes of reading” (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000, p. 3). Motivation is the driving force behind students’ literacy behaviors and is also linked to reading ability (Baumann & Duffy, 1997; Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Cox & Guthrie, 2001; Stanovich, 1986). The more students value and have specific purposes for reading, the more they will read, which leads to reading proficiency and overall academic achievement. This supports the findings of the current study in which students who indicated they read for the following reasons scored statistically significantly higher on the TAKS than those who did not: because it was fun and gave them a break, it was enjoyable, it was a life skill, it taught them about others, it helped them understand the world, and it helped them find out information. These students read and found value in reading for purposes that fit their personal interests, which indicated that they were intrinsically motivated to read (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to Hidi (2000), intrinsic reading motivation is linked to more substantial reading frequency and

breadth of reading, which further supports the notion that the more students read, the higher their reading proficiency.

Reading Frequency.

The results of this study showed that students who read outside of school at least once or twice a week scored higher on the TAKS than those who did not. Previous research has established the relationship between the amount of time children spend reading outside of school and their reading achievement (Anderson et al., 1988; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Moje et al., 2008; National Endowment for the Arts, 2007; Stanovich, 1986). Numerous studies also note the decline of voluntary reading in students as they transition into middle and high school (Hopper, 2005; Johnson-Smaragdi & Jonsson, 2006; Ley et al., 1994; Nippold et al., 2005). In this study, students' responses to questions about their outside of school reading were conflicting and did not consistently align with previous research. When asked to what extent they agreed with the statement, "I read outside of school," a slightly higher percentage of sixth graders than seventh and eighth graders agreed with the statement; however, when asked how often they read outside of school, a slightly higher percentage of eighth graders indicated that they read more often than sixth and seventh graders. Regardless of their responses, it was clear that more than half of both sixth and eighth grade students were reading outside of school at least once or twice a week, which reveals that voluntary reading for students in this study did not decline as they aged. The sixth grade students in this study, however, were more likely to indicate that they enjoyed reading and read for fun as compared to their seventh and eighth grade peers. The relationship between reading behavior and reading attitudes, and the general decline in the reading attitudes of older students has

been documented (Clark & Foster, 2005; Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Ley et al., 1994; McKenna et al., 2012; McKenna et al., 1995; Strommen & Mates, 2004; Worthy et al., 1999).

Reading Materials.

Analysis of the data showed that the trends in preferred reading materials for all students, as well as those for females and males, were consistent with past research. To begin with, students' revealed a variety of reading interests, selecting a majority of the materials listed on the questionnaire as materials they liked to read. Isaacs (1990) also noted the variety of middle school students' reading interests and that "their choice of independent reading reflects the range of their interests and concerns..." (p. 36). Most often, students in this study chose reading materials other than books. More than half of students selected magazines as a preferred reading material; out of 24 choices, they ranked magazines second, and a higher percentage of females read magazines compared to males. These findings were similar to other studies (Clark & Foster, 2005; Hopper, 2005; Nippold et al., 2005; Pitcher et al., 2007; Worthy et al., 1999). A majority of students also indicated that they read electronic media such as websites and social networking sites online, as well as text messages, which ranked first out of the twenty-four choices. Pitcher et al. (2007) noted similar findings.

Data indicated that more than half of students read fiction and that females read fiction only slightly more than males. Isaacs (1990) also noted fiction as a preferred genre, and Clark and Foster (2005) found that a greater proportion of females read fiction compared to males. Fiction readers in this study scored higher on the TAKS than those students who did not read fiction. Other researchers have found fiction to be a predictor

of academic success (Cox & Guthrie, 2001; Mohler, 2011; Moje et al., 2008). The most popular type of fiction for all students was horror/ghost, and females were more likely than males to read romance, as well as poetry. Few students indicated that they read plays and encyclopedias. These findings were consistent with others (Higginbotham, 1999; Isaacs, 1990; Nippold et al., 2005; Worthy et al., 1999).

Self-Efficacy.

According to Henk and Melnick (1995), "...children who have made positive associations with reading tend to read more often, for longer periods of time, and with greater intensity. This deeper engagement translates into superior reading achievement," (p. 470) a finding also evidenced by others (Anderson et al., 1988; Cloer & Ross, 1996; Waleff, 2010). Bandura (1994) explained, "Students' belief in their capabilities to master academic activities affects their aspirations, their level of interest in academic activities, and their academic accomplishments" (p. 78). This supports the findings of the current study in which students with more positive reader self-perceptions on the RSPS scored statistically significantly higher on the TAKS than those with lower reader self-perceptions. Students' reader self-perceptions were further determined by two questions from the reading experiences and behaviors questionnaire, both of which revealed that students who believed that reading was hard and that they did not read well scored statistically significantly lower than their peers with higher reader self-perceptions. Talan (1980), in her study of middle school readers, did not find students' self-perceptions to be correlated with reading achievement.

Home Literacy Environment.

The results of this study revealed with statistical significance that certain aspects of students' home literacy environments affected their reading achievement: parents or guardians reading and the presence of books in the home. Students who indicated that their parents or guardians read at least "some" scored higher on the TAKS than those students whose parents did not read. Foertsch (1992) noted a similar finding based on 1990 NAEP data in which students who reported that the adults in their homes read a lot had higher proficiencies on average than those who reported that they rarely saw adults read. While Foertsch did review the reading materials available to students in their homes, she did not indicate whether or not there was a relationship between students' reading proficiency and the reading materials in their homes. The findings of the current study revealed with statistical significance that students who had books in their homes scored higher on TAKS than those who did not. Similarly, Talan (1980), the National Endowment for the Arts (2007), and Mohler (2011) noted a correlation between the number of books in the home and reading achievement.

Other aspects of students' home literacy environment have been discussed in terms of their impact on students' attitudes toward and involvement in reading (Pitcher et al., 2007; Strommen & Mates, 2004). Children first learn about reading from their home environment; parents and guardians establish what role reading plays in their lives and ultimately communicate to their children a certain value of reading. In this study, more than half of students indicated that they talked about reading with their mother or guardian. Clark and Foster (2005) found students' mothers as one of the top three people with whom students discussed their reading. Pitcher et al. (2007) and Strommen and

Mates (2004) described how parents established a pattern of talking about and valuing reading and how such interaction between parent and child plays an important role in developing a child's love of reading. A large majority of students in this study also noted that their parents or guardians encouraged them to read. Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2001) found similar results in their study of adolescents. Similarly, Strommen and Mates (2004) described how parents or family members of "readers" in their study bought students books, took them to the library or bookstore, and/or established reading habits (bedtime stories) in order to encourage them to read.

Implications

This study, similar to others that have utilized student self-reported data, (Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; McKenna et al., 2012; Moje et al., 2008; Pitcher et al., 2007) shows that student voices provide a wealth of information for teachers in their development and modification of instructional methods and acquisition of classroom reading materials, and also for students in the development of their self-awareness and identity as readers and learners. The more teachers know about their students' experiences and interests, the more they can "tailor-fit" their instruction and locate reading materials that will promote interest and achievement in reading. Teachers who know their students' reader self-perceptions can work to maintain and improve them by creating a learning environment conducive to student success, which will foster students' feelings of competency with reading and transfer to the literacy tasks of their content area classes, as well as their reading outside of school. Through these surveys, teachers can recognize who students are as readers and the myriad of factors that contribute to their levels of reading proficiency and use these to teach the individual child rather than

relying solely on standardized test scores to communicate students' needs. Teachers can then show students what their survey responses reveal about their reading experiences, behaviors, and self-perceptions and the impact these have on their reading achievement. Students can learn what constitutes and influences their identities as readers and learners and develop a self-awareness that will facilitate future growth and development.

The achievement gaps between the genders and between the two predominant ethnicities confirm the need for teachers to be responsive to their students' individual needs and interests as learners. It is expected that female and male students, as well as students from different cultural backgrounds, differ in their reading interests, yet teachers often select reading materials that appeal more to one than the other. Teachers are also the primary source and selector of classroom reading materials and expect all students to learn from the same text despite the research that emphasizes the importance of student choice and voice in the classroom (Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; Ivey, 1999; Moje et al., 2008; Pitcher et al., 2007; Strommen & Mates, 2004; Worthy et al., 1999). The construct that students learn and achieve proficiency individually and are influenced by outside factors such as their home environment, culture, and socioeconomic status has been supported by research (Barton & Coley, 2009; Foertsch, 1992; Moje et al., 2008). Teachers need to be aware of the impact these have on students' learning and create a classroom environment that embraces and uses students' differences as a foundation for learning.

Students in this study who valued reading, had specific purposes for reading, read outside of school, and who had more positive reader self-perceptions achieved higher levels of reading proficiency than other students. Basically, the more involved students

were with reading and the more they believed in their abilities as readers, the more they succeeded. For teachers, this means providing all students with opportunities to discover their own relevance for reading and experience personal growth and achievement, especially for those students who have little belief in their abilities as readers and who have lower levels of reading proficiency. Instead of trying to teach as if all students were cut from the same mold, teachers must recognize the individuality of their students and how it plays an integral role in the development of their behaviors and proficiencies as readers.

The key finding of this study was the role that individual interests and values played in the lives of these middle school readers. More than half of students believed that reading was important and would read more if it was about subjects in which they were interested. Given the opportunity to explore their interests and find related reading materials, students would develop a personal value and purpose for reading, which would promote independent, recreational reading, a factor known to positively affect reading achievement (Anderson, et al., 1988; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; National Endowment for the Arts, 2007). As students' levels of reading proficiency increase, so will their self-efficacy as readers. Thus, helping students discover the individuality that defines them as readers is fundamental in developing their literate lives.

Although students indicated that they talked most often with their mothers about reading, they noted that they spent a substantial amount of their time reading with a teacher. Teachers must capitalize on the time they have with students to not only help them find what captures their interests and curiosities, but also help students locate such materials and provide time at school for self-selected independent reading. In this rural

middle school, students were 40 miles from the nearest bookstore and at least 15 miles from public libraries other than the one housed at the local middle school, which is open only during regular school hours. Not to mention, more than half of these students also received free or reduced priced lunches, which meant that there was mostly likely not extra money for books, library card fees, or travel costs each month. Teachers must work with librarians and administrators to secure funds and purchase books and other types of reading materials that would allow students access to their reading interests.

Teachers must also provide uninterrupted time during the day for students to read self-selected materials, as more than half of the students in this study noted they would read more if they had more time. The families that comprised this rural community prided themselves on their children's involvement in activities outside of school that often required hours of practice and/or preparation for competitive events that took place throughout the year. Many students also had family obligations after school, such as taking care of younger siblings or working to earn extra money. Both scenarios limited the amount of time students had outside of school to read recreationally, especially after they had completed their daily homework assignments. Independent reading time during the school day would provide time to read, as well as support for reading. Students may select reading materials that are above their independent reading level and need help with certain terminology or phrasing. It has been the researcher's experience that students will ask for clarification with self-selected texts when provided independent reading time in class.

Students also indicated the need for a reading role model, just as they have family members, famous athletes and singers to admire for their various personal qualities,

talents and skills. The students in this study believed that both the home and school should encourage reading, and as “actions speak louder than words,” students would be encouraged by watching teachers and other school officials read their own self-selected materials and see that they, too, have individual interests and values in reading. By modeling reading in the classroom, teachers provide an opportunity to have dialogue with their students about reading, from interests and habits to strategies. The researcher has traded books with students and had conversations about characters and conflicts that occurred within the story, which resulted in directing the interest of another student in the class toward a novel or series. The researcher has also modeled reading strategies using college texts to show students how to approach reading in different contexts. A teacher role model is critical to creating a classroom of readers.

In addition to classroom teachers, administrators and policy makers must advocate for student-centered classrooms that are built upon the unique needs of their students and ensure the development and maintenance of such classrooms through observation protocols and stringent hiring processes. Administrators need to be more involved in the daily happenings of their campus classrooms so that they, too, become part of the learning community both as a support for the classroom teacher and as an additional role model for students. Such involvement would encourage teachers to sustain a higher level of commitment to the needs of their students and help administrators hire faculty with the same level of dedication to student achievement and success. Policy makers, while not directly involved with the inner workings of individual school campuses, can develop mandates that stipulate rigorous expectations for schools whereby they must implement reading programs and activities that cater to their students’ needs

and interests. They would also need to acquire or provide any funding necessary to establish and maintain the educational needs of such student-centered learning environments.

Limitations

Some limitations to the present study should be noted. Students self-reported their reading experiences, behaviors, and self-perceptions, which allowed for certain factors such as mood, attentiveness, and the desire (or not) to please a teacher, to potentially impact responses and not reflect actual practices. For the sixth- and seventh-grade students, the researcher was a visitor to their classrooms, which could have made students uncomfortable and discouraged them from asking questions during the administration of the reading experiences and behaviors survey. The eighth grade students, on the other hand, knew the researcher as their classroom teacher, and consequently may not have been completely honest on the surveys and may have felt obligated to participate.

While the authors of the RSPS indicated that it could be functional with students in the upper grades, it was only normed for use in the fourth through sixth grades. Also, only one measure of reading achievement was used, which happened to be the state mandated test that students had been taking since the fourth grade, and one that carried with it a great deal of pressure for students and teachers. Students' scores determine the campus' statewide rating and certain aspects of students' class schedule for the following school year. For eighth-grade students, the TAKS is a gateway exam to high school, as it is part of the Student Success Initiative. Students in the eighth grade must pass the TAKS Reading in order to be promoted to high school. The researcher could have used an

additional measure of students' reading proficiency in order to establish a more clear indication of their achievement.

Recommendations for Future Research

Throughout the duration of this study, the researcher noted several areas for future research.

- The study should be replicated in middle schools across South Texas in order to create a more accurate description of middle school readers from this area.
- The study should be conducted at the beginning and end of the school year to note any changes in reading experiences and behaviors, self-efficacy, and/or reading achievement.
- The role of the classroom teacher in fostering students' reading experiences and behaviors, as well as their promoting their self-perceptions as readers needs to be explored.
- The research should include teachers' reading experiences and behaviors and their effect on instructional practices and the classroom setting.
- The survey component should be expanded to include open-ended responses for students to clarify their choices and/or offer additional information about their reading experiences and behaviors.
- An additional survey should be included that would allow students to identify the classroom activities and practices that have proven beneficial to their reading development. The survey should also encourage students to offer suggestions.
- Additional measures of reading achievement should be included in order to establish a pattern of reading proficiency.

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Appendix A

PARENT CONSENT LETTER

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Your child has been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Christie L. Warren, an Orange Grove Junior High reading/language arts teacher and a doctoral candidate at Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi. Your child has been selected as a possible participant in the study because he/she is a middle school student enrolled at Orange Grove Junior High School.

Background Information: The purpose of the research is to discover middle school students' beliefs and experiences with reading, as well as how they feel about themselves as readers. This study will further investigate how such beliefs, experiences, and self-perceptions relate to their reading achievement.

Procedures: (1)Your child will be asked to complete a survey and reader self-perception scale which will provide information about his/her experiences, beliefs, and attitudes toward reading. Completion of the survey and reader self-perception scale will take place during the school day and will only take approximately 15 minutes. Both of these scales have been widely used in other projects nationally and internationally. (2)Your child may also be asked to participate in a follow-up interview that would expand upon the information gathered from the survey and self-perception scale. Only 30 students will be selected randomly to participate in such interviews. If your child's school identification number is selected, you will be notified by phone and have the opportunity to either grant or deny your child's participation in the interview at that time.

Risks and Benefits of Participation: There are no risks involved in this study. The benefit of your child's participation is allowing him/her to share personal beliefs, experiences, and self-perceptions of reading, which could ultimately improve the current reading program and inform others about what middle school students think about reading.

Confidentiality: Your child's participation in this study is confidential. All surveys and self-perception scales will have only your child's school identification number. This signed consent form will be the only document containing your child's name and will be filed in the counselor's office in the event that you or your child decides at a later day to withdraw from the study. In the event that this research results in a publication or presentation, no personally identifiable information will be used. The Office for Research Protections and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board may review records related to this project.

Voluntary Nature of Study: Participation in this study is voluntary and is in no way related to your child's grade in his/her reading class. You or your child may withdraw from this study at any time.

Contacts and Questions: If you have any questions, you are encouraged to contact Christie L. Warren by phone (361/384-2323) or by email (cwarren@ogisd.net).

You will be provided with a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers to my satisfaction. I hereby give my child permission to participate in this study.

Child's name

Parent/Guardian signature

Child's school identification number

Appendix B

STUDENT ASSENT

ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

1. My name is Christie L. Warren.
2. I am asking you to take part in a research study because I am trying to learn more about what middle school students believe about reading. I am also wanting to learn about what experiences middle school students have had with reading and how they feel about themselves as readers.
3. If you agree to be in this study, you will complete two things: (1) a survey that asks questions about your feelings, experiences, and attitudes toward reading and (2) another questionnaire that will tell me how you feel about yourself as a reader.
4. If you agree to be in this study, you may also be selected for an interview. Only 30 students from this campus will be chosen for the interviews.
5. You may decide that you want to complete the survey and questionnaire but do not want to be interviewed.
6. There are no risks from this study. This research study has nothing to do with your grades or average in your reading class.
7. Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether to participate. I will also ask your parent(s)/guardian(s) to give their permission for you to take part in this study. However, even if your parent(s)/guardian(s) say “yes,” you can still decide not to participate.
8. If you don’t want to be in this study, you do not have to participate. Remember, being in this study is up to you and no one will be upset if you do not want to, or if you change your mind later and want to stop.
9. You can ask me any questions you have about the study. If you have a question later that you did not think of now, you can come by my classroom (Room 3) anytime . You can also ask your reading teacher.

10. Signing your name at the bottom means that you agree to be in the study. You and your parents will be given a copy of this form after you have signed it.

Student's name

Date

Student's school identification number

Principal investigator

Appendix C

READING EXPERIENCES AND BEHAVIORS QUESTIONNAIRE

Student ID number

We want to know what you think about reading

Thank you for taking part in this questionnaire. Don't try to write what you think teachers want you to write; tell us what you really think. This is anonymous; no one will know the answers you have given.

About you

1. Are you a: boy girl
2. How old are you?
3. What is your ethnicity? African American Caucasian/white
Hispanic/Mexican American Other _____
4. How much do you enjoy reading? (check one box only)
not at all some a lot very much
5. On a scale of 1-10, how good a reader do you think you are? (check one box only)
Not a very good reader Average reader Excellent reader
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. How often do you read outside of school? (check one box only)
every day or almost every day once or twice a week
once or twice a month never or almost never
7. Do you think you read enough? (check one box only)
Yes No, but I would like to read more No, and I don't want to read more
8. How many books do you think there are in your home? (check one box only)
none 1-10 11-50
51-100 101-250 251-500 more than 500
9. How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading? (check one box only)
every day or almost every day once or twice a week
once or twice a month never or almost never

What you think about reading

10. What do you think about reading? (check one box for each statement)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
Reading is more for girls than boys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading is boring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading is hard for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading is important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can't find books that interest me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read outside of school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like going to the library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be happy if someone gave me a book as a present	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not read as well as other students in my class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. I read because: (check as many as you like)

it is a skill for life <input type="checkbox"/>	it will help me get a job <input type="checkbox"/>	it teaches me how other people live and feel <input type="checkbox"/>
it helps me understand more of the world <input type="checkbox"/>	it is fun <input type="checkbox"/>	it helps me find out what I want/need to know <input type="checkbox"/>
it gives me a break <input type="checkbox"/>	I have to <input type="checkbox"/>	it helps me understand more about myself <input type="checkbox"/>

12. Which of the following do you read outside of class? (check as many as you like)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| websites <input type="checkbox"/> | newspapers <input type="checkbox"/> | factual books <input type="checkbox"/> |
| magazines <input type="checkbox"/> | jokes <input type="checkbox"/> | comics <input type="checkbox"/> |
| fiction <input type="checkbox"/> | graphic novels <input type="checkbox"/> | text messages <input type="checkbox"/> |
| annuals <input type="checkbox"/> | manuals/instructions <input type="checkbox"/> | plays <input type="checkbox"/> |
| emails <input type="checkbox"/> | poetry <input type="checkbox"/> | posters/signs <input type="checkbox"/> |
| catalogs <input type="checkbox"/> | song lyrics <input type="checkbox"/> | travel books <input type="checkbox"/> |
| cookbooks <input type="checkbox"/> | encyclopedias <input type="checkbox"/> | books & magazines
about TV programs <input type="checkbox"/> |
| audio books <input type="checkbox"/> | books & magazines
in a language other
than English <input type="checkbox"/> | social networking sites
such as Facebook,
MySpace, Bebo, Twitter <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. What types of fiction do you like reading? (check as many as you like)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| adventure <input type="checkbox"/> | horror/ghost <input type="checkbox"/> | romance/relationships <input type="checkbox"/> |
| animal-related <input type="checkbox"/> | science-fiction/fantasy <input type="checkbox"/> | comedy <input type="checkbox"/> |
| crime/detective <input type="checkbox"/> | sports-related <input type="checkbox"/> | realistic teenage fiction <input type="checkbox"/> |
| war/spy-related <input type="checkbox"/> | poetry <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't read fiction <input type="checkbox"/> |

14. Where do you like reading? (check as many as you like)

- Home:** living room bedroom bath
toilet outside
-

- School:** classroom school library school yard
-

- Community** traveling (bus, train,
car, etc.) restaurant public library
outside, e.g. park friend's house

15. I would be more likely to read if: (check as many as you like)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| I had more time <input type="checkbox"/> | books were cheaper <input type="checkbox"/> | it was about subjects I am interested in <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I enjoyed it more <input type="checkbox"/> | libraries were better <input type="checkbox"/> | books had more pictures <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I knew what to read <input type="checkbox"/> | someone read aloud to me <input type="checkbox"/> | the stories were shorter <input type="checkbox"/> |
| libraries were closer <input type="checkbox"/> | I found reading easier <input type="checkbox"/> | my friends read more <input type="checkbox"/> |
| my school encouraged me more <input type="checkbox"/> | my parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged me more <input type="checkbox"/> | I had better eyesight <input type="checkbox"/> |

16. Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? (check as many as you like)

- | | |
|--|--|
| reading groups with friends <input type="checkbox"/> | talking about my favorite reads <input type="checkbox"/> |
| reading games <input type="checkbox"/> | helping choose books for the library <input type="checkbox"/> |
| writing book reviews <input type="checkbox"/> | helping younger children with their reading <input type="checkbox"/> |
| designing displays for the library <input type="checkbox"/> | reading for charity/sponsorship <input type="checkbox"/> |
| designing websites/magazines <input type="checkbox"/> | rating books for your peers <input type="checkbox"/> |
| reading for a competition or prizes <input type="checkbox"/> | meeting authors/celebrity readers <input type="checkbox"/> |

Reading with other people

17. Who taught you to read? (check as many as you like)

mom/guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	dad/guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	grandparent	<input type="checkbox"/>
brother/sister	<input type="checkbox"/>	friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
reading tutor	<input type="checkbox"/>	other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

18. Who do you read with? And who do you talk about reading with? (check as many as you like)

	Read with	Talk with		Read with	Talk with
mom/guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	dad/guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
grandparent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	brother/sister	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
librarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	reading tutor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

19. Does your mom, dad, or guardian encourage you to read?

mom/guardian	yes, a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes, sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no, not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>
dad/guardian	yes, a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes, sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no, not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Does your mom, dad, or guardian spend time reading?

mom/guardian	yes, a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes, sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no, not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>
dad/guardian	yes, a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes, sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no, not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Who should encourage you to enjoy reading? (check one box only)

school home both neither don't know

22. Who should teach you to read? (check one box only)

school home both neither don't know

23. Which of the following do you have at home? (check as many as you like)

a computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	a desk of your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	books of your own	<input type="checkbox"/>
access to a daily newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/>	access to magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Appendix D

UK SURVEY: WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT READING

School number Pupil ID number

We want to know what you think about reading

Thank you for taking part in this questionnaire. Don't try to write what you think teachers want you to write; tell us what you really think. This is anonymous; no one will know what answers you have given.



About you

- Are you a: Boy Girl
- How old are you? (In years. For example, if you are eight, write 08)
- Do you get free school meals? Yes No Don't know
- How much do you enjoy reading? (Tick one box only)
Not at all A bit Quite a lot Very much
- On a scale of 1 - 10, how good a reader do you think you are? (Tick one box only)
Not a very good reader Average reader Excellent reader
- How often do you read outside of school? (Tick one box only)
Every day or almost every day Once or twice a week Once or twice a month
Never or almost never
- Do you think you read enough? (Tick one box only)
Yes No, but I would like to read more No, and I don't want to read more
- How many books do you think there are in your home? (Tick one box only)
None 1-10 11-50
51-100 101-250 251-500
More than 500
- How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading? (Tick one box only)
Every day or almost every day Once or twice a week Once or twice a month
Never or almost never

What you think about reading

10. What do you think about reading? (Tick **one** box for each statement)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Reading is more for girls than boys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading is boring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading is hard for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading is important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can't find books that interest me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read outside of school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like going to the library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be happy if someone gave me a book as a present	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not read as well as other students in my class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. I read because: (Tick **as many** as you like)

It is a skill for life <input type="checkbox"/>	It will help me get a job <input type="checkbox"/>	It teaches me how other people live and feel <input type="checkbox"/>
It helps me understand more of the world <input type="checkbox"/>	It is fun <input type="checkbox"/>	It helps me find out what I want/need to know <input type="checkbox"/>
It gives me a break (escapism) <input type="checkbox"/>	I have to <input type="checkbox"/>	It helps me understand more about myself <input type="checkbox"/>

12. Which of the following do you read outside of class? (Tick **as many** as you like)

Websites <input type="checkbox"/>	Newspapers <input type="checkbox"/>	Teletext/Ceefax <input type="checkbox"/>
Magazines <input type="checkbox"/>	Jokes <input type="checkbox"/>	Factual books <input type="checkbox"/>
Fiction <input type="checkbox"/>	Graphic novels <input type="checkbox"/>	Comics <input type="checkbox"/>
Annuals <input type="checkbox"/>	Manuals/instructions <input type="checkbox"/>	Text messages <input type="checkbox"/>
Emails <input type="checkbox"/>	Poetry <input type="checkbox"/>	Plays <input type="checkbox"/>
Catalogues <input type="checkbox"/>	Song lyrics <input type="checkbox"/>	Posters/signs <input type="checkbox"/>
Cookbooks <input type="checkbox"/>	Encyclopaedias <input type="checkbox"/>	Travel books <input type="checkbox"/>
Audiobooks <input type="checkbox"/>	Books & magazines in a language other than English <input type="checkbox"/>	Books & magazines about TV programmes <input type="checkbox"/>

13. What types of fiction do you like reading? (Tick as many as you like)

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> | Horror/ghost | <input type="checkbox"/> | Romance/relationships | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Animal-related | <input type="checkbox"/> | Science-fiction/fantasy | <input type="checkbox"/> | Comedy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Crime/detective | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sports-related | <input type="checkbox"/> | Realistic teenage fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| War/spy-related | <input type="checkbox"/> | Poetry | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't read fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> |

14. Where do you like reading? (Tick as many as you like)

- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Home: | Lounge/Living room | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bedroom | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bath | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Toilet | <input type="checkbox"/> | Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| School: | Classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> | School library | <input type="checkbox"/> | Playground | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Community: | Travelling (bus, train, car etc) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cafe | <input type="checkbox"/> | Town library | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Outside, e.g. park | <input type="checkbox"/> | Friend's house | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

15. I would be more likely to read if: (Tick as many as you like)

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| I had more time | <input type="checkbox"/> | Books were cheaper | <input type="checkbox"/> | It was about subjects I am interested in | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I enjoyed it more | <input type="checkbox"/> | Libraries were better | <input type="checkbox"/> | Books had more pictures | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I knew what to read | <input type="checkbox"/> | Someone read aloud to me | <input type="checkbox"/> | The stories were shorter | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Libraries were closer | <input type="checkbox"/> | I found reading easier | <input type="checkbox"/> | My friends read more | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My school encouraged me more | <input type="checkbox"/> | My parent(s)/carer(s) encouraged me more | <input type="checkbox"/> | I had better eyesight | <input type="checkbox"/> |

16. Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?

(Tick as many as you like)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Reading groups with friends | <input type="checkbox"/> | Talking about my favourite reads | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reading games | <input type="checkbox"/> | Helping choose stock for the library | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Writing book reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | Helping younger children with their reading | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Designing displays for the library | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reading for charity/sponsorship | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Designing websites/magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rating books for your peers | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reading for a competition or prizes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Meeting authors/celebrity readers | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Reading with other people

17. Who taught you to read? (Tick as many as you like)

Mum/carer <input type="checkbox"/>	Dad/carer <input type="checkbox"/>
Grandparent <input type="checkbox"/>	Brother/sister <input type="checkbox"/>
Friend <input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher <input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching Assistant <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>

18. Who do you read with? And who do you talk about reading with?

(Tick as many as you like)

	Read with	Talk with		Read with	Talk with
Mum/carer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dad/carer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grandparent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brother/sister	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Librarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

19. Does your mum, dad or carer encourage you to read?

Mum/carer	Yes, a lot <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, sometimes <input type="checkbox"/>	No, not at all <input type="checkbox"/>
Dad/carer	Yes, a lot <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, sometimes <input type="checkbox"/>	No, not at all <input type="checkbox"/>

20. Does your mum, dad or carer spend time reading?

Mum/carer	Yes, a lot <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, sometimes <input type="checkbox"/>	No, not at all <input type="checkbox"/>
Dad/carer	Yes, a lot <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, sometimes <input type="checkbox"/>	No, not at all <input type="checkbox"/>

21. Who should encourage you to enjoy reading? (Tick one box only)

School Home Both Neither Don't know

22. Who should teach you to read? (Tick one box only)

School Home Both Neither Don't know

23. How many of the following do you have at home? (Tick as many as you like)

A computer <input type="checkbox"/>	A desk of your own <input type="checkbox"/>	Books of your own <input type="checkbox"/>
Access to a daily newspaper <input type="checkbox"/>	Access to magazines <input type="checkbox"/>	

reader.	SA	A	U	D	SD
13. I am getting better at reading.	SA	A	U	D	SD
14. I understand what I read as well as other kids do.	SA	A	U	D	SD
15. When I read, I need less help than I used to.	SA	A	U	D	SD
16. Reading makes me feel happy inside.	SA	A	U	D	SD
17. My teacher thinks I am a good reader.	SA	A	U	D	SD
18. Reading is easier for me than it used to be.	SA	A	U	D	SD
19. I read faster than I could before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
20. I read better than other kids in my class.	SA	A	U	D	SD
21. I feel calm when I read.	SA	A	U	D	SD
22. I read more than other kids.	SA	A	U	D	SD
23. I understand what I read better than I could before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
24. I can figure out words better than I could before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
25. I feel comfortable when I read.	SA	A	U	D	SD
26. I think reading is relaxing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
27. I read better now than I could before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
28. When I read, I recognize more words than I used to.	SA	A	U	D	SD
29. Reading makes me feel good.	SA	A	U	D	SD
30. Other kids think I'm a good reader.	SA	A	U	D	SD
31. People in my family think I read pretty well.	SA	A	U	D	SD
32. I enjoy reading.	SA	A	U	D	SD
33. People in my family like to listen to me read.	SA	A	U	D	SD

Appendix F**TAMU-CC (IRB) APPROVAL 2010****Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**

Compliance Office

6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5844, Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5844 361-825-2177 Fax 361-825-2755

April 13, 2010

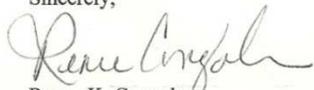
Ms. Christie L. Warren
Orange Grove Jr. High School
P. O. Box 1468
Orange Grove, TX 78372

Dear Ms. Warren,

I am pleased to inform you that your research project entitled "Middle School Students' Experiences with and Beliefs About Reading and Their Relationship to Reading Achievement and Self Efficacy: A Study of One Rural Middle School in South Texas" (IRB#21-10) has been granted approval through an expedited review category 7.2.1(7) by the TAMU-CC Institutional Review Board (IRB). We wish you the best on this project.

Please be reminded that this IRB approval lasts for 1 year. Should you need to continue this project past April 12, 2011 you must reapply for IRB expedited status and approval. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or any Board member.

Sincerely,



Renee K. Gonzales,
Research Compliance Officer
Renee.gonzales@tamucc.edu



The Island University

www.tamucc.edu

Appendix G

TAMU-CC (IRB) CONTINUED APPROVAL 2011



ERIN L. SHERMAN, MAcc, CRA, CIP
Research Compliance Officer

6300 OCEAN DRIVE, UNIT 5844
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS 78412
O 361.825.2497 • F 361.825.2755

April 20, 2011

Ms. Christie L. Warren
P.O. Box 1468
Orange Grove, TX 78372

Dear Ms. Warren,

The research project entitled "Middle School Students' Experiences with and Beliefs About Reading and their Relationship to Reading Achievement and Self Efficacy: A Study of One Rural Middle School in South Texas" (IRB# 21-10) has been granted continued approval through an expedited review by the Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi Institutional Review Board (IRB). You are authorized to continue the project as outlined in the IRB continuing review application.

IRB approval is granted for one year from the date the committee reviewed your continuation. You must submit an IRB Continuing Review Application for IRB committee review and approval should the project continue beyond April 12, 2012. Please submit the IRB Continuing Review Application one month prior to the approval expiration date to allow time for IRB review.

Please submit an IRB Amendment Application for any modifications to the approved study protocol. Changes to the study may not be initiated before the amendment is approved. Please submit an IRB Completion Report to the Compliance Office upon the conclusion of the project. Both report formats can be downloaded from IRB website.

All study records must be maintained by the researcher for three years after the completion of the study. Please contact me if you will no longer be affiliated with Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi before the conclusion of the records retention timeframe to discuss retention requirements.

We wish you the best on the project. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin L. Sherman".

Erin L. Sherman

Appendix H

TAMU-CC (IRB) CONTINUED APPROVAL 2012



ERIN L. SHERMAN, MAcc, CRA, CIP
Research Compliance Officer

6300 OCEAN DRIVE, UNIT 5844
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS 78412
O 361.825.3497 • F 361.845.2755

March 15, 2012

Ms. Christie L. Warren
PO Box 1468
Orange Grove, TX 78372

Dear Ms. Warren,

The research project entitled "Middle School Students' Experiences with and Beliefs About Reading and Their Relationship to Reading Achievement and Self-Efficacy: A Study of One Rural Middle School in South Texas" (IRB# 21-10) has been granted continued approval through an expedited review by the Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Institutional Review Board (IRB). You are authorized to continue the project as outlined in the IRB continuing review application.

IRB approval is granted for one year from the date the committee reviewed your continuation. You must submit an IRB Continuing Review Application for IRB committee review and approval should the project continue beyond April 12, 2013. Please submit the IRB Continuing Review Application one month prior to the approval expiration date to allow time for IRB review.

Please submit an IRB Amendment Application for any modifications to the approved study protocol. Changes to the study may not be initiated before the amendment is approved. Please submit an IRB Completion Report to the Compliance Office upon the conclusion of the project. Both report formats can be downloaded from IRB website.

All study records must be maintained by the researcher for three years after the completion of the study. Please contact me if you will no longer be affiliated with Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi before the conclusion of the records retention timeframe to discuss retention requirements.

We wish you the best on the project. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin L. Sherman".

Erin L. Sherman

Appendix I

PERMISSION TO USE UK SURVEY

Subject: RE: request for a USA dissertation study

From: Christina Clark (christina.clark@literacytrust.org.uk)

To: ogteach21@yahoo.com;

Cc: dan.pearce@tamucc.edu;

Date: Monday, February 15, 2010 5:16 AM

Hello Christie, I am delighted that you would like to use the survey that we developed in your study incorporating the changes that you suggest.

I would suggest on further change, one we made when we reused the survey in late 2009 for a repeat study. Like you we omitted some of the reading materials, like ceefax, but also included one more, namely: social networking sites (such as Facebook, Bebo, Twitter).

And of course, I would very much like to hear back from you with some of your findings!

Many thanks

Christina

 **Dr. Christina Clark (PhD)**
Head of Research
National Literacy Trust

Email: christina.clark@literacytrust.org.uk
Direct line: 020 7840 9551
Web: www.literacytrust.org.uk

Registered address: 68 South Lambeth Road, London SW8 1RL. Tel: 020 7587 1842

The National Literacy Trust is a registered charity, no. 1116260, and a company limited by guarantee, no. 5836486.
Registered in England and Wales.

Appendix J

TAMU-CC (IRB) AMMENDMENT APPROVAL 2012



ERIN L. SHERMAN, MAcc, CRA, CIP
 Research Compliance Officer
 Division of Research, Commercialization and Outreach

6500 OCEAN DRIVE, UNIT 5844
 CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS 78412
 O 361.825.2497 • F 361.825.1755

October 11, 2012

Ms. Christie L. Warren
 Orange Grove Jr. High School
 P. O. Box 1468
 Orange Grove, TX 78372

Dear Ms. Warren,

The amendment to the research project entitled "Middle School Students' Reading Experiences and Behaviors and Their Relationship to Reading Achievement and Self-Efficacy: A Study of One Rural Middle School in South Texas" (IRB# 21-10) has been granted approval through an expedited review under category 7.2.1(7) by the Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Institutional Review Board (IRB). You are authorized to proceed with the project as outlined in the IRB amendment application.

The amendment(s) approved for IRB protocol #21-10 include:

1. Change of study title

IRB approval is granted for one year from the date approval is originally granted. You must submit an IRB Continuing Review Application for IRB committee review and approval should the project continue beyond April 12, 2013. Please submit the IRB Continuing Review Application one month prior to the approval expiration date to allow time for IRB review.

Please submit an IRB Amendment Application for any modifications to the approved study protocol. Changes to the study may not be initiated before the amendment is approved. Please submit an IRB Completion Report to the Compliance Office upon the conclusion of the project. Both report formats can be downloaded from IRB website.

All study records must be maintained by the researcher for three years after the completion of the study. Please contact me if you will no longer be affiliated with Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi before the conclusion of the records retention timeframe to discuss retention requirements.

We wish you the best on the project. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin L. Sherman".

Erin L. Sherman