AN INVESTIGATION INTO READING HABITS OF TEXAS MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION INTO READING HABITS OF TEXAS MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS

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Chair: Daniel L. Pearce, Ph.D.

Throughout the history of education, it has been noted that teachers are influential people in lives of children (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Daisey, 2010; Gambrell, 1996; Ruddell, 1995). Children spend one-third (or more) of the day with teachers; and as they enter into adolescence, children come in contact with more and more teachers during day. Teachers are in a position to influence children's academic and personal lives positively or negatively (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Ruddell, 1995).

When we look for ways to motivate students as readers, improve literacy instruction, and raise academic achievement, the teacher is an important factor. "Teachers are often well positioned to do so" (Applegate & Applegate, 2004, p. 555) by sharing and valuing reading inside and outside the classroom. While literacy is a multi-faceted feature, it seems logical to state that teachers are the common reading models for school aged children across the United States. Linda Gambrell (1996), stated that, "Teachers who love reading and are avid readers themselves have students who have higher reading achievement than do the teachers who rarely read" (p. 20).

This study examined one aspect of the growing body of research exploring English Language Arts teachers' personal reading experiences and how that affects their attitude toward the teaching of reading, specifically in the modeling practices in the classroom. Participants in this study included 158 Secondary English Language Arts teachers currently teaching in grades 6-12 in the state of Texas. The participants completed an online questionnaire, through a web-based tool. Respondents were asked a series of demographic questions followed by questions about their personal reading practices outside the classroom and their modeling practices in the classroom.

The participants’ answers to the questions in survey provided descriptive data to explain the way things are or describe the characteristics of a whole group by using part of it without any experimental manipulation (Borg & Gall, 1971; Duke & Mallette, 2004, Kamil, Langer, & Shanahan, 1985). The majority of the secondary English Language Arts (ELA) teachers that responded to the survey claimed to be readers. ELA teachers with graduate hours were readers and better reading models. Also, the teachers at schools that received performance ratings of the “Recognized” and “Exemplary” reported implementing more modeling practices.

These findings are intended to start conversations and encourage social reading experiences both among content area educators, as well as in classrooms, between educator and student. Suggestions are made for further research using both qualitative and quantitative methods to explore the reading and modeling practices in the content area classroom.

DEDICATION

To my boys, my family:

Darryl “DC” and Davon, for the inspiration and courage to finish. This is for you!

Darryl L., Thank you! I love you!

To my parents:

Dorothy J. Barnes Francis, for being my Angel and saving the day many times; and Alvin Francis, Jr., for giving me the start on this journey and believing in me.

To my grandparents:

Granny (Joyce B. Barnes), Memaw (Louia L. Francis), Pawpaw (Alvin Francis, Sr.), and Grandpa (Claude Lee Barnes, May you rest in peace!)

To my siblings:

Alvin Francis, III and Bridgette Francis

Thank you. I love you both!

To Pamela Yvette Boston,

Butterflies to you! Miss you. May you continue to rest in peace.

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Second, I extend a special thanks to my committee, Dr. Sherrye D. Garrett, Dr. Guang Zeng, and Dr. Molly Engelhardt. Dr. Garrett, thank you for the countless hours devoted to reading and suggesting revisions. Thank you for the many writing sessions. Words cannot express how grateful and appreciative I am in these final steps. Thank you! To Dr. Zeng, thank you for the many meetings and your patience and expertise. Dr. Engelhardt, thank you being so supportive and providing a different view of ideas. Thank you all!

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

A common theme in articles about education has been that teachers are influential in lives of their students' literacy development (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Daisey, 2010; Gambrell, 1996; Ruddell, 1995). Students spend as much as one-third of the day with teachers. In the elementary grades, teachers tend to see a smaller number of students for longer periods of time. In the later grades, as children enter into adolescence, teachers come in contact with an increasing number of students during the school day. Consequently, as a result of the amount of time students spend in school, teachers are in a position to influence children's academic and personal lives positively or negatively (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Nathanson, Pruslow, & Levitt, 2008; Ruddell, 1995).

The teacher is an important factor when we look at ways to motivate students as readers, improve literacy instruction, and raise academic achievement. In fact, overall it is not an exaggeration to claim that teachers represent the reading models children encounter most frequently. Applegate and Applegate (2004) noted that teachers are well suited to influence their students' reading and literacy development by promoting and valuing reading inside and outside the classroom. Gambrell (1996) asserted that "teachers who love reading and are avid readers themselves have students who have higher reading achievement than do the teachers who rarely read" (p. 20). While Gambrell's statement was based upon the results of her study with elementary teachers, in subsequent work (Gambrell, 2011), she referenced that this held true for students in later grades as well.

This study investigated English language arts (ELA) teachers and their role as reading models in the classroom. This chapter reviews the teaching of reading in the secondary ELA classroom and the role of ELA teachers in the teaching of reading.

History of Teaching Reading in Secondary English/English Language Arts

At the insistence of many classical scholars, English as a course subject became an essential component of the secondary curriculum in the mid-1800s. At the time English was introduced into the curriculum, the teaching of secondary English focused on grammar instruction, specifically formal grammar (Venable, 1958).

A report submitted to National Education Association (NEA) in 1894 discussed the work of the Committee of Ten, which had been established in July of 1892. The committee met later in that year in nine Conferences throughout the United States to standardize the curriculum for each of the subject areas. Each Conference's goal was to make sure that the same subject selected for discussion was taught the same way in different schools. The Conferences outlined the curriculum and time allotted in the school day for each subject area.

The Conference on the study of English met in December of 1892. They had two main objectives for English instruction:

(1) To enable the pupil to understand the expressed thoughts of others and to give expression to thoughts of his own;

(2) To cultivate a taste for reading, to give the pupil some acquaintance with good literature, and to furnish him with the means of extending that acquaintance (NEA, 1894, p.86).

The Conference also determined the reading materials for the English curriculum and was influential in setting the standards for college entrance exams, which, in turn, had a great impact on the high school curriculum.

In 1911, the NEA appointed a committee led by James Hosic to conduct a survey of college entrance exam requirements (NCTE, 2012). This committee determined that there was a need for a national organization of English teachers. Hosic invited more than 400 hundred individuals, teachers, and local associations from around the country to attend an organizational meeting (NCTE, 2012). Of the 65 people who attended the meeting, 35 signed the roster as charter members of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). NCTE was formed to address the pressures and demands on high school English departments to meet college requirements (NCTE, 2012; Squire, 2003). NCTE also advocated for students and their rights as readers and learners.

In the 1930s, the teaching of literature and composition was integrated with grammar instruction into the English curriculum. English teachers were also charged with teaching 14 classic literature titles and ensuring their students developed a love for those same pieces of literature (Dixon, 2003; Venable, 1958). In 1936, NCTE made a recommendation to discard the teaching of formal grammar and offer grammar instruction only as an elective to seniors. During this same time period, at the junior high level, teachers used an anthology written by NCTE leaders as their text. Dixon (2003) pointed out that in the 1930s, which was the time of the Great Depression, testing and college entrance exams drove the English curriculum. The standardized exams tested students' knowledge of specific classic texts. English teachers continued teaching the classics because of the entrance requirements of colleges and universities, which focused on knowledge of those classics. English teachers understood that this would result in their students' success on the college entrance exams, which would ensure job security for teachers at a time when the unemployment rates soared.

In the 1930s, reading was thought to be thoroughly covered in elementary school, thus solely the burden of the elementary teachers; therefore, reading was not considered a part of the English curriculum or a focus of the secondary school (Dean, 2000; Smith, 2002; Venable, 1958). Squire (2003) summed up the view prevalent during this time period as being, "Children were to be taught to read in the grammar school; they read to learn in the secondary" (p. 4).

From 1940 to 1950, there was a heightened interest in reading at the secondary levels; however, teaching reading as a subject did not receive the same time and attention as other content area subjects. Because the content teachers thought of reading as one of the communications areas, they, and schools, assigned that responsibility to the English teachers. English teachers were identified as the experts of reading and were expected to assume the task of teaching reading. Venable (1958) made the point:

> Emphasis is also being given to high school reading, especially as part of the English program. The assumption that reading skills are the concern of the elementary teacher solely has fast been replaced by the concept of a twelve-grade reading program. *The English teacher holds a key post in the teaching of high school reading* [emphasis added]. Reading skills such as general reading, reading of technical information, oral reading, skimming and scanning, locating information, and organizing are all considered a part of today's English program (p. 125).

Venable (1958) observed that in the 1940s and 1950s reading skills became a part of the shift in reading and English instruction. The focus changed from grammar and the quality of speech and writing to improving students' ability to read and comprehend texts. During this time, NCTE (2012) began promoting the use of "language arts" as a subject area in schools. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, after World War II, there were several studies which revealed a large number of high school and college students with reading deficits (Venable, 1958; Smith, 2002). These deficits shifted attention to reading at the secondary levels. Professional publications also addressed reading at the high school and college levels (Smith, 2002).

Classroom instruction and educational practices in the next 60 years changed due to an increase in the federal government's role in American Education, as well as key events in history. Lagemann (1997) claimed that, "Until the mid-1950s, the federal government had not been a significant force in education research" (p. 12). Lagemann (1997), and later Spring (2006), suggested that it was the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the War on Poverty that sparked this increase in public interest in education. Hill and Patterson (2010) noted that this time period marked an increase in state and federal government influence in the secondary English curriculum education as part of government growing influence on public education in general.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 in particular marked an increase in government involvement in education (Hill & Patterson, 2010; NEA, 2008). Squire (2003) maintains that after the passing of this law, there was a shift in how English was taught at the secondary level. Until the 1960s, junior high curriculum focused on grammar, and the high schools focused on literature. After the passage of these laws, reading instruction and student improvement in reading became a factor in ELA classrooms and in classrooms in general. Both the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the ESEA of 1965, according to Allington and McGill-Frazen

(2004), “institutionalized reading teachers into the educational workforce” (p. 9). The influx of reading teachers influenced public education at all levels.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, interest in Americans becoming readers intensified. Several reports were published to encourage the nation to read frequently. In 1983, the *Nation at Risk* report stressed the need for a quality education for all students (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1984); in 1985, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading* defined readers and encouraged the nation, both children and adults, to read regularly (Anderson, Heibert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). Following these reports there was renewed interest in the teaching of reading in ELA classrooms (Hill & Patterson, 2010). This interest was manifested in the works of scholars such as Margaret Early, who wrote extensively on reading instruction in the ELA classrooms (Early, 1977; Wolcott, 2011).

ELA and reading programs were greatly impacted again in the 2000s by a series of reports. These reports included the *Report of the National Reading Panel* in 2000, the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) (NEA, 2008), the *To Read or Not to Read* (Endowment, 2007), the *Nation’s Report Card* (NCES, 2011), and the report from Alliance for Excellent Education entitled, *Adolescent Literacy* (2011) . As a result of NCLB, the states divided approximately $1 billion over a six-year period for literacy/reading coaches. The report of the National Reading Panel also sparked major organizations, such as NCTE (2012) and National Reading Conference (Alvermann, 2001), to publish position statements regarding reading, effective reading instruction, and the important role of teachers.

The public’s interest and perception that adolescent literacy was a problem was to some extent the result of the advent of the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) test, also known as the Nation’s Report Card. The NAEP test was initiated in the 1970s and the only national assessment that examines students across the country. Reading and mathematics are tested every two years and other subject areas, such as science and history, are also examined, but not yet on a two-year schedule. The NAEP sample of students includes both private and public schools. In 1990, the NAEP found that eight million children in America were reading "below basic" levels (NAEP, 2012). The 2003 scores for eighth graders indicated that there had been some improvement in reading since 1990. The scores also indicated that significant gaps continued to exist in the achievement levels between males, females, and Anglo students compared with other ethnic groups (NCES, 2011).

Biancarosa and Snow (2004) coauthored the report, *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy,* to address the needs of the eight million struggling readers in grade four and up. This report delineated the recommendations of a panel of five nationally known educational researchers. The panel recommended 15 key elements of effective literacy programs, many of which addressed the struggling reader.

Partially as a result the attention on adolescent and adult literacy through events such as the NAEP scores over a period of years, the report of the National Reading Panel (2000), and various reports on the state of adolescent and adult literacy, President George W. Bush's 2005 State of the Union address presented *Jobs for the 21st Century*, a program to improve high school and postsecondary education, which would ultimately increase job skills. This new program contained six initiatives, one of which was the Striving Readers Initiative. Its goal was to increase the development of "struggling" or "striving" middle and high school adolescents literacy skills (NCTE, 2008). The Striving Readers Initiative added a secondary, or adolescent, component to President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act.

Since the mid-2000s, attention has continued to focus on adolescent literacy. In *Reading at Risk*, The National Endowment of the Arts (2004) expressed concern about reading in the United States. They noted that adolescents and adults were not reading regularly. It stated that “for the first time in modern history, less than half the adult population now reads literature” (p. vii). In a follow up study in 2007, The National Endowment of the Arts (2007) compiled data from a 30-year period that addressed voluntary reading and school achievement among students ages nine, 13, and 17. The overall analysis found that voluntary reading had declined among students. The report also noted that reading test scores had not improved for 17-year-olds over a 30-year period. The Alliance for Excellent Education (2011) concluded that over a quarter of twelfth-grade students scored below the “basic level” and did not have even partial mastery of basic grade level knowledge and skills

As a result of these reports, and the perception that adolescent literacy was a problem area, the role of the ELA classroom in developing adolescent literacy has been emphasized. This was illustrated by position statements on adolescent literacy by IRA (2012) and NCTE (2012). This emphasis on the ELA teacher as someone who was responsible for both teaching literature and developing students’ reading abilities is reflected in the Texas English Language Arts and Reading 8-12 teaching certificate. This current Texas secondary English teaching certificate is an English/Reading certificate and four of the nine standards specifically speak to a teacher’s ability to develop reading in his/her students (TEA, 2012b).

Since the early 1900s, the English curriculum has changed, and with this change, how reading is emphasized and implemented has evolved. Originally, reading was not a focus at the secondary level; then it was acknowledged as a subject. To some extent how reading is addressed in the secondary school today depends on the school district. Some have designated reading as a subject and others have made have made it part of the English teacher's implicit responsibility (i.e. the "hidden curriculum or expected curriculum"). Burroughs and Smagorinsky (2010) noted in their review of the *Secondary English Curriculum and Adolescent Literacy*, a shift had occurred in the secondary ELA curriculum to include not just knowledge, but also a focus on reading practices and preferences.

Various authorities have traced the emergence of adolescent literacy as an evolving element within middle and secondary ELA classrooms (Burroughs & Smagorinsky, 2010; Dixon, 2010; Squire, 2003). Interestingly, the main objectives of the Conference on the study of English remain as viable and worthy today as when they were drafted—to allow students to dialogue about their thoughts and cultivate a love a of reading and share that love with others (NEA, 1894). Reading is a complex process and can be challenging to some. When students are motivated to read, it is expected that they will eventually develop a love for reading.

The Importance of Teachers

Professional organizations' position statements, such as those by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 2008) and the International Reading Association (IRA, 2012; Moore, et. al; 1999), focused primarily on instruction and effective strategies while encouraging educators to be mindful of adolescents' backgrounds and to provide engaging, self-selected, and relevant reading materials. NCTE's position was that in order to promote learning to read, schools needed to "provide learners with a wide variety of engaging, age-appropriate reading materials, free of stereotypes and compatible with community values to read for pleasure and information" (p. 4). IRA's position paper stated that "adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences, and respond to their characteristics" (p. 8). Embedded in both organizations' positions is the recommendation that students need and are entitled to teachers who are knowledgeable about the reading materials available to adolescent students.

English language arts teachers have been expected to be experts in the area of literature texts; originally they were expected to be knowledgeable about specific classical texts. Later, these teachers were expected to be knowledgeable about specific texts as well as the broader area of literature because they were expected to be readers themselves. In the National Society of the Study of Education's (NSSE) 1960 Annual Yearbook, *Development In and Through Reading,* (Henry, 1961), the chapters on junior high (Sheldon, 1961), and high school (Bond & Kegler, 1961), presented the English language arts teacher as a person knowledgeable of the literature that is available and appropriate for their students. In the 1976 NSSE Yearbook, *The Teaching of English,* (Squire, 1977), the chapter by Petty, Petty, Newman, and Skeen (1977) described a curriculum which was dependent upon English teachers who were knowledgeable about reading materials and were themselves literate. The perception that ELA teachers are avid readers is illustrated by Zancanella (1991), who stated, "English teachers are readers of literature long before they are teachers of literature" (p.5).

The assumptions that ELA teachers are readers might be an unwarranted assumption. The existing information on the reading behaviors and interests of ELA teachers is limited. This research consists of two studies that examined the professional reading habits (Hipple & Giblin, 1971; Lindsey, 1969) and one case study of ELA teachers' reading habits (Walker, 1988). Hipple and Giblin (1971) and Lindsey (1969) found that secondary ELA teachers were not reading professional material, and approximately 30% did not read each week (Lindsey, 1969). Walker (1988) "never" observed teachers "demonstrate" reading behaviors or writing with students or reading an excerpt of something they had written (pp. 440-441). These studies are more than two decades old. The need exists for updated information on ELA teachers' reading behaviors.

The researcher's goal is to determine whether or not the results of this study support the findings of previous research in this area: those teachers who enjoy reading will pass that love on to their students and may improve students' reading and success in the classroom. Applegate and Applegate (2004) remind us "teachers often motivate their students to read by sharing their own enthusiasm for reading" (p. 556). Second, their instruction will be more engaging (Applegate & Applegate, 2004). Third, English teachers' preparation to teach reading would increase their confidence as teachers of reading and literature.

Teachers are acknowledged to be a major influence on their students as readers at both the elementary (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999) and secondary levels (Daisey, 2010; Zancanella, 1991). Zancanella, in his study of five junior high English teachers, found there was a conflict between teaching "reading" and teaching "literature." High school teachers were more comfortable with teaching literature while middle school teacher were not comfortable with teaching reading or literature. Based on teacher interviews, classroom observations, and student interviews, Zancanella concluded that the teacher's personal approach to reading and literature directly influenced his/her approach to teaching literature. This, in turn, directly influenced that teacher's students' understanding of the literature and reading enjoyment. Daisey (2010), in her study of preservice teachers, concluded, "Teachers' personal experiences with reading form an important basis for their attitudes toward infusing reading activities into their instruction" (p. 679). The preservice teachers in this study also reported that their high school teachers were the "most negative influence on them as readers" (p. 679) because they did not promote reading or encourage discussions about reading and/or books.

The existing research supports the concept that classroom teachers can have a major impact on the motivation and development of students' reading. The literature also supports the view that a problem exists in adolescent literacy. Linda Darling-Hammond, in a series of publications, has focused on teacher quality and student achievement (2012b). She and other authorities view teachers as being a major component in solving existing literacy problems. Darling-Hammond (2012) posited that every aspect of school reform is contingent on the success of highly skilled and qualified teachers. The literature supports the concept that certain teacher characteristics are associated successful teachers. These can lead to a positive relationship between teaching experience and reading scores (Durall, 1995); student achievement, and advanced work in reading (Darling-Hammond, 1999); and a relationship between socioeconomic status of a school's students and reading achievement (NAEP, 2012). No research has been identified that examined the relationship of these and other teacher characteristics to the reading behaviors and experiences of ELA teachers.

This is particularly important when one considers the total educational situation in Texas. As a state, Texas does not score well on various measures of literacy: overall ranking of literate cities, percentage of population with high school diploma, and reading achievement of 8th graders. Texas' percentage of qualified teachers is low and its percentage of teachers teaching outside their areas of specialization is high. In Texas, the literacy crisis appears to be more severe than other parts of the nation. Texas currently has the second-largest grade school enrollment in the nation and a growing minority/Hispanic population, expected to reach 60.9% by 2040 (TEA, 2012). Bickel (1999) noted that Texas has an achievement gap between middle class and socioeconomically challenged students. The latest Texas assessment confirmed that a gap existed between schools in wealthier districts compared to those districts that are not as affluent (TEA, 2012). The United States Census Bureau (2012) data ranks the 50 states based upon each of three factors: percentage of population that finished high school, percentage of population with an undergraduate degree, and percentage of population with a graduate degree. The rankings for the 2009 percentage of population 25 years old and over with a high school diploma or more place Texas 50 out of the 50 states. The rankings for the 2009 percentage of population 25 years old and over with Bachelor Degree or more place Texas 30th. The rankings of the 2009 percentage of population 25 years old and over with an advanced graduate degree placed Texas 33rd.

Central Connecticut State University produces an annual ranking of America's most and least literate cities. Researchers determined the ranking of those cities with a population of 250,000 or larger. Researchers annually examine each of six subcategories for every city: bookstores, educational attainment of its citizens, Internet resources, library resources, newspaper circulation, and periodical publication. For the 2011 rankings of 69 cities, five Texas cities placed in the lowest 15 cities: Houston, Arlington, San Antonio, El Paso, and Corpus Christi. Three Texas cities ranked among the 10 least literate cities: San Antonio, El Paso, and Corpus Christi (Central Connecticut State University, 2011).

This problem is potentially linked to the literacy and literacy habits of teachers. Darling-Hammond (2012a) noted that wealthier districts with achieving students receive the more accomplished and experienced teachers. There is some evidence that Texas teachers are not as accomplished overall as teachers in other parts of the country. Rosa and Miller (2009) included a state-by-state ranking of the percentage of teachers who have completed a master's degree or above. Twenty-seven percent of Texas public school teachers have a master's degree or above.

Out of the 50 states, Texas is tied with North Dakota and Utah for the lowest percentage of teachers with advanced degrees. Questions exist; and given Texas's student and teacher demographics, surprisingly no information was identified that addressed relationships between teacher characteristics and student reading achievement.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the reading experiences and habits of Texas middle and secondary English Language Arts teachers. Research supports the view that a teacher's reading habits, interests, and willingness to share with students can affect those students' reading development and their future motivation to read. While calls have been issued to increase the use of a variety of texts in content areas and for teachers to share reading strategies with students (IRA, 2012; Schoenbach, Greenleaf, & Hale, 2010), these recommendations have been met with some resistance because other subject area teachers think reading is only the English teachers' responsibility (Benjamin, 2007; Lent, 2007). Teachers of different content areas and others associated with the schools have assumed that English teachers enjoy reading and read extensively. Data supporting this assumption is lacking. A related purpose of this study is to determine whether or not an ELA teacher's personal experience with reading relates to their students' reading achievement.

As a secondary English teacher and teacher educator, the researcher expects this study to contribute much needed information to the current research on English teachers as readers and reading models, which in turn can positively affect student achievement. The idea for the study originated in part with Clark and Foster's (2005) study for the National Literacy Trust in England. Clark and Foster surveyed over 8,000 elementary and secondary students in England. They reported that students at both the elementary and secondary level believe that both home and school should be responsible for teaching reading and fostering reading enjoyment. This report strongly placed emphasis on the parents and home and mentioned school only briefly.

After reading the report, the researcher began to reflect about how the English department where she had taught would respond if they were given the same survey—how would the results look? As the researcher began to read more about the topic, she wondered about the different profiles of readers by age, proficiency, and socio-economic status. Many studies examining students as readers exist but few have looked at teachers as readers, especially English teachers as readers. English teachers are thought to be readers because of the content they teach, but the researcher's experience in her 10 years of teaching suggested that was not necessarily the case. As she explored the topic she discovered that there were many assumptions but little data existed on the topic.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the relationship between the teachers' reading experiences, behaviors, characteristics, and school achievement. The examination drew upon the research which indicates that there may be a relationship between the teachers' reading experiences, practices, and their current school's characteristics, specifically, their percentages of economically disadvantaged and academic performance ratings. The study was guided by the following research questions:

(1) What are English/Language Arts teachers' reading experiences?

(2) Do these English Language Arts teachers' reading habits differ based upon demographics?

(3) Do these English Language Arts teachers' modeling practices differ based upon demographics?

(4) What is the relationship between English Language Arts teachers' reading/teaching practices and schools’ characteristics?

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for the purpose of the proposed study:

- *Adolescent*: a term generally used to describe teenagers, young people between childhood and adulthood (Christenbury, Bomer, & Smagorinsky, 2009; Hall, 1904; IRA, 2012)
- *Baby Boomers*: individuals born before 1967 and 46 or more years of age, (Carlson, 2009)
- *English:* courses taught by the English Department at the high school level, such as English I/AP, English II/AP, English III/AP, and English IV/AP/Dual Credit
- *English Language Arts:* courses typically in grades 6-8; however, this study, will encompass both English and English language arts courses for grades 6-12
- *Experienced teacher(s):* teachers with 4-25 years teaching in the k-12 school classroom
- *Generation X (Gen X):* Individual 28-45 years of age, born between 1967-1984 (Carlson, 2009)
- *Inservice teachers*: teachers who are currently employed by a school district and teaching in a public or private school classroom
- *Literacy:* reading and writing
- *Modeling Practices:* instructional practices that involve the teacher or instructional leader demonstrating their enthusiasm for reading with their students and actively participating in reading and reading process
- *Preservice teachers:* students attending college pursuing teacher certification, but who have not yet entered the classroom as a practicing teacher

- *Proficiency:* Proficiency indicates skills necessary to perform more complex and challenging literacy activities, such as comparing viewpoints in two different sources, interpreting a table, computing and comparing items. Key abilities associated with proficiency are reading lengthy, complex, abstract text; integrating, synthesizing, and analyzing; and locating more abstract quantitative information and using it. (National Assessment on Adult Literacy [NAAL], 2011)
- *New Boomers (Generation Y/ Millennials):* individuals 21-27 years of age, born between 1985-1991; actually this age group expands until today, 2012 (Carlson, 2009)
- *Novice teacher(s):* teachers with 0-3 years teaching in the K-12 school classroom
- *Reading:* reading, not inclusive of writing; making meaning from the printed text
- *Reading Experiences:* early influences on reading attitudes and development (Stocks, 2011).
- *Reading Habits:* current routine practices with regard to text choice and reading frequency (Stocks, 2011).
- *Reading Model(s):* teachers who share their enthusiasm for reading with their students.
- *Veteran teacher(s):* teachers with 26 or more years of experience teaching in the K-12 school classroom

Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation includes five chapters. Chapter One has provided an historical overview of the teaching of reading in the secondary ELA curriculum and an emphasis on the importance of teachers in the success of students. Chapter Two looks at what research has uncovered about teachers' reading practices and habits, teachers' influence as reading models, and the value of that influence on students. Chapter Three provides an overview of survey research and the researcher's approach to the study. A discussion of the respondents and the rationale for this particular method of study follows. Chapter Four presents the results of the study beginning with the findings using chi-square tests and crosstabulations. Nonparametric tests, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis, were used to explore group differences in reading experiences, habits, and practices by the demographic data. Some tables and figures are presented for clarification. Chapter Five is a discussion of the results and a charge to teachers as reading models. Contributions of this study and opportunities for further study are also presented.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

This chapter reviews related scholarship in order to provide a context for understanding this study. The chapter contains five sections: (a) reading as a social and shared experience, (b) adolescent readers, (c) teachers as reading models and motivators, (d) English language arts teachers as readers and reading models, and (e) a summary. In researching these areas, which included a historical look at the teaching of reading in secondary English, relatively few studies were found regarding English teachers as readers and reading models.

Reading as a Social and Shared Experience

Reading is a process, a complex, interactive, cognitive process that improves with practice (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985; McCormick, 1994; Moore & Hinchman, 2006; NCTE, 2006; Rosenblatt, 1996; Rystrom, 1974; Schoenbach & Greenleaf, 2009; Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 2000; Weiner, 2009). While there is some uncertainty about how the communicative processes relate to each other, there is a concern that students benefit from opportunities to experience how reading, writing, speaking, and listening support each other (IRA, 2012; NCTE, 2012). The sharing of the reading experience in and out school does just that; it creates an opportunity to learn. Reading is as much a social act as an academic action.

As a social act, reading can be shared and enjoyed with others. Reading, either reading something oneself or being read to, can convey feelings which potentially evoke both positive and negative emotions. This sharing can have a significant impact on how individuals engage in reading. If reading is seen as being important to significant others in a person's life, that person is more likely to read (Henderson & Berla, 1994; IRA, 2012). At the same time, what an individual chooses to read can also be influenced by other people. This appears to be significant in the case of developing readers. Several researchers have documented the role of a literate environment in fostering literacy development. This aspect, including the modeling and recommendations of significant others, appears to impact the reading of children from early grades through high school (Endowment, 2007; IRA, 2012; Lesesne, 2006). Readers' attitudes and development are influenced by early reading experiences, such as having books available in the home and classroom, visiting the public library, observing family and teachers engaged in reading, and being encouraged by teachers to read for the pure joy of reading.

A series of studies have found that social situations impact a person's reading habits. Pozzer-Ardenghi and Roth (2010) agreed "[r]eading is social practice. We learn it in social situations" (p. 239). Children's reading behaviors develop in social situations where they share the reading experience with others—family, friends, and peers. Pozzer-Ardenghi and Roth's (2010) review of the literature suggested that students learn and understand more of the concepts "in social situations" involving teachers and peers if students have the opportunity to observe different ways of reading. These can be academic and/or out-of-school reading. Students learn reading habits and practices from their community. Snow (1983), drawing upon research and a case study of a child learning to talk and read, outlined the similarities between learning to talk and literacy development. A major component in language and literacy development was parental involvement and the literacy events that occurred in a child's home environment. Children from a home with a high degree of literacy and parents who engaged in intentional oral and literate acts (i.e., speaking to the child, playing word games with the child, reading, writing, and purposefully engaging the child in those acts) developed higher levels of both oral language and literacy. Purcell-Gates (1996) conducted a descriptive study of the literacy practices of 20 lower socio-income families. Within these 20 families, she measured the literacy knowledge of 24 children, ages four to six. The results strongly suggested that a pattern of relationships existed between home literacy practices and a child's emergent literacy knowledge. Those children whose parents engaged in intentional reading had higher measures of literacy both at home and in school.

Adolescent Readers

Adolescent is the term generally used to describe teenagers, young people between childhood and adulthood. The term has been used to describe this population since the late 19th Century and continues to be used today (Christenbury, Bomer, & Smagorinsky, 2009; Hall, 1904; IRA, 2012). This is a period of great physical and cognitive change (IRA, 2012; Lesesne, 2006). It is during this time period that a person's reading develops so that he or she can function at an academically high level. It is also a time when a person can formulate reading habits and abilities that help determine future success (Alliance for Excellence in Education, 2011; Schoenbach & Greenleaf, 2009).

The development of adolescent readers is an area about which much has been written, particularly in recent years. It is also a topic that has drawn a great deal of attention from educators. Dating back to 1997, Jack Cassidy has authored, with different coauthors, a survey of literary experts to determine what is "hot" in reading. In the first survey (Cassidy & Wenrich, 1997), "adolescent literacy" was not even listed as one of the topics on the list. However, in 2001, it appeared on the list as a "hot" and "should be hot" topic. Five years later, Cassidy, Garrett, and Barrera (2006) focused on adolescent literacy. They found that not only was it a "hot" topic, but it was getting hotter each year, especially hotter than the year before. Adolescent literacy proved to be something that secondary teachers and researchers wanted to talk about more, and its importance was revealed by the surveys and research each year (Cassidy & Cassidy, 2002; Cassidy & Cassidy, 2004; Cassidy & Cassidy, 2009; Cassidy, Garrett, &Barrera, 2006; Cassidy & Loveless, 2011; Cassidy, Ortlieb, & Shettel, 2010; Cassidy & Grote-Garcia, 2012; Cassidy, Valadez, Garrett, & Barrera, 2010).

A major reason for this attention has been a series of studies and reports that have focused attention on a perceived reading problem among adolescents. Biancarosa and Snow (2004) coauthored the report *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy* to address the needs of the eight million struggling readers in grade four and up. The report presented the findings of a panel of five nationally known educational researchers; it included some alarming statistics about the state of adolescent literacy and its impact on students after high school. According to Biancarosa and Snow (2004), only an estimated 32 percent of college-bound high school students will likely be successful in English courses at the college level. Schoenbach and Greenleaf (2009) agreed that many adolescents are underprepared for college, especially in the areas of comprehension of college-level text, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Biancarosa and Snow, in their report, concluded that making our struggling readers successful in college and life is a collaborative effort between home, school, and community. Lesesne (2006) shared an eye-opening statistic that "more than 75 percent of teens graduating from high school indicated that they will never read another book again (p. 17)." The findings of these reports are supported by additional studies.

The National Endowment of the Arts (2007) compiled data from a 30-year period that addressed voluntary reading and school achievement among students' ages nine, 13, and 17. This study surveyed approximately 38,000 American students from these ages about their reading skills and habits. It found, among teenagers, that reading declined with age. In 2005, the number of 17-year-olds reading for pleasure was lower than it was 20 years previously. Among 13-year-olds, less than one-third was reading daily. The reading rates, how often students read, decreased by 50 percent from age nine to age 17, with only 22 percent of 17-year-olds reading almost every day for pleasure. Over the 30 year period researched, 17-year-olds have not improved their reading test scores.

The National Endowment of Arts reported three conclusions that were a result of the trends seen in the 30-year study:

(1) There is a historical decline of voluntary reading rates among teenagers and young adults.
(2) There is a gradual worsening of reading skills among older teens, 17-year-olds.
(3) There is a declining proficiency in adult readers (Endowment, 2007, p. 21).

These declines reflected how the lack of pleasure reading impacts not only adolescents in their teens, but can also carry over into adulthood. On a larger scale, a decline in reading can impact the job market and the economy as a whole. A strong economy is contingent on a literate workforce.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assesses the educational progress of youth in the United States periodically in various subject areas. Reading has been measured every two years since 1971. NAEP scores indicate that while reading abilities of students might be improving, reading ability, both overall and within specific ethnic groups, remains an area of concern. For example, while the overall reading scores for 8th grade White, Black, and Hispanic students have increased since 1992, the achievement gaps between White and Black and Hispanic students have not measurably changed in that time period (NCES, 2011) The NAEP results for 2010 found that more than 60 percent of middle and high school students scored below the “proficient” level in reading achievement. According to the NAEP, “proficient” represents “solid academic performance” and competency over challenging subject material (NCES, 2011, p. 6).

The Alliance for Excellent Education (2011) examined adolescent reading in the context of a world economy. They concluded that a literacy plan addressing adolescent reading was necessary. They based their recommendations on the following statistics:

- Only 16 percent of eighth-grade students on free and reduced-price lunch reach the proficient level, compared with 42 percent of their more affluent peers.
- Only 14 percent of African American, 17 percent of Hispanic, and 21 percent of Native American eighth-graders score at or above the proficient level. These results reveal that millions of young people cannot understand or evaluate text, provide relevant details, or support inferences about the written documents they read.
- Only 36 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander American, 26 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native, 20 percent of Hispanic, and 16 percent of African American twelfth-graders score at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading, compared to 43 percent of white students.
- Half of incoming ninth-graders in urban, high-poverty schools read three years or more below grade level.
- On average, African American and Hispanic twelfth-grade students read at the same level as White eighth-grade students.

- About 40 percent of employers indicate they are dissatisfied with high school graduates' ability to read and understand complicated materials, think analytically, and solve real-world problems (pp. 1-2). .

Christenbury, Bomer, and Smagorinsky (2009) stated that there is a gap between what we know about adolescent literacy and what we are doing about it. Therefore, there is still much work needed to implement the research that has been conducted to date and a need to continue researching this area.

Teachers as Reading Models and Motivators

One key element of closing the education gap that exists in the United States is effective teachers. In *Becoming a Nation of Readers,* Anderson, Heibert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985) emphasized the role of teachers as role models and instructors from the elementary through secondary grades. Teachers from the middle through high school grades are in a unique position to influence students' views on reading. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2011), it is estimated that the average child spends up to 1,289 hours a year in school. That means average middle school or high school students spend as much or more time with teachers than they do with parents (OECD, 2011; Wolk, 2008).

As McKool and Gespass (2009) stated, "If teachers serve as role models, the modeling or demonstrating their own reading preferences, passions, and puzzlements most likely will affect how their students respond to reading" (p. 264). Carlsen and Sherrill (1988) examined thousands of reading autobiographies in which generations of students wrote about reading habits. One of their findings affirmed the role of adults and teachers in creating a positive experience with books. They also noted that sharing experiences with other readers helped guide developing readers in what they read and, to a lesser extent, how they read materials.

Nathanson, Pruslow, and Levitt (2008) conducted a study with 747 education graduate students. The graduate students were asked seven questions about their more recent reading attitudes and practices. Their findings suggested that teachers have a significant impact on students' enthusiasm for reading. Those labeled as enthusiastic readers reported having high school teachers who discussed their personal reading, shared insights into literature, and recommended literature to their students. It should also be noted here that the researchers of this study agreed with Purcell-Gates (1996) and Snow (1983). Nathanson, Pruslow, and Levitt (2008) found that the early reading experiences of the most enthusiastic readers were positive and associated with a literate environment, encouragement, and access to print. These findings suggested that teachers should be "reading role models," when they engage in personal reading regularly and share that with their students in an effort to pass on their love for reading, choose more appropriate reading strategies, and improve reading instruction in the classroom. As Schmidt (1997) admitted "the experiences I had as a reader and learner in my own school experience as a child, adolescent, and a college student preparing to enter the teaching profession had been haunting my own teaching" (p. 3).

Benevides and Peterson (2010) conducted a study of 227 preservice teachers in a preservice education program in the fall of 2005. All the preservice teachers in this program had completed at least three years toward a bachelor's degree and had a B average. The sample came from different sections of language arts courses in the teacher education program. The preservice teachers completed a questionnaire, the *Nelson-Denny Reading Test,* and provided a writing sample. The results showed that the teachers' reading comprehension was not high, nor did they possess positive attitudes toward reading and reading-related tasks. Benevides and Peterson determined that teachers needed to possess a certain level of reading comprehension abilities, a positive attitude toward reading, and pleasant childhood literary experiences in order to share their enthusiasm and their love for reading in the classroom and to be effective in their reading instruction. In those preservice teachers who indicated that they frequently read and enjoyed doing so, reading test scores were significantly higher. Teachers who are good reading models will get students enthusiastic about reading and foster a love for it. Students will then hold on to those pleasant memories and experiences. This, in turn, fosters reading development and promotes lifelong reading.

McKool and Gespass (2009) explored the connection between teachers' personal reading habits and their instructional practices. They surveyed 65 elementary teachers from schools in three states. One of the findings was that teachers who valued their personal reading were more likely to use literacy instructional strategies such as sustained silent reading, book discussions, and literature circles. They concluded that it is important that teachers read. Teachers should read more than the reading associated with their curriculum. Reading outside of school for pleasure and their own interests inspired the use of literary practices in the classroom which allowed their students to talk about books and reading.

Commeyras, Bisplinghoff, and Olson (2003) conducted a study that focused on teachers' weekly responses to their personal reading. As part of this study, the authors designed a graduate seminar course in which inservice teachers (students) maintained a journal and came into class and discussed their personal reading and their roles as readers in the classroom. This was an attempt to address concerns of the teacher's role in the classroom as reader and motivator.

The teachers agreed that there is much to learn about the teachers as readers and their influence on students. They stated that "our conversations that evening and thereafter blended sharing what we were reading with one another, what we were doing to share our reading selves with our students, and further imagining the possibilities for connecting ourselves as readers with ourselves as teachers" (p. 10). The authors identified 13 stances, attitudes, or views that help teachers meet the level of excellence desired. Teachers as readers:

(1) Let their students see them reading a variety of texts.
(2) Talk with students about their reading lives.
(3) Talk about how their reading influences their writing.
(4) Talk about new vocabulary in their reading and how they go about understanding it.
(5) Tell students about the reader relationships they form with students, family, and friends and with fiction and nonfiction characters.
(6) Tell students about the questions they have while reading.
(7) Tell students how they select something to read, why they sometimes do not finish as text, and why they sometimes reread a text.
(8) Talk to students about who influences them as readers—who inspires them.
(9) Tell students about troubles they have had with reading.
(10) Tell students about the strategies they find helpful as readers.
(11) Tell students about what they are learning from reading.
(12) Find connections between their reading and their teaching of students.
(13) Teach passionately (pp. 163-172).

Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) conducted a study of 1974 teachers nationwide that addressed and revealed the characteristics of elementary teachers who motivated students to become lifelong readers and take time to read daily. Their study identified some of the characteristics of teachers as readers: as teachers get older they are more likely to be a readers, and teaching experience was not a predictor. However, the teachers with fewer years of teaching experience were more likely to use the literacy strategies during their classroom instruction. The authors concluded that a source of reading motivation could be the classroom teacher, more specifically their personal reading in and out of school.

Modeling is effective when teachers are aware of their own mental processing when they read challenging texts and are able to share that information with students. Students then develop awareness of their mental processes and learn how to use that knowledge to address challenging texts. This sharing and motivating is also empowering (Schoenbach & Greenleaf, 2009). Students are also motivated by having someone read aloud to them, whether an entire book or excerpt. Modeling reading and the thinking process associated with reading are powerful (Lesesne, 2006). It helps develop students' listening, speaking, and fluency.

As researchers (Benevides & Peterson, 2010; Carlsen & Sherrill, 1988; Commeyras, Bisplinghoff, & Olson, 2003; McKool & Gespass, 2009; Morrison, Jacobs, &Swinyard, 1999; Nathanson, Pruslow, & Levitt, 2008) have found, modeling practices can be accomplished by simply allowing students the opportunity to discuss what they are reading with both or the teacher and peers. This involves sharing, talking about, listening to, encouraging, and expressing ideas. The sharing of books in this way is unstructured, but the teacher models appropriate comments and behavior. Talking about books and reading provides a connection to books for students (Lesesne, 2006). This is a shared reading experience that builds background knowledge and promotes critical thinking. Researchers posit that teachers who serve as reading models help students become lifelong readers (Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999; Mour, 1977).

English Language Arts Teachers as Readers and Reading Models

It has long been thought that secondary English teachers' reading perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors are directly related to student performance. These perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors not only impact reading motivation of students, they also affect the way teachers teach. The recent history of teaching of English in the middle and secondary schools seems to support the assumption that English teachers are avid readers, knowledgeable in literature, and obvious experts in the area of reading (Hipple & Giblin, 1971).

Lindsey (1969) studied 76 English teachers in Illinois high schools with populations under 350 students. The study used 20 professional reading materials and evaluated the teachers' thinking and teaching before and after the readings. These readings addressed five of the areas that were of interest to English minors and proved to be weaknesses in the teacher preparation: "language, composition, adolescent literature, reading, and general English methods" (p. 1). The participants completed a survey that required them to apply pedagogical reasoning. Lindsey determined that professional readings changed the attitudes and performance of English teachers both at that time and in the future. There was a significant difference found.

Hipple and Giblin (1971) also conducted a study looking into the professional reading practices of English teachers. They sent out surveys to 580 randomly selected secondary English teachers in Florida. Of those 580 English teachers, 386 teachers completed and returned the surveys. They found that English teachers do not read professional literature. "It is not that these teachers find professional reading to be valueless; it is, often, that their time is too limited and that other areas of reading seem to them to merit their first attention" (p.164). These teachers seem not to be current on what professional literature exists for them to read.

The early studies that researched English teachers' reading preferences and practices were like Lindsey's (1969) and Hipple and Giblin's (1971) studies: they investigated English teachers' professional reading, but not their personal reading preferences and/or practices. It was not until the 1980s that Walker (1988) used case studies to explore English teachers' personal reading and its effect on classroom performance.

Walker (1988), in his dissertation, investigated three English teachers' perceptions of themselves as readers and their students' performance or achievement in the classroom. Walker was more interested in the characteristics of the three teachers as readers and not what they should be doing in their literature class. Walker explored their reading behaviors, perceptions, and characteristics. During his observations, not one of the teachers "demonstrated" making a selection of a book for independent reading—"taking a book off the library shelf or thinking out loud about what to read next" (p. 440). Teachers did not share what it is like to read a text for the very first time; usually these teachers had read a text before sharing it and had been using it for years in their classrooms. Walker noted that the students of the teacher that he characterized as the "cleaner" knew more about their teacher as reader, for example, her reading preferences (authors, reading buddies, etc…) and outside reading behaviors (p. 441) than the students knew of the other two teachers.

Zancanella (1991) conducted five case studies of junior high English teachers in Missouri. The English teachers volunteered to participate in eight 50-minute interviews and eight classroom observations. As a source of triangulation, Zancanella also interviewed two to three students in small groups from each of the teachers' classes. Zancanella wanted to determine what manner and to what extent was the English teachers' reading of literature a source of their knowledge in the teaching of literature. The teachers' personal approach to reading and teaching reading and literature impacted their instruction. The teachers admitted that their participation in Zancanella's study helped them to see how their personal reading habits contributed to their teaching of literature.

Adolescents need to discover their own reading interests and develop good reading behaviors. The ELA teacher should serve as a mentor to encourage reading and a role model for what engaged readers do (Lee, 2011). Not only do teachers as reading models encourage lifelong reading, they also demonstrate how students should behave in a literary setting, their reading habits, and attitudes (Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999). These behaviors may include selecting a book, picking up a book for the first time, having in-depth conversations about books, thinking aloud about what to read next, among many other behaviors associated with a reading event. Mour (1977) believed "the teacher who reads much would present a more positive and enthusiastic model than would the teacher who reads little" (p. 397).

Research studies into the reading habits and behaviors of middle and secondary ELA teachers are few, and dated. Various researchers have made the argument that the dynamics of literacy in this digital age have changed (Biancarosa, 2012; Dean, 2004; Gee, 2000; IRA, 2012) because of web-based and electronic access. That plus, the dated nature of studies completed more than 20 years ago leaves open the question of what are the current reading habits and behaviors of ELA teachers. The existing research established that a strong relationship exists between teacher qualifications and student achievement. In the field of reading, research supports the position that highly skilled and qualified teachers are associated with reading scores (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Durall, 1995); student achievement, and advance work in reading (Darling-Hammond, 1999). There is also a relationship between socioeconomic status of a school's students and reading achievement (NAEP, 2012).

Summary

This chapter presented a review of literature that studied English and English Language Arts teachers' early reading experiences, current reading habits, and modeling practices in the classroom. The first section defined reading and looked at reading as a shared experience. The next section then discussed adolescents and their attitudes toward reading and teachers' influence on that experience. Next, the review explored the idea of teachers as reading models and motivators to create lifelong readers in adolescents. Finally, the chapter looked specifically at ELA teachers as reader and reading models.

In summary, existing research supported the ideas that shared reading experiences, early reading experiences, personal reading habits, and modeling reading in the classroom are important in creating lifelong readers. However, it is unknown as to whether age, initial certification, degree attainment, reading or English graduate hours, grade levels taught, and ELA teaching experience determined or reflected those experiences. The research indicated that teachers are an important factor in creating lifelong readers.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods

This chapter describes the methodology used to gather and analyze data for this study. It addresses the following aspects of the study: Purpose, Research Design, Participants, Questionnaire, Procedures for Data Collection, and Procedures for Data Analysis.

Purpose

Little research on English language arts teacher reading habits was found during the review of literature. The purpose of this study was to determine middle school English Language Arts and high school English teachers' reading practices and their perceptions of themselves as readers. This study examined the relationship between the teachers' reading experiences and practices and their perception of themselves as a reader. This study also investigated the relationship between the teachers' reading experiences and practices and their current schools' characteristics, which are: economically disadvantaged percentages and academic performance ratings. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are English/Language Arts teachers' reading experiences?
2. Do these English Language Arts teachers' reading habits differ based upon demographics?
3. Do these English Language Arts teachers' modeling practices differ based upon demographics?
4. What is the relationship between English Language Arts teachers' reading/teaching practices and school's characteristics?

Research Design and Rationale

Descriptive research has been known as an approach that attempts to explain the way things are or describe the characteristics of a whole group by using part of it without any experimental manipulation (Borg & Gall, 1971; Duke & Mallette, 2004, Kamil, Langer, & Shanahan, 1985). Schumacher and McMillan (1993) stated that "descriptive statistics portray and focus on "what is" with respect to the data…" (p.192).

Survey research is one way to collect descriptive data. Surveys are frequently used in education because they allow the researcher to obtain information from a small sample to make generalizations about the larger population (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993). Survey research allows the data gathered to be used to describe characteristics of a population. In addition, it also provided a means to explore the relationships between variables in an explanatory way.

Instrumentation

The primary data collection instrument was a modified version of the Reading Behaviors Questionaire (RBQ) used in a previous dissertation (Stocks, 2011). Stocks (2011) designed a questionnaire on reading behaviors and then used a rigorous process to develop and validate the questionnaire. Once an initial survey instrument was developed, Stocks (2011) revised and tested the questionnaire over a year and a half period to ensure its validity, reliability, and effectiveness in conducting survey research. Stocks (2011) took the advice of Jaegar (1988) and conducted a pilot study to identify problems with the survey instrument and made the necessary revisions before using it in Stocks' dissertation research.

The RBQ consists of four sections: Demographic Information, Reading Experiences, Reading Habits, and Reader Self-Awareness. The questionnaire consists of 15 demographic questions followed by three sections containing 12 questions using the Likert scale ratings one to four—*never, occasionally, regularly,* and *very often*. Each of the reading sections contained one open-ended response question (Stocks, 2011), which encouraged the respondents to elaborate on their personal reading experiences, reading habits, and reader self-awareness. The first section asked the participants about their past reading experiences. The second section inquired about their reading habits. The last section addressed their self-awareness as a reader while reading.

The researcher modified RBQ section on demographic information to fit the target population. The following changes were also made: (a) the Likert scale was changed to a five-point scale that included *never, rarely, sometimes, very often,* and *always*; (b) modified the third section of the questionnaire by inserting questions that specifically address the teachers as reading models, and (c) removed the open-ended questions from the questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Reliability and Validity

Stocks (2011) established content validity of the RBQ by dividing the development phases into multiple steps. The survey instrument was piloted with a group of graduate and undergraduate students prior to its use in her dissertation research study. Using Cronbach's (1951) alpha method, internal consistency of the RBQ was established. Coefficients of the subscales were: reading experiences =.88, reading habits = .78, and reader self-awareness = .82 (Stocks, 2011).

For the current research, the modified RBQ was examined by six faculty members (five reading faculty members and one English faculty member) for consistency and accuracy. Minor comments were recommended. The researcher incorporated these changes and returned the modified RBQ to the six faculty members. The document was then given to five doctoral research classes, and one undergraduate content methods course for English majors to take and respond to. Minor revisions were made to the questionnaire after each class gave feedback and before distributing to the next class.

Since there were modifications to the original questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha method was also used to determine the internal consistency for the subscales in the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha method uses the means of all inter-item correlations to assess the stability and consistency of the questionnaire. It is the average of all possible split half reliabilities to assess the degree of agreement of items in the questionnaire, that is how consistent were the respondents on these questions (Warner, 2008). Coefficients of the subscales for the modified RBQ were: reading experiences = .87, reading habits=.79, and teachers as reading models = .92.

Then, the three matrices, which in the survey represented a different question, were also checked for the reliability. There was a high correlation from question to question, even more so between questions 20 (teachers' current reading habits) and 21 (teachers' current modeling practices in the classroom). The two questions were strongly correlated $r(132) = .66$, $p < .01$.

Demographics.

The first section of the questionnaire included three statements followed by a series of questions that asked respondents to report descriptive data about themselves. Each statement provided selections or categories that corresponded to the information requested. The statements and questions that addressed demographic information included:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Through which of the following programs were you initially certified to teach?
5. By what means did you receive your English/Language Arts certification?

6. What is the highest degree you have earned?
7. If you have a masters or doctoral degree, what is it in?
8. How many graduate semester hours have you taken in reading education?
9. How many graduate semester hours have you taken in English?
10. Which of the following professional organizations are you currently a member?
11. Which grade levels are you currently teaching?
12. How many students do you currently teach English or English Language Arts to each day?
13. Including this year, how many years have you taught English/English Language Arts?
14. Please provide the name of the school where you are currently teaching, including city/town.
15. How do you view your proficiency as a reader?
16. How much do you enjoy reading?
17. What degree of freedom do you as a teacher have in choosing materials?

Reading Experiences.

The next section of the questionnaire, titled "Reading Experiences," comprised of a series of statements that deals with respondents' reading experiences which referred to the early influences on respondents' reading attitudes and development. These statements addressed both home and school as well as influential people in their literate lives. A five-point Likert scale was quantified to specify 1=never, 2=rarely (1-2 times per month), 3=sometimes (3-5times per month), 4=very often (6-7 times per month), and 5=always (8+ times per month). Regarding their Reading Experiences as a child, respondents' answered statements such as:

1. I recall books being accessible to me in my home.

2. I observed family members engaged in reading.
3. I visited the public library or bookstore.
4. I was read to at home.
5. I read books independently.
6. I read other materials (magazines, comic books, etc...)
7. I recall books being available in my classroom for leisure reading.
8. I observed teachers engaged in reading.
9. I was read to at school.
10. My teacher(s) encouraged reading for enjoyment.
11. My teacher(s) encouraged reading for grade fulfillment.

In doing the item analysis for this question of teacher reading experiences, the means and standard deviation were calculated for items above in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Item Analysis for Teachers' Reading Experiences

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Read book independently	4.59	0.82
Access in the home	4.57	0.91
Read other materials (magazines, comics, etc…)	4.34	0.96
Family members engaged in reading	4.24	1.03
Read to at home	4.07	1.21
Teacher(s) encouraged reading for grade	3.95	1.11
Read to at school	3.82	1.16
Visited the public library or bookstore	3.80	1.16
Teacher(s) encouraged reading for enjoyment	3.74	1.24
Books available in my classroom for leisure reading	3.55	1.36
Teachers engaged in reading	3.15	1.19

Note: N = 137.

Reading Habits.

The next section, titled "Reading Habits," consisted of a series of statements that addressed current routine practices with regard to text choice and reading frequency (Stocks, 2011). A five-point Likert scale was quantified to specify 1=never, 2=rarely (1-2 times per month), 3=sometimes (3-5times per month), 4=very often (6-7 times per month), and 5=always (8+ times per month). The statements addressed the current Reading Habits. The statements were:

1. I currently read for leisure.
2. I currently read for academic purposes.
3. I currently read for informational purposes.
4. I currently read children's picture books.
5. I currently read young adult literature.
6. I currently read fiction.
7. I currently read non-fiction.
8. I currently read poetry.
9. I currently read drama/plays.
10. I currently read magazines.
11. I currently read newspapers.
12. I currently read online.
13. I currently read religious material.

In doing an item analysis for this question of teacher reading habits, the means and standard deviation was calculated for the items above in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Items Analysis for ELA Teachers' Reading Habits

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Read for leisure	4.39	0.97
Read for informational purposes	4.34	0.78
Read online	4.30	1.04
Read fiction	4.21	0.93
Read for academic purposes	4.10	0.93
Read non-fiction	3.80	0.97
Read magazines	3.76	1.13
Read newspapers	3.56	1.27
Read young adult literature	3.42	1.14
Read poetry	3.01	1.17
Read religious material	2.92	1.41
Read children's picture books	2.90	1.38
Read drama/plays	2.48	1.06

Note: N = 135.

Reading Models.

The final section, titled Reading Models, included a series of statements that addressed how teachers shared their enthusiasm for reading with their students in the classroom. Respondents answered the statements using the same quantified Likert-type scale, 1=never, 2=rarely (1-2 times per month), 3=sometimes (3-5times per month), 4=very often (6-7 times per month), and 5=always (8+ times per month). The statements that addressed teachers as Reading Models in the classroom included:

1. I share authentic literature (texts not designated for instruction; the original source, not excerpts, abridged versions, or anthologies).
2. I share books through read alouds.
3. I talk about reading and/or books.
4. I recommend books to individual students.
5. I recommend books to my class(es).
6. I recommend books to students by genre.
7. I recommend books to students by theme.
8. I encourage or invite suggestions for books from students.
9. I share what I am reading.
10. I share interesting reading facts or news.
11. I share my curiosity/questions with my students
12. I express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.

In doing an item analysis for this question of teachers' as reading models, the means and standard deviation was calculated for items above in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Item Analysis for Teachers as Reading Models

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment for reading	4.50	0.79
Talk about reading and/or books	4.37	0.79
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	4.12	0.97
Recommend books to individual students	4.08	0.94
Recommends books to my class(es)	3.99	1.00
Share interesting reading facts or news	3.96	1.04
Share what I am reading	3.88	1.07
Invite suggestions for books from students	3.74	1.08
Recommends books to students by genre	3.68	1.07
Share authentic literature	3.46	1.41
Recommends books to students by theme	3.32	1.10
Share books through read alouds	3.22	1.12

Note: N = 133.

Participants

The participants were selected based on the following criteria:

(a) *Secondary English Language Arts and English teachers* currently teaching grades 6-12 in September of the 2011-2012 school year;

(b) *Teachers from the state of Texas.*

The participants were contacted through Texas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (TCTELA) (see Appendix A). A summary of the study and web link for the questionnaire were posted on the TCTELA website. In addition, the communications manager sent an email containing the same information to their members. Other ways the participants were contacted were via social networking sites, e-mail, and/or in-person through professional colleagues in the field of education.

The respondents, English Language Arts classroom teachers across the state of Texas, participated in the online questionnaire. All participants were 18 years of age or older. This study did not lend itself to calculating a response rate because it was delivered online to different groups of teachers through social networking sites and this professional organization's email lists. Therefore, there was no way to calculate or even estimate how many requests were made and the return rate of those requests.

Informed Consent (Appendix C).

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol form (Appendix B) was submitted to obtain permission to conduct this research. The following practices were followed in the study to protect the participants: (a) no names were used; (b) attached to e-mail requests by professional colleagues in the field of education, some participants were provided an overview of the study and an instruction sheet with contact information of the principal investigator and research compliance officer in the event that any questions or concerns need to be addressed;(c) informed consent was obtained through SurveyMonkey (2012), a web-based survey tool, prior to the teachers accessing the data collection instrument or participating in the interviews; and (d) participants were also informed that their participation was completely voluntary and could be discontinued at any point.

Consent documents as well as the data collection instrument were completed using a web-based survey tool. A standard consent form was included in the opening page of

SurveyMonkey. Once participants went to a link to access the online questionnaire, the candidates for participation in the online survey had the opportunity to read the online consent form. At the end, they had the option to click "agree" or "disagree" to consent. If the candidate agreed, he or she was granted access to the electronic questionnaire. If the candidate clicked "disagree," then he or she was not granted access to the electronic survey and redirected to the homepage of the survey provider, SurveyMonkey. Therefore, signatures were not required for the online questionnaire. The electronic survey was not password protected. Therefore, participants did not need a password to access the survey.

Data Collection

All participants were provided with an overview of the study and an informed consent identifying the researcher, educational affiliation, the purpose of the study and a personal invitation to take part in the research conducted. As a part of this invitation, it was clearly stated that participation in this study was completely voluntary and could have been discontinued at any time. The primary data collection instrument was a survey.

SurveyMonkey.com, a web-based tool, was used to make the survey available online. SurveyMonkey.com is owned by a private American company. Founded by Ryan and Chris Finley in 1999, this web tool allows users to create their own web survey, assigns a URL/web link which can be customized, allows control of survey’s availability and other parameters for data collection (SurveyMonkey.com, 2012).

Coding the Data

For analyzing the participants’ responses, the data had to be imported into a spreadsheet or data file and coded. First, each question or item in the questionnaire was given a unique variable name, starting with the first variable, "ID," a unique number to identify each case or respondent. Then, each response was assigned a numerical code.

For survey question number 15 regarding the schools' *Economically Disadvantaged* population or percentage on the questionnaire, the schools' "Academic Excellence Indicator System" data for each of the 70 schools and 38 school districts represented were searched, found, and downloaded. Then, after all were printed for review of economically disadvantaged and performance ratings, each school and district was coded for whether or not they were designated economically disadvantaged. After all coding was completed, the data was run and the reports were compiled and organized alphabetically by school's name. Afterwards, the *economically disadvantaged* percentages and *performance ratings* were added to the spreadsheet.

Later, the percentile cut-off points had to be established for the economically disadvantaged coding (Table 3.4). Finally, those two columns were coded accordingly. For those respondents that entered a false name for their school, the information was coded as missing.

Table 3.4

Coding: Percentile Cut-off Points

Economically Disadvantaged	Percentile Cut-off Points	Socioeconomic Status
Low	34.7% and below	High
Medium	34.8% - 62.9%	Medium
High	63% and above	Low

A statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to analyze the data on English Language Arts Teachers personal reading habits and modeling practices. The data was loaded into SPSS from Excel. Therefore, the data had to be recoded. Then, the categorical variables with more than two categories were dummy coded as zeros and ones (Field, 2005).

Procedures for Data Analysis

After these initial steps were taken to code the data, another look at the survey instrument and research questions were done. Then, a clear distinction was made among the survey questions as to which would be used to answer each research question. In the midst of this process, it became necessary to make sure the questionnaire was answering the research questions as intended when written. For example, the modeling practice, "share my curiosity/questions with my students," was eliminated for the reason stated above.

The statistical program, SPSS, was used to analyze the data with three different tests: Chi Square Test, Kruskal-Wallis H Test, and Mann-Whitney U Test. Kruskal-Wallis H Test, and Mann-Whitney U Test were used to explore group differences. A Chi Square Test was conducted to determine whether or not there was a relationship between two categorical variables, which compared the frequencies observed. The Kruskal-Wallis test and the Mann-Whitney U test are both nonparametric tests based on ranked data. The Mann-Whitney U test looks for differences between two independent samples, whereas the Kruskal-Wallis test where more than two independent groups differ (Field, 2005).

Question 1, *What are English/Language Arts teachers' reading experiences?* Initially, Survey Monkey summary sheet was used to sum the scores of all the participants. Descriptive statistics and crosstabulations were used to describe the English/English Language Arts teachers' reading experiences.

Questions 2, 3, and 4*, Do these English Language Arts teachers' reading habits differ based upon demographics? Do these English Language Arts teachers' modeling practices differ* *based upon demographics? What is the relationship between English Language Arts teachers' reading/teaching practices and school's characteristics?* SPSS was also used to look at the differences based on the selected variable from the demographics portion of the questionnaire. More specifically, chi square test was applied to determine the association a teacher’s professional affiliations, degree attainment, initial certification program, academic majors, teaching locations, grade levels taught, years teaching ELA, and age have on the teachers’ reading habits and the reading model they present to their students. Kruskal Wallis H Test was used to investigate differences among the schools’ economically disadvantaged percentages (free and reduced lunch program) and the schools’ performance ratings.

Summary

This chapter discussed the method and approach to the study. The study’s purpose, research questions, and research design and rationale are presented. The modification of the survey instrument was detailed and along with measure to ensure reliability and validity. Finally, procedures for data collection and data analysis were described. The results will be presented in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

This chapter presents the results of the study of ELA teachers' reading practices and them as reading models in classrooms across the state of Texas. It will also share teachers' reading experiences along with how teachers see themselves as readers and how those two correlate with their classroom instruction. This chapter is organized around the research questions.

Demographics

The description of the study sample was important to this study to create an accurate picture of the literacy experiences and practices of secondary ELA teachers. Therefore, the demographic information was summarized using Survey Monkey and then used for comparison when answering the research questions. The information obtained from the respondents is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Demographics: Gender, Age, Ethnicity, and Grade Levels

	N	%
Age		
21-27	6	5.3
28-35	37	24.3
36-45	52	34.2
46+	55	36.2
Gender		
Female	135	88.8
Male	17	11.2
Ethnicity		
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	28	18.4
White	112	73.7
Black, African American, or Negro	6	3.9
American Indian, Alaska native	1	0.7
Asian Indian	3	2.0
Some other race	2	1.3
Grade Levels		
Middle/junior high school (grades 6-8)	66	47.5
Senior high school (grades 9-12)	67	48.2
Both	6	4.3

In Table 4.1, the majority of the respondents were female (88.8%). The respondents' ages ranged from 21 to over 46 years of which 70.4% were over the age of 35 years old. The ethnicity of the ELA teachers who responded were 73.7% White; 18.4% Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin; 3.9% Black; 2.0% Asian Indian; 0.7% American Indian or Alaska native; and 1.3% some other race. Approximately half of the teachers were middle/junior high school teachers (47.5%) and the other half were senior high school teachers (48.2%). There was a minority of the teachers that actually taught both middle and high school (4.3%).

Table 4.2

Teacher Certification: Initial Certification and English Language Arts Certification

	N	%
Program Received Initial Certification		
Certification through an accredited college or university – undergraduate	78	54.5
Certification through an accredited college or university – graduate	33	23.1
Alternative certification through an Education Service Center	11	7.7
Alternative certification through a school district	1	0.7
Alternative certification through an independent program	5	3.5
Alternative certification through an accredited college or university – undergraduate	6	4.2
Alternative certification through an accredited college or university – graduate	8	5.6
Other	1	0.7
English Language Arts Certification		
Exam (I was already certified in another area.)	24	16.8
Program (teaching/university degree program) AND certification exam	115	80.4
Not certified to teach English Language Arts	4	2.8

Table 4.2 showed the many routes the teachers took to become certified to teach and how they obtained their English Language Arts certification. The majority of the respondents (54.5%) obtained their certification through an accredited college or university as an undergraduate. The next option for about 23.1 % was to pursue their teacher certification as a graduate student through an accredited college or university. However, 22.4% obtained their teacher certification through an alternative certification program. Of those that did the alternative certification, 7.7% completed an alternative certification through an Education Service Center, 5.6% completed an alternative certification at the graduate level through an accredited college or university, 4.2% received their alternative certification as an undergraduate through an accredited college or university, 3.5% completed their alternative certification through an independent program, and .07% actually received their alternative certification through a school district.

The respondents were also asked about their English Language Arts certification in particular and by which of two methods, program and exam or exam only, did they receive that certification. The results are also presented in Table 4.2. Eighty-four percent of the inservice English Language Arts teachers obtained their certification in English language arts from teaching/university degree program and by taking a certification exam. While, on the other hand, 16.8% of the respondents were already certified in another area in the state of Texas, and therefore, only were required to take the certification exam for ELA content area. There were 2.8% respondents that were not certified to teach English Language Arts.

Table 4.3

Degree Attainment: Highest Degree and Graduate Major of Highest Degree

	N	%
Highest Degree Attained		
Bachelor	78	54.5
Masters	59	41.3
Doctorate	6	4.2
Graduate Major of Highest Degree Attained		
Reading/Literacy	7	4.9
English	16	11.2
Curriculum and Instruction	16	11.2
Secondary Education	10	7.0
Other graduate degree	19	13.3
No graduate degree	75	52.5

In Table 4.3, degree attainment was presented and for those with graduate degrees. Approximately 45% percent of the respondents held a degree higher than a bachelor's degree. Of which, 41.3% were master's degrees. Only a small number (4.2%) held doctorate degree. Of the respondents, only 4.9% had a graduate degree in reading and/or literacy. An equal number of respondents (11.2%) received their graduate degree in English as they did in Curriculum and Instruction. Surprisingly, more (13.3%) held a graduate degree in another area other than reading, English, curriculum and instruction, and secondary education.

Table 4.4

Graduate Hours: Reading and English

	N	%
Graduate Hours in Reading		
0	58	40.6
3-6	33	23.1
9-12	26	18.2
15+	26	18.2
Graduate Hours in English		
0	59	41.3
3-6	30	21.0
9-12	18	12.6
15+	36	25.2

Table 4.4 described the graduate hours of the respondents. The majority of the respondents had zero hours in reading and/or English, 40.6% and 41.3% respectively. Only 18.2% had 15 hours or more in reading. More of the respondents (25.2%) did have 15 hours or more in English. Having 15 hours or more indicated that those respondents completed at least half of the discipline or emphasis hours to reading or English.

The four research questions were answered best by using non-parametric techniques. Specifically, the chi-square test for independence was used. It was more suitable for the ordinal or ranked data that did not meet the stringent assumptions of parametric techniques. A crosstabulation was used to obtain a summary of information presented in percentages. The results of the research questions are shared with descriptive statistics.

Research Question One

What are English/Language Arts teachers' reading experiences?

Research question one examined the differences in ELA teachers reading experiences as a child using the two survey questions regarding the teachers' teaching experience in ELA and their age. These variables were used to describe the ELA teachers' early influences on their reading attitudes and development.

The age variable was chosen to answer this question because the age was indicative of what year/decade the respondents were born and parallel with the historical shifts in the curriculum, as discussed in Chapter One. Age was divided into three age groups for the final analysis. The terms used to describe the age groups were created using the information from the Population Reference Bureau's bulletin (Carlson, 2009), and the 2010 U.S. Census Report. The years do not correspond exactly; however, in this study, Carlson's terms were used as closed to the original as possible to help make distinction between the groups. They were as follows: 21-27 age group, born between 1985-1991, was referred to as New Boomers or Generation Y (Gen Y); the next group, 28-45 years of age, born between 1967-1984, was called Generation X (Gen X); and the last age group, 46 or older, born before 1967, was known as the Baby Boomers.

In Table 4.5, presented are the results of the crosstabulations of the age factor and all the reading experiences included in the survey.

Table 4. 5

Crosstabulations: Age Factor, 21-35, 36-45, and 46+ Age Groups, and Reading Experiences

Reading Experiences	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
I recall books being accessible in my home.	3.79	8	.876	.118
I observed family members engaged in reading.	1.52	8	.992	.074
I visited the public library or bookstore.	15.88	8	.044	.241
I was read to at home.	7.61	8	.472	.167
I read books independently.	3.27	8	.917	.109
I read other materials (magazines, comic books, etc.).	5.36	8	.718	.140
I recall books being available in my classroom for leisure reading.	19.75	8	.011	.268
I observed teachers engaged in reading	7.84	8	.449	.169
I was read to at school.	6.19	8	.629	.150
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for enjoyment.	12.85	8	.117	.217
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for grade fulfillment.	7.98	8	.436	.171

Note: N = 137.

The crosstabulations revealed there was an association between age and “I visited the public library or bookstore,” χ^2 (8) = 15.88, $p \leq .05$, and “I recall books being available in my classroom for leisure reading,” χ^2 (8) = 19.75, $p \leq .05$.

Table 4.6

Early Reading Experiences:

Crosstabulations: Age and Access to Books at Home

Age	Never # %	Rarely # %	Sometimes # %	Very Often # %	Always # %	Total # %
21-27	0	0	0	1	7	8
	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	87.5	100.0
28-45	1	3	3	10	63	80
	1.2	3.8	3.8	12.5	78.8	100.0
46+	2	2	4	7	34	49
	4.1	4.1	8.2	14.3	69.4	100.0
Total	3	5	7	18	104	137
	2.2	3.6	5.1	13.1	75.9	100.0

In Table 4.6, the teachers' "access to books in the home" was shown by age groups. Looking at the *very often* and *always* column totals, the New Boomers have more "access to books in the home" (100%) than do the other two groups, Generation X (91.3%) and the Baby Boomers (83.7%). The access to books over the years has increased.

Table 4.7 described the frequency ELA teachers "visited the public library or bookstore" as a child. Generation Y "visited the public library or bookstore" a significant amount less than the other groups. Fifty-percent (50%) Generation Y "visited the library or bookstore" *rarely* or *never* whereas only ten percent (10%) of Generation X and 16.3% of the Baby Boomers went.

Table 4.7

Early Reading Experiences:

Crosstabulations: Age and Visited the Public Library or Bookstore

Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very Often	Always	Total
	#	#	#	#	#	#
	%	%	%	%	%	%
21-27	0	4	1	0	3	8
	0.0	50.0	12.5	0.0	37.5	100.0
28-45	2	6	21	15	36	80
	2.5	7.5	26.2	18.8	45.0	100.0
46+	1	7	18	7	16	49
	2.0	14.3	36.7	14.3	32.7	100.0
Total	3	17	40	22	55	137
	2.2	12.4	29.2	16.1	40.1	100.0

The majority of New Boomers (87.5%) responded that they were “read to at home” (see Table 4.8). Surprisingly, none of them reported that they were *never* or *rarely* “read to at home” unlike Generation X (13.8%) and the Baby Boomers (16.3%).

Table 4.8

Early Reading Experiences:

Crosstabulations: Age and Read to at Home

Age	Never # %	Rarely # %	Sometimes # %	Very Often # %	Always # %	Total # %
21-27	0	0	1	3	4	8
	0.0	0.0	12.5	37.5	50.0	100.0
28-45	3	8	9	12	48	80
	3.8	10.0	11.2	15.0	60.0	100.0
46+	3	5	11	8	22	49
	6.1%	10.2	22.4	16.3	44.9	100.0
Total	6	13	21	23	74	137
	4.4	9.5	15.3	16.8	54.0	100.0

In the Table 4.9 below, there was a noticeable increase in the availability of books in the classroom from the Baby Boomers (46.9%) to the New Boomers (62.5%), which is reflective of the history of reading in the English classroom and curriculum. As discussed in Chapter One, the 1960s reflected more child-centered curriculum in English before standards became the focus.

Table 4.9

Early Reading Experiences:

Crosstabulations: Age and Books were Available in the Classroom

Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very Often	Always	Total
	#	#	#	#	#	#
	%	%	%	%	%	%
21-27	0	0	2	1	5	8
	0.0	0.0	25	12.5	62.5	100.0
28-45	6	13	25	16	20	80
	7.5	16.2	31.2	20.0	25.0	100.0
46+	8	6	3	9	23	49
	16.3	12.2	6.1	18.4	46.9	100.0
Total	14	19	30	26	48	137
	10.2	13.9	21.9	19.0	35.0	100.0

However, what was more surprising than the “availability of books at school” was the responses regarding being “read to at school.” The same trend was captured and true for the amount of time ELA teachers were “read to at school.” There was an increase in the number of participants who responded that they were “read to at school.” One-hundred percent of the New Boomers reported that they *very often* or *always* were “read to at school" while 65% of Generation X and 59.2% of Baby Boomers were “read to at school.”

Research Questions Two and Three: An Overview

Research questions two and three were exploring the relationships between variables. Therefore, chi-square tests were used to analyze the data for these questions. Once the crosstabulations and chi-square were run, there were a few factors that indicated that there may a significant relationship. The groups were unbalanced, so that also had to be explored to see what effect that had on the results Therefore, some recoding of the variables, age and highest degree attained, were redone to create more of balance between groups and/or categories.

These results should be interpreted cautiously because many of the crosstabulations contained some cells that had extremely small number of respondents. Following are collapsed tables to show the relationships between the factors and variables. Those “possible” significant relationships are addressed and highlighted in this chapter.

Research Question Two

Do these English Language Arts teachers’ reading habits differ based on demographics?

In Table 4.10, cross tabulations of age and the 13 reading habits indicated only a relationship between age groups and teachers “reading children books,” $\chi 2(8) = 16.22$, $p \leq .05$.

Table 4.10

Crosstabulations: Age Factor (21-35, 36 – 45, and 46+ Age Groups) and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	5.76	8	.672	.146
Academic purposes	7.91	8	.442	.171
Informational purposes	7.64	8	.470	.168
Children's picture books	16.22	8	.039	.245
Young adult literature	5.22	8	.734	.139
Fiction	7.74	8	.459	.169
Non-fiction	6.35	8	.608	.153
Poetry	4.95	8	.763	.135
Drama/plays	4.65	8	.794	.131
Magazines	8.89	8	.352	.181
Newspapers	15.01	8	.059	.236
Online	8.92	8	.349	.182
Religious material	13.00	8	.112	.219

Note: N = 135.

A Kruskal-Wallis *H* Test revealed a statistically significant difference in "reading children picture books" across three different groups (Gp1, n = 41: 21-35 years, Gp2, n = 46: 36-45 years, Gp3, n = 48: 46+ years), x^2 (2, n = 135) = 7.31, $p \leq .05$. The 21-35 age group recorded a higher median score (*Md* = 19) than the other two age groups, which were *Md* = 17 for those between the ages of 36-45 and *Md* = 10 for those that were 46+ years of age.

The crosstabulations of the teachers' initial certification and the 13 reading habits in Table 4.11 indicated no significant relationships existed.

Table 4.11

Crosstabulations: Initial Certification and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	7.08	8	.529	.162
Academic purposes	10.57	8	.227	.198
Informational purposes	8.10	8	.424	.173
Children's picture books	9.36	8	.313	.186
Young adult literature	9.70	8	.287	.190
Fiction	10.53	8	.230	.197
Non-fiction	8.53	8	.384	.178
Poetry	4.66	8	.793	.131
Drama/plays	11.08	8	.197	.203
Magazines	13.65	8	.091	.225
Newspapers	7.47	8	.486	.166
Online	3.61	8	.891	.116
Religious material	10.35	8	.241	.196

Note: N = 135.

In Table 4.12, one of the reading habits came close to the significant level. Upon first glance it appears to have some consistent responses between highest degree attained and "reading for academic purposes." The crosstabulations revealed a relationship between the highest degree attained and "reading for academic purposes" at the .05 level, χ^2 (4) = 9.37, $p \leq .05$.

Table 4.12

Crosstabulations: Highest Degree Attained and Reading Habits

Current Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	1.62	4	.803	.109
Academic purposes	9.37	4	.052	.264
Informational purposes	4.59	4	.332	.184
Children's picture books	2.65	4	.617	.140
Young adult literature	1.85	4	.764	.117
Fiction	6.71	4	.152	.223
Non-fiction	3.30	4	.508	.156
Poetry	3.14	4	.534	.153
Drama/plays	1.18	4	.881	.094
Magazines	0.35	4	.986	.051
Newspapers	1.54	4	.819	.107
Online	0.88	4	.928	.081
Religious material	1.80	4	.773	.115

Note: N = 135.

The Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. The Mann-Whitney U test revealed a difference in the amount of academic reading in those with an undergraduate degree, bachelors, (*Md* = 60.70, n = 75) and those with a graduate degree, master's or doctorate, (*Md* = 77.13, n = 60), U = 1702.5, z = -2.58, p = .01, r = -.22.

The crosstabulations of graduate hours earned in reading and the 13 reading habits in Table 4.13 indicated no significant relationships existed.

Table 4.13

Crosstabulations: Graduate Hours in Reading and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	2.77	4	.598	.143
Academic purposes	5.98	4	.231	.204
Informational purposes	1.19	4	.879	.094
Children’s picture books	7.73	4	.102	.239
Young adult literature	0.64	4	.958	.069
Fiction	3.19	4	.527	.154
Non-fiction	2.98	4	.562	.148
Poetry	4.68	4	.321	.186
Drama/plays	2.31	4	.679	.131
Magazines	3.09	4	.544	.151
Newspapers	3.62	4	.460	.164
Online	4.72	4	.318	.187
Religious material	0.92	4	.921	.083

Note: N = 135.

In Table 4.14, three of the reading habits showed that there is a relationship between those with graduate hours earned in English and "reading for academic purposes," χ^2 (4) = 10.02, $p \leq .05$; graduate hours in English and "read for informational purposes," χ^2 (4) = 9.50, $p \leq .05$; and graduate hours in English and "read poetry," χ^2 (4) = 10.28, $p \leq .05$.

Table 4.14

Crosstabulations: Graduate Hours in English and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	1.12	4	.891	.091
Academic purposes	10.02	4	.040	.272
Informational purposes	9.50	4	.050	.265
Children's picture books	3.85	4	.427	.169
Young adult literature	3.90	4	.420	.170
Fiction	4.91	4	.297	.191
Non-fiction	5.98	4	.200	.211
Poetry	10.28	4	.036	.276
Drama/plays	0.50	4	.974	.061
Magazines	0.73	4	.948	.073
Newspapers	4.17	4	.383	.176
Online	6.17	4	.187	.214
Religious material	2.27	4	.687	.130

Note: N = 135.

The Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on the three reading habits. The Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference in the amount of "academic reading" in those with 0-6 hours in English (*Md* = 62.51, n = 86) and 9+ hours in English, (*Md* = 77.63, n = 49), U = 1635, z = -2.30, p ≤ .05, r = -.20. There was also a statistically significant difference in the amount of "reading for informational purposes," 0-6 hours in English (*Md* = 61.05, n = 86) and 9+ hours in English, (*Md* = 80.20, n = 49), U = 1509, z = -3.02, p ≤ .05, r = -.26. Finally, there was statistically significant difference in the amount of "reading poetry," 0-6 hours in English (*Md* = 62.77, n = 86) and 9+ hours in English, (*Md* = 77.18, n = 49), U = 1657, z = -2.13, p ≤.05, r = -.18. Among the three reading habits where a statistical significance was found, those ELA teachers with more than nine (9) hours in English had a higher median score.

The crosstabulations did not revealed a relationship between grade levels currently teaching ELA and the 13 reading habits. The results of the chi-square tests are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

Crosstabulations: Grade Levels Currently Teaching and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	p	ES
Leisure	1.93	3	.588	.122
Academic purposes	1.53	3	.675	.109
Informational purposes	2.06	3	.560	.126
Children's picture books	0.98	4	.914	.087
Young adult literature	6.43	4	.170	.222
Fiction	1.96	3	.581	.123
Non-fiction	4.42	3	.220	.184
Poetry	1.49	4	.828	.107
Drama/plays	6.34	4	.175	.221
Magazines	1.87	4	.759	.120
Newspapers	2.95	4	.566	.151
Online	0.74	4	.946	.076
Religious material	4.81	4	.308	.192

Note: N = 135.

The years of teaching ELA were spilt in three categories: 0-3 years (novice teachers), 4-25 years (experienced teachers), and 26 or more years (veteran teachers). In the crosstabulations for the teachers' teaching experience or years teaching ELA and the 13 reading habits, there was a relationship found between those teacher years teaching ELA and the amount of "reading for leisure," χ^2 (8) = 16.89, $p \leq .05$ and years teaching ELA and "reading religious material," χ^2 (8) = 16.57, $p \leq .05$ (see Table 4.16).

Table 4.16

Crosstabulations: Years Teaching ELA and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	16.89	8	.031	.250
Academic purposes	12.86	8	.117	.218
Informational purposes	11.75	8	.163	.209
Children’s picture books	9.54	8	.299	.188
Young adult literature	4.85	8	.773	.134
Fiction	9.47	8	.304	.187
Non-fiction	12.50	8	.130	.215
Poetry	9.62	8	.293	.189
Drama/plays	8.02	8	.431	.172
Magazines	10.99	8	.203	.202
Newspapers	5.85	8	.664	.147
Online	8.34	8	.401	.176
Religious material	16.57	8	.035	.248

Note: N = 135.

Research Question Three

Do these English Language Arts teachers' modeling practices differ based on demographics?

In Table 4.17, cross tabulations of age and the 12 modeling practices indicated a relationship between the age groups and the frequency teachers "share their curiosity," $\chi^2(8) = 17.13$, $p \leq .05$ and the age groups and "expressing their enthusiasm for and/or enjoyment of reading," $\chi^2(6) = 18.20$, $p \leq .05$. "Sharing interesting reading facts or news" was not statistically significant at the .05 level.

However, "sharing interesting reading facts or news," $\chi^2 (8) = 15.43$, $p = .051$, with an effect size of .24, indicated that there may be a statistically significant relationship between the two variables: age groups and the frequency teachers "sharing interesting reading facts or news."

The results of the Kruskall-Wallis Test indicated that all three modeling practices were differences among the three age groups. The three groups were Gp1, n = 40: ages 21-35, Gp2, n = 46: ages 36-45, Gp3, n = 47: age 46+. The group differences were age and teachers "sharing their curiosity," $\chi^2(2, n = 133) = 12.85$, $p \leq .05$, age and the teachers expressing their "enthusiasm for and/or enjoyment of reading," $\chi^2(2, n = 133) = 13.64$, $p \leq .05$, and teachers age and their "sharing of interesting reading facts or news," $\chi^2(2, n = 133) = 10.32$, $p \leq .05$.

When analyzing the median scores for the modeling practice, "share interesting reading facts or news," the 36-45 age group had the higher median score (*Md* = 24); the median scores for other two groups were *Md* = 7 for the 21-35 age group and *Md* = 20 for the 46+ age group. The same was true for the modeling practice, "share my curiosity and/or questions" (*Md* = 10, 21-35 age group; *Md* = 28, 36-45 age group; *Md* = 20, 46+ age group). Unfortunately, there were not enough valid cases to perform the median test for "express my enthusiasm for or enjoyment of reading." Therefore, no statistics were computed.

Table 4.17

Crosstabulations: Age Factor, 21-35, 36- 45, 46+ Age Groups, and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	6.31	8	.613	.154
Share books through read alouds	9.42	8	.308	.188
Talk about reading and/or books	1.58	6	.954	.077
Recommend books to individual students	10.43	6	.108	.198
Recommend books to my class(es)	3.69	6	.719	.118
Recommend books to students by genre	2.60	8	.957	.099
Recommend books to students by theme	2.95	8	.938	.105
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	5.95	8	.653	.150
Share what I am reading	5.34	8	.721	.142
Share interesting reading facts or news	15.43	8	.051	.241
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	17.13	8	.029	.254
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	18.20	6	.006	.262

Note: N = 133.

The crosstabulations of initial certification and the 12 modeling practices indicated only a relationship between initial certification and the frequency teachers' "talked about reading and/or books," $\chi^2(6) = 15.28$, $p \leq .05$. A Kruskall-Wallis Test confirmed that there was statistically significant difference in the frequency teachers' "talk about reading and/or books" across the three group (Gp1, n = 74: undergraduate at a university, Gp2, n = 30: graduate at a university, Gp3, n = 29: alternative certification), χ^2 (2, n = 133) = 11.54, p = .003.

Table 4.18

Crosstabulations: Initial Certification and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	11.64	8	.168	.209
Share books through read alouds	5.06	8	.751	.138
Talk about reading and/or books	15.28	6	.018	.240
Recommend books to individual students	5.44	6	.489	.143
Recommend books to my class(es)	2.55	6	.862	.098
Recommend books to students by genre	5.02	8	.756	.137
Recommends books to students by theme	13.34	8	.101	.224
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	4.47	8	.812	.130
Share what I am reading	3.21	8	.920	.110
Share interesting reading facts or news	13.23	8	.104	.223
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	6.06	8	.640	.151
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	7.10	6	.312	.163

Note: N = 133.

The crosstabulations of the highest degree that ELA teachers obtained and the 12 modeling practices indicated a relationships between highest degree earned and the frequency in which teachers “recommend books to students by theme,” χ^2 (4) = 9.99, $p \leq .05$. The results are presented in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19

Crosstabulations: Highest Degree Attained, Bachelors or Masters/Doctorate, and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	8.14	4	.087	.247
Share books through read alouds	6.77	4	.149	.226
Talk about reading and/or books	1.05	3	.790	.089
Recommend books to individual students	0.23	3	.973	.041
Recommend books to my class(es)	0.35	3	.951	.051
Recommend books to students by genre	3.02	4	.554	.151
Recommend books to students by theme	9.99	4	.041	.274
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	2.40	4	.663	.134
Share what I am reading	2.35	4	.672	.133
Share interesting reading facts or news	4.89	4	.299	.192
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	2.94	4	.567	.149
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	0.69	3	.877	.072

Note: N = 133.

In the crosstabulations of graduate hours teachers earned in reading and the 12 modeling practices indicated no significant relationships existed. The results of the chi-square tests are presented in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20

Crosstabulations: Number of Graduate Hours Earned in Reading and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	5.89	4	.208	.210
Share books through read alouds	6.92	4	.140	.228
Talk about reading and/or books	1.36	4	.716	.101
Recommend books to individual students	1.13	3	.770	.092
Recommend books to my class(es)	1.93	3	.587	.120
Recommend books to students by genre	3.42	4	.491	.160
Recommend books to students by theme	4.72	4	.317	.188
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	2.11	4	.716	.126
Share what I am reading	4.18	4	.382	.177
Share interesting reading facts or news	8.97	4	.062	.260
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	7.56	4	.109	.238
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	2.68	3	.443	.142

Note: N = 133.

In the crosstabulations of graduate hours teachers earned in English and the 12 modeling practices indicated no significant relationships existed. The results are presented in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21

Crosstabulations: Number of Graduate Hours Earned in English and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	5.79	4	.216	.209
Share books through read alouds	4.21	4	.378	.178
Talk about reading and/or books	3.73	3	.292	.167
Recommend books to individual students	.20	3	.977	.039
Recommend books to my class(es)	.637	3	.888	.069
Recommend books to students by genre	3.31	4	.507	.158
Recommend books to students by theme	7.01	4	.136	.230
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	4.86	4	.302	.191
Share what I am reading	.89	4	.926	.082
Share interesting reading facts or news	3.68	4	.451	.166
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	3.35	4	.501	.159
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	3.46	3	.326	.161

Note: N = 133.

In Table 4.22, there were two of the modeling practices that showed to be statistically significant relationship with the grade levels the ELA teachers taught during 2011-2012 school year. There was a relationship between the grade levels ELA teachers taught and "talking about reading and/or books," χ^2 (3) = 12.56, $p \leq .05$ and the grade levels ELA teachers taught and "sharing their curiosity/questions with their students," χ^2 (4) = 9.57, $p \leq .05$.

Table 4.22

Crosstabulations: Grade Levels Currently Teaching and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	1.17	4	.884	.095
Share books through read alouds	1.75	4	.781	.117
Talk about reading and/or books	12.56	3	.006	.313
Recommend books to individual students	4.71	3	.195	.192
Recommend books to my class(es)	2.02	3	.569	.125
Recommend books to students by genre	2.55	4	.636	.141
Recommend books to students by theme	6.39	4	.172	.223
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	6.21	4	.184	.220
Share what I am reading	6.64	4	.156	.228
Share interesting reading facts or news	5.43	4	.246	.206
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	9.57	4	.048	.273
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	6.59	3	.086	.227

Note: N = 133.

The ELA teachers' years teaching English or English language arts proved to present the most statistically significant relationship among the modeling practices than any other variable and three questions in the online survey that addressed reading experiences, reading habits, and modeling practices (see Table 4.23). In particular, there were five out of the 12 modeling practices that indicated relationships between modeling practices and "recommend books to individual students," χ^2 (6) = 24.23, $p \leq .05$, modeling practices and "recommend books to my class(es)," χ^2 (6) = 19.35, $p \leq .05$, modeling practices and "share interesting reading facts and news," χ^2 (8) = 17.45, $p \leq .05$, modeling practices and "share my curiosity/questions with my students," χ^2 (8) = 21.80, $p \leq .05$, and modeling practices and "express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading," χ^2 (6) = 16.58, $p \leq .05$.

Table 4.23

Crosstabulations: Number of Years Spent Teaching ELA and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	8.51	8	.385	.179
Share books through read alouds	7.15	8	.521	.154
Talk about reading and/or books	4.11	6	.662	.124
Recommend books to individual students	24.23	6	.000	.302
Recommend books to my class(es)	19.35	6	.004	.270
Recommend books to students by genre	7.59	8	.474	.169
Recommend books to students by theme	7.27	8	.507	.165
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	12.31	8	.138	.215
Share what I am reading	9.60	8	.294	.190
Share interesting reading facts or news	17.45	8	.026	.256
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	21.80	8	.005	.286
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	16.58	6	.011	.250

Note: N = 133.

Research Question Four

What is the relationship between English Language Arts teachers' reading/teaching practices and school's characteristics?

To answer this question, two school's characteristics were determined and used: economically disadvantaged and district accountability ratings. Economically disadvantaged information is reported in percentages. These percentages reflect the total percent of students reported as being eligible for free or reduced-priced meals under the National School Lunch Program and Child Nutrition Program or other public assistance. These students may or may not participate in a special program such as compensatory or special education. The economically disadvantaged percentages were divided into three ranges for coding and determination of where the school would fall into the categories established based on socioeconomic status (see Table 3.1).

The second characteristic used was district's accountability rating or school performance rating acknowledged by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). TEA recognized the following ratings: exemplary, recognized, acceptable, academically unacceptable, and not rated or other. However, for this study, exemplary, recognized, acceptable, and academically unacceptable were used. Exemplary schools are those that meet 90% of the standards for each subject. Recognized schools are those that meet 80% of the standards for each subject or meet the 75% for all standards for each subject and the required improvements. Then, there is an academically acceptable performance rating. Academically acceptable schools meet each standard for the five subjects (Reading/ELA, Writing, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science) or meet the required improvements. The distribution of the schools' performance ratings is shown in Figure 4.1.

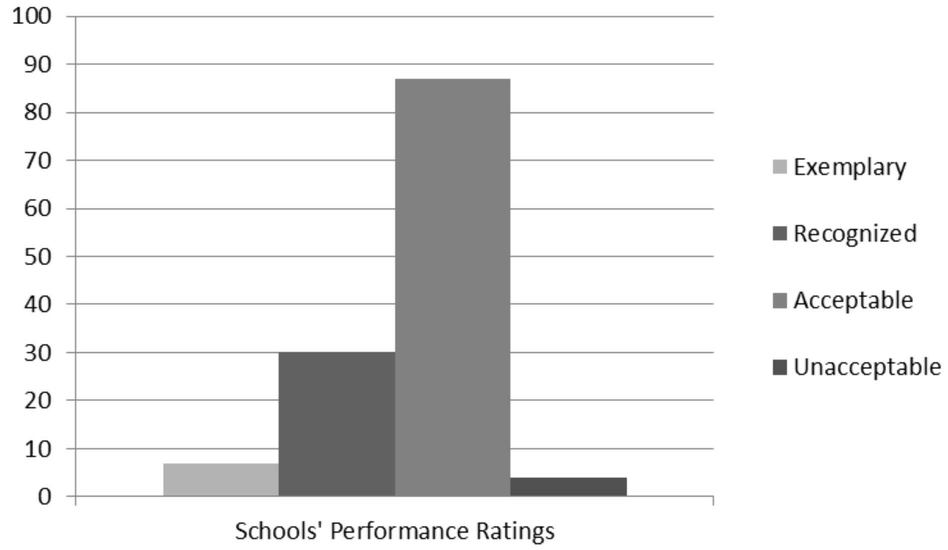

Figure 4.1 *Distributions of Schools Represented by Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) Performance Ratings*

The crosstabulations of economically disadvantaged and the 11 reading experiences in Table 4.24 indicated no significant association existed.

Table 4.24

Crosstabulations: Economically Disadvantaged Percentages and Reading Experiences

Reading Experiences	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
I recall books being accessible in my home.	12.14	8	.145	.215
I observed family members engaged in reading.	10.55	8	.228	.201
I visited the public library or bookstore.	7.81	8	.453	.173
I was read to at home.	10.26	8	.248	.198
I read books independently.	11.39	8	.180	.209
I read other materials (magazines, comic books, etc.).	12.06	8	.149	.215
I recall books being available in my classroom for leisure reading.	6.22	8	.622	.154
I observed teachers engaged in reading	1.91	8	.984	.085
I was read to at school.	2.65	8	.954	.101
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for enjoyment.	3.19	8	.922	.110
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for grade fulfillment.	11.85	8	.158	.213

Note: N = 131.

The crosstabulations of the economically disadvantaged percentages and the 13 reading habits indicated a relationships between the percent of economically disadvantaged and the frequency in which teachers “read drama and/or plays,” χ^2 (8) = 10.64, $p \leq .05$. The results are presented in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25

Crosstabulations: Economically Disadvantaged Percentages and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	6.80	6	.340	.162
Academic purposes	2.43	6	.868	.097
Informational purposes	7.20	6	.303	.166
Children’s picture books	4.71	8	.788	.135
Young adult literature	6.84	6	.555	.162
Fiction	6.44	6	.376	.157
Non-fiction	8.81	6	.184	.184
Poetry	10.64	8	.223	.202
Drama/plays	15.83	8	.045	.247
Magazines	4.51	8	.808	.132
Newspapers	14.44	8	.071	.236
Online	11.40	8	.180	.209
Religious material	4.67	8	.792	.134

Note: N = 130.

In Table 4.26, the crosstabulations indicated there was no relationship between economically disadvantaged percentages and the 12 modeling practices.

Table 4.26

Crosstabulations: Economically Disadvantaged Percentages and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	6.93	8	.544	.165
Share books through read alouds	.7.02	8	.535	.166
Talk about reading and/or books	3.20	6	.783	.112
Recommend books to individual students	3.01	6	.808	.108
Recommend books to my class(es)	3.75	6	.711	.121
Recommend books to students by genre	5.48	8	.705	.146
Recommend books to students by theme	5.73	8	.678	.150
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	7.74	8	.459	.174
Share what I am reading	6.81	8	.557	.163
Share interesting reading facts or news	4.59	8	.801	.134
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	9.28	8	.319	.190
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	9.77	6	.135	.195

Note: N = 128.

Next, the other school characteristic used to answer question four was school's the performance rating reported by the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). There was an association between (AEIS) performance ratings and two (2) of the 11 reading experiences: performance rating and "I recall books being accessible my home," χ^2 (12) = 29.61, $p \leq .05$, and performance rating and "I read other materials (magazines, comic books, etc…)" χ^2 (12) = 21.72, $p \leq .05$. Table 4.27 displayed the results.

Table 4.27

Crosstabulations: AEIS Performance Ratings and Reading Experiences

Reading Experiences	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
I recall books being accessible in my home.	29.61	12	.003	.274
I observed family members engaged in reading.	8.96	12	.706	.151
I visited the public library or bookstore.	14.30	12	.282	.191
I was read to at home.	19.73	12	.072	.224
I read books independently.	.17.48	12	.133	.211
I read other materials (magazines, comic books, etc.).	21.72	12	.041	.235
I recall books being available in my classroom for leisure reading.	8.81	12	.719	.150
I observed teachers engaged in reading	9.53	12	.657	.156
I was read to at school.	2.90	12	.996	.086
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for enjoyment.	13.43	12	.339	.185
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for grade fulfillment.	16.48	12	.170	.205

a. N = 131.

There also appeared to be an association between AEIS performance ratings and one (1) of the 13 reading habits, “I read fiction,” χ^2 (9) = 18.47 $p \leq .05$. Results are reported in Table 4.28.

Table 4.28

Crosstabulations: AEIS Performance Ratings and Reading Habits

Reading Habits	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Leisure	12.55	9	.184	.179
Academic purposes	12.87	9	.169	.182
Informational purposes	6.63	9	.676	.130
Children’s picture books	7.84	12	.798	.142
Young adult literature	13.05	12	.365	.183
Fiction	18.47	9	.030	.218
Non-fiction	12.73	9	.175	.181
Poetry	12.02	12	.444	.176
Drama/plays	9.05	12	.699	.152
Magazines	8.73	12	.726	.150
Newspapers	11.95	12	.450	.175
Online	20.19	12	.064	.228
Religious material	10.25	12	.594	.162

Note: N = 130.

There was an association between AEIS performance ratings and six (6) of the 12 modeling practices: performance rating and “I share authentic literature,” χ^2 (12) = 20.93, $p \leq .05$, performance ratings and “I talk about reading and/or books,” χ^2 (9) = 25.94, $p \leq .05$; performance ratings and “I recommend books to individual students,” χ^2 (9) = 20.13, $p \leq .05$; performance ratings and “I encourage to invite suggestions for books from students,” χ^2 (12) = 21.85, $p \leq .05$; performance ratings and “I share interesting reading facts or news,” χ^2 (12) = 22.76, $p \leq .05$; and performance ratings and “I express my enthusiasm for and/or enjoyment of reading,” χ^2 (9) = 26.92, $p \leq .05$. These results are presented in Table 4.29.

Using the Kruskal-Wallis test, there were two (2) modeling practices that proved to be statistically significant differences at the .05 level. The Kruskal-Wallis revealed a statistically significant difference between the teachers “talking about reading and/or books” in their classroom and the four ratings, (Gp1, n = 4: academically unacceptable, Gp2, n = 87: academically acceptable, Gp3, n = 30: recognized, Gp4, n = 7: exemplary), χ^2 (3, n = 128) = 9.98, $p = .019$. There were not enough valid cases to perform the median test for “talk about reading and/or books.” Therefore, no statistics were computed.

The Kruskal-Wallis revealed a statistically significant difference between the teachers “expressing their enthusiasm for and/or enjoyment of reading” in their classroom and the four ratings, (Gp1, n = 4: academically unacceptable, Gp2, n = 87: academically acceptable, Gp3, n = 30: recognized, Gp4, n = 7: exemplary), χ^2 (3, n = 128) = 13.61, $p = .003$. There were not enough valid cases to perform the median test for “express my enthusiasm for or enjoyment of reading.” Therefore, no statistics were computed.

Table 4.29

Crosstabulations: AEIS Performance Ratings and Modeling Practices

Modeling Practices	χ^2	df	*p*	ES
Share authentic literature	20.93	12	.051	.233
Share books through read alouds	11.51	12	.486	.173
Talk about reading and/or books	25.94	9	.002	.260
Recommend books to individual students	20.13	9	.017	.229
Recommend books to my class(es)	16.13	9	.064	.205
Recommend books to students by genre	8.19	12	.770	.146
Recommend books to students by theme	6.33	12	.899	.128
Encourage or invite suggestions for book from students	21.85	12	.039	.239
Share what I am reading	10.02	12	.614	.162
Share interesting reading facts or news	22.76	12	.030	.243
Share my curiosity/questions with my students	15.10	12	.236	.198
Express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.	26.92	9	.001	.265

Note: N = 128.

Summary

The purpose of this descriptive study was to explore and explain the relationships of secondary ELA teachers in the state of Texas and their reading experiences, reading habits, and modeling practices. The findings suggested that ELA teachers have more positive childhood reading experiences, read a variety of materials, and utilize their best teaching or modeling practices in the classroom. The self-reported data was not conclusive because it is subjective.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter discusses the findings and interpretations of the study and presents the researcher's conclusions and recommendations. This chapter is organized in the following five parts: (a) study overview, (b) ELA teachers as readers, (c) delimitations and limitations of the study, and (d) implications for future research.

Study Overview

This quantitative study investigated the reading experiences, reading habits, and modeling practices of Texas' English and English Language Arts teachers in grades 6-12 This study could furnish information where none currently exists, on the reading experiences and habits of secondary ELA teachers. The significance of these results could provide evidence for curriculum writers and staff developers to train all ELA teachers in appropriate and beneficial modeling practices that promote lifelong readers. Applegate and Applegate (2004) called this concept of being able to "pass on" what teachers themselves possess to their students the "Peter Effect." If teachers know what they know, have experienced, and prefer, then their abilities to share their reading experiences with their students is enhanced. This helps create the notion of reading as a shared experience with their students.

One purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between secondary ELA teachers' reading experiences and practices and the demographic data gathered. This study also sought to explore as to whether or not the characteristics of the ELA teachers' schools was related to their reading experiences and modeling behaviors.

This study examined the reading histories and habits of 158 ELA teachers currently in grades 6-12 in the state of Texas. Respondents completed an online survey through Survey

Monkey. The survey provided the descriptive data presented in Chapter Four and served as the basis for the following conclusions and recommendations.

Initially, the researcher wanted to connect how proficient the ELA teachers saw themselves as readers to their reading experiences, reading habits, and modeling practices in the classroom. However, 90% (n = 125) of the respondents reported that they are above average and there were very few (9.4%, n = 13) reported that they were average, none reported being below average. This was similar to previous research on the self-reporting of English/English Language Arts teachers reading habits. Hipple and Giblin (1971), in their research, reported that English teachers saw themselves as being proficient readers. They also noted that the ELA teachers could have responded in this way for many reasons (i.e., that what they think others believe they should be reporting because they are language arts teachers.)

After comparing all the demographic data collected, the question regarding “grade levels” was best used to determine or predict any relationships. The number of respondents were relatively equal in size for the two groups (Gp1, n = 66: middle school teachers – grades 6-8 and Gp2, n = 67: high school teachers – grades 9-12).

The researcher had expected that there would be a relationship in the demographic data collected and response to the last three survey questions (reading experiences, reading habits, and modeling practices), but the data analysis indicated that the mean response to questions on the survey was 3.67**.** This, along with a medium response of 3.53, indicated that although there was a range of responses on the Likert scale between 1 and 5, the teachers were still responding in the middle between 3 and 4. There were no extreme instances, either closer to 1 or 5, that could have been reported.

ELA Teachers as Readers

This study confirmed prior research that English teachers see themselves as readers. The responses to question number 19 regarding reading experiences indicated that the majority of ELA teachers had positive experiences with reading. This result is consistent with Hipple and Giblin's findings (1971) that teachers that go into in the area of English or reading are generally perceived as being readers, enjoy reading, and talk about reading and/or books experiences. That has not changed in the last 50 years, ELA teachers still see themselves as readers and enjoy reading.

The data indicates that there is a difference between the older and younger teachers. Secondary ELA teachers' age was closely related to "visiting the public library and/or bookstore." The question, "books were available in the classroom" explored the idea of classroom libraries. According to the participants' responses, access to books has increased over the years with New Boomers having more access than any of the other age groups. The responses also indicated that the New Boomers, as children, had not utilized the public library as much as those of previous generations. Possible reasons for this could be an increase in the availability of books in the schools, an increase in bookstores, and the rise of computers.

In survey question number 20 regarding reading habits, ELA teachers read a variety of materials. There was an association between reading habits and "children's picture books" and reading habits and "read newspapers." Relatively, few ELA teachers reported that they did not read or rarely "read children's picture books." Those ELA teachers that were over 46 years of age tended to read more newspapers than the younger teachers. Overall, the number of ELA teachers who reported reading the newspaper increased as the age as the teachers' ages increased. Since overall newspaper circulation has decreased over the last 20 years (Newspaper

Association of America, 2012) as alternative forms of information providers has increased, this finding was consistent with societal trends. Regardless of the demographic variable used to run the analysis, there was less interest in "reading poetry" and "reading drama/plays" than reading other materials.

The teachers' factors of initial certification, graduate hours in reading, grade levels taught, age, highest degree attained, and teaching experience showed no relationship to the secondary ELA teachers' reading habits. However, the number of graduate hours in English was significantly related to their reading habits. Graduate hours in English also had a significant association with the classroom modeling practices. Two possible related explanations could explain this finding. The first is that in Texas, graduate degrees for public school teachers are optional. Those ELA teachers who enjoyed reading and literature would be expected to be more likely to pursue graduate English classes. The second is that since graduate work is optional in Texas, those teachers who had a stronger sense of being "English teachers" voluntarily pursued graduate education.

The next matrix of survey questions addressed modeling practices in classroom. These modeling practices included "sharing books through read alouds," "talking about reading and/or books," "recommending books to students," "recommending books to classes," "recommending books by genre," and/or "recommending books by theme," "sharing what I am reading," and "inviting the students" to do the same.

The variable that seemed to be the most significantly related to the ELA teachers' modeling practices was their teaching experience in the K-12 classroom. However, initial certification, highest degree, and the grade levels taught seem to have no relationship to ELA teachers' modeling practices in the classroom.

Teaching experience was significantly related to five modeling practices: "recommend book to individual students," "recommend books to my class(es)," share interesting reading facts or news," "share my curiosity/questions with my students," and "express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading." The more teaching experience the teacher possessed the more likely he or she was able to implement the best modeling practices into their classroom. This contradicted what Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) found in their study. They found that teaching experiences was not associated with modeling but rather with the age of the teachers in their study.

The schools' characteristics were used to answer the last research question. This data was determined by using each of the schools listed by the respondents of the survey when answering the demographic questions. This information used was public data compiled by the state of Texas and federal government as a part of schools' accountability measures: economically disadvantage percentages and AEIS performance ratings.

The percentage of economically disadvantaged students did not show any significant associations with the ELA teachers' reading experiences and modeling practices. A school's economically disadvantaged percentages did indicate an association with "reading drama and/or plays." Therefore, it seems that those events that the Endowment (2004) categorized as "cultural and leisure activities" could be impacted by the students' and schools' socioeconomic status. Otherwise, the socioeconomic status of the school is not related to reading habits of the teachers who participated in this research.

It had been hypothesized that the socioeconomic status of the school community would be related to the teachers' reading experiences and reading habits. The analysis indicated that the Texas schools' AEIS performance ratings were related to the teachers' early reading experiences and current reading habits. Performance ratings did show a relationship with teachers having "books accessible in the home," "reading other materials," and "reading fiction." However, additional testing did not confirm these findings. This finding was surprising because of the researcher's personal experiences in the public schools. One possible explanation for this finding could have been that the teachers who participated in this research were not necessarily representative of the wider range of secondary Texas' ELA teachers. This is supported by the fact that in Texas only 25% of public school teachers have earned a graduate degree. In this sample, over 50% had taken graduate coursework.

There was an association between the schools' AEIS performance ratings and ELA teachers' modeling practices in the classroom. More specifically, there was an association with teachers "talking about reading and/or books" and teachers "expressing their enthusiasm for and/or enjoyment of reading" with a school's performance rating. As various authors (Lesesne, 2006 &, Schoenbach & Greenleaf, 2009) have commented, sharing and modeling reading experiences and one's enthusiasm for reading can be motivating and powerful. The findings of this research support this notion. This research's findings also indicate that sharing and modeling have some influence on the students' academic performances and the performance ratings of the school.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Delimitations are those factors which consciously limit the boundary of the study. The delimitations of this study were a convenience sample limiting the participants to volunteers in Texas. A second delimitation was the decision to use self-reported data collected through on an online tool. Other delimitations were as follows:

Teachers were self-reporting their reading experiences, reading habits and modeling practices. Therefore, although specific measures were taken to ensure the honesty of teachers (e. g. their participation was confidential and privately completed online), teachers could have given responses which might have differed from actual usage.

- The selection of the participants was limited to Texas.
- The survey responses were voluntary and teachers respond to the survey on their own time so as not to impede classroom instruction.
- An existing questionnaire was modified by the researcher for this study.

Limitations for this study included:

- The number and variety of respondents were low in number. As cited previously, the participants might not have been representative of Texas ELA teachers. Overall, only 25% of Texas teachers have graduate degrees. This sample reported that more than 50% successfully completed graduate course work.
- The relatively small number of participants who taught in academically low performing and/or low socio-economic districts did not allow for broad generalizations.

Implications for Future Research

Existing studies of teachers reading habits identified the reading habits of preservice teachers and elementary teachers. Relatively little research was identified on English Language Arts teachers' reading habits. The research identified were case studies of a small number of teachers. No studies were identified that investigated the reading behaviors of ELA teachers in Texas. This was significant because: (1) differs from other states in that it offers established alternative certification avenues for teachers (TEA, 2012; SBEC, 2012); (2) Texas, especially South Texas cities, are reported as being among the least literate cities in the county (NCES, 2003); (3) Texas schools have a large number of low socio-economic students with a high achievement gap between students based on socio-economic status (Bickel, 1999); and (4) Texas is one of five states that has not adopted the common core standards in the United States and designs its curriculum unlike any other state (Common Core, 2012; TEA, 2012).

Based upon the results of this study, future efforts could focus on determining the extent that ELA teachers share their reading habits with their students and what if any impact this has on students. Ideas/topics for future research studies related to this topic are as follows.

- A researcher could conduct a survey with an expanded number of teachers.
- A researcher could conduct personal interviews of ELA teachers in different socio economic or academically successful school districts.
- This study primarily focused on secondary ELA teachers. However, this study can be expanded on by looking at all content areas at the secondary level and doing a comparison of the findings in this study with other content areas.
- A research study could be to compare the data for ELA teachers to the general populations of teachers.
- A research study could be to duplicate the same study in other states. For instance a comparison of teachers using the International Reading Association (IRA) geographic regions in order to identify if there are regional differences.
- A researcher could conduct follow-up interviews for those that responded to this survey. This would add additional information on the reading habits of the teachers.

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APPENDIX A: Modified Questionnaire

TCFD Questionnaire for English Language Arts Teachers, Grades 6-12
(Modified from Reading Behaviors Questionnaire (RBQ), Stocks in progress, 2011)

Your participation in the following survey is completely voluntary and your responses will be confidential. Respond to each of the following by choosing the category that best applies to you.

Age:
21-27
28-35
36-45
46+

Race/Ethnicity:
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
White
Black, African American, or Negro
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian Indian
Chinese
Flipino
Japanese
Korean
Vietnamese
Native Hawaiian
Guamanian or Chamorro
Samoan
Other Pacific Islander
Some other race

Gender:
Female
Male

Through which of the following programs were you initially certified to teach?
Certification through an accredited college or university – undergraduate
Certification through an accredited college or university – graduate
Alternative certification through an Education Service Center
Alternative certification through a school district
Alternative certification through an independent program
Alternative certification through an accredited college or university – undergraduate
Alternative certification through an accredited college or university - graduate
Other

By what means did you receive your English/Language Arts certification?
Exam (I was already certified in another area.)
Program (teaching/university degree program) AND certification exam
Not certified to teach English Language Arts

What is the highest degree you have earned?
Bachelor
Masters
Doctorate

If you have a masters or doctoral degree, what is it in?
Reading
English
Curriculum and Instruction
Secondary Education
Other graduate degree
No graduate degree

How many graduate semester hours have you taken in reading education?
0
3-6
9-12
15+

How many graduate semester hours have you taken in English?
0
3-6
9-12
15+

Which of the following professional organizations are you currently a member? (Check all that apply.)

Texas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (TCTELA)
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
International Reading Association (IRA)
Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
Other
None

Which grade levels are you currently teaching?
Middle/junior high (grades 6-8)
Senior high school (grades 9-12)

How many students do you currently teach English or English Language Arts to each day?
0-25
26-50
51-75
76-100
101-125
126-150
151+

Including this year, how many years have you taught English/English Language Arts?
0-3
4-6
7-10
11-15
16-20
21-25
26-30
31+

Please provide the name of the school where you are currently teaching including city/town.

How do you view your proficiency as a reader? (National Assessment on Adult Literacy[NAAL], 2011)

Above average – *reading and understanding moderately dense, less commonplace texts; making simple inferences; determining cause and effect; recognizing the author's purpose*

Average - *reading lengthy, complex, abstract text; integrating, synthesizing, and analyzing; and locating more abstract quantitative information and using it, comparing viewpoints*

Below average – *reading a short, simple text; locating easily identifiable information; reread frequently; following written instructions in simple documents; limited vocabulary*

How much do you enjoy reading?
Great deal
Somewhat
Not so much

What degree of freedom do you as a teacher have in choosing materials?
Great deal
Somewhat
Not so much

Reading Experiences
For the purpose of this study, *reading experiences* refer to early influences on your reading attitudes and development.

As a child,…	Never	Rarely (1-2xs per month)	Sometimes (3-5xs per month)	Very Often (6-7xs per month)	Always (8+ xs per month)
I recall books being accessible to me in my home.					
I observed family members engaged in reading.					
I visited the public library or bookstore.					
I was read to at home.					
I read books independently.					
I read other materials (magazines, comic books, etc.)					
I recall books being available in my classroom for leisure reading.					
I observed teachers engaged in reading.					
I was read to at school.					
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for enjoyment.					
My teacher(s) encouraged reading for grade fulfillment.					

Reading Habits

For the purpose of this study, *reading habits* refer to your current routine practices with regard to text choice and reading frequency.

I currently…	Never	Rarely (1-2xs per month)	Sometimes (3-5xs per month)	Very Often (6-7xs per month)	Always (8+ xs per month)
read for leisure.					
read for academic purposes.					
read for informational purposes.					
read children’s picture books.					
read young adult literature.					
read fiction.					
read non-fiction.					
read poetry.					
read drama/plays.					
read magazines.					
read newspapers.					
read online.					
read religious material.					

Teacher as Reading Model

For the purpose of this study, *reading model* refers to teachers who share their enthusiasm for reading with their students. For the statements below, reading and/or books refer to materials other than readings assigned in class.

In my classroom,…	Never	Rarely (1-2xs per month)	Sometimes (3-5xs per month)	Very Often (6-7xs per month)	Always (8+ xs per month)
I share authentic literature (texts not designated for instruction; the original source, not excerpts, abridged versions, or anthologies).					
I share books through read alouds.					
I talk about reading and/or books.					
I recommend books to individual students.					
I recommend books to my class(es).					
I recommend books to students by genre.					
I recommend books to students by theme.					
I encourage or invite suggestions for books from students.					
I share what I am reading.					
I share interesting reading facts or news.					
I share my curiosity/questions with my students.					
I express my enthusiasm for/enjoyment of reading.					

www.surveymonkey.com/s/secondaryelateachers

APPENDIX B: E-mail Sample

(to teachers, possible participants)

Dear Teacher,

I am doctoral student at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. I am conducting research to determine the reading practices of English Language Arts teachers currently teaching in grades 6-12 in the state of Texas. The information obtained will provide insights about teachers as readers.

If you would like to participate in this study, please click on the link below. Also, I would appreciate it if you would *forward the link to other teachers you know* teaching English/English Language Arts in grades 6-12 in the state of Texas.

Thank you!

Tammy Francis Donaldson

Are you currently teaching English/English Language Arts in grades 6-12 in the state of Texas? Are you willing to take a 10-minute survey?

Click here (or copy and paste the link into the URL address box):

www.surveymonkey.com/s/secondaryelateachers

APPENDIX C: Sample Website Post

Are you currently teaching English/English Language Arts in grades 6-12 in the state of Texas? Are you willing to take a 10-minute survey?

TCTELA Member Tammy Francis Donaldson is a doctoral student at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi conducting research to determine the reading practices of English Language Arts teachers currently teaching in grades 6-12 in the state of Texas. The purpose of her study is to examine literacy experiences, current reading practices, and teachers as reading models. The information obtained will provide insights about teachers as readers.

If you would like to help this doctoral student with her research and participate in her study, please click on the link below. *Survey open until February 10, 2012*.

(Posting is on www.tctela.org *under Communication tab.)*

APPENDIX D: Consent Form

CONSENT FOR
An Exploration into Secondary English Language Arts Teachers as Readers and Reading Models

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate in this study, this form will also be used to record your consent.

You have been asked to participate in dissertation research studying the reading habits of secondary English/English Language Arts teachers. The purpose of this study is to examine literacy experiences, current reading habits, and reader self-awareness of teachers as reading models. You were selected to be a possible participant because you are currently teaching secondary Engish/English Language Arts courses.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire of your reading habits using a web-based survey tool called Survey Monkey. This study will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

What are the risks involved in this study?

The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, your participation will provide information about teachers as readers to improve student achievement and the standard of teaching and curriculum.

Do I have to participate?

No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?

This study is anonymous. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Tammy Francis Donaldson, the researcher, and Dr. Daniel L. Pearce, Dissertation Chair, will have access to the records.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Tammy Francis Donaldson, 361-825-3658, tammy.donaldson@tamucc.edu or Dr. Daniel Pearce, 361-825-5881, dan.pearce@tamucc.edu .

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Research Compliance Office and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Erin Sherman, Research Compliance Officer, at (361) 825-2497 or erin.sherman@tamucc.edu

Agreement to Participate

Please indicate your decision as whether or not you would like to participate in this study by clicking either “Agree” or “Disagree” below.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older.

APPENDIX E: Information Sheet

INFORMATION SHEET

An Exploration into Secondary English Language Arts Teachers as Readers and Reading Models

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. By filling out the survey and providing responses to the questions, you are consenting to participate in the study. By participating in this study, you are also certifying that you are 18 years of age or older. Please do not log onto Survey Monkey, the web-based survey tool, or complete the online questionnaire if you do not consent to participate in the study.

You have been asked to participate in dissertation research studying the reading habits of secondary English/English Language Arts teachers. The purpose of this study is to examine literacy experiences, current reading habits, and teachers as reading models. You were selected to be a possible participant because you are currently teaching Engish/English Language Arts courses in grades 6-12.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire of your reading habits using a web-based survey tool called Survey Monkey. This study will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

To access the survey, you will need to go to:

URL HERE

Then, enter the password : ?

What are the risks involved in this study?

The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, your participation will provide information about teachers as readers to improve the standard of teaching and student achievement.

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