CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FOUR CORE BASAL PROGRAMS: FOCUSING ON COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES (STORY STRUCTURE, SUMMARIZING, AND THE USE OF GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS)

by

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ABSTRACT

Core reading programs are typically referred to as basals because they serve as the "base" for reading instruction. A core reading program is the primary instructional tool that teachers use to teach children to learn to read. The purpose of this study was to conduct a content analysis of three comprehension instructional strategies in four first-grade core basal reading teachers' manuals that were the top four highly recommended core basal reading programs of those to be considered for adoption by the Alabama State Department of Education during the 2007-2008 academic year. The content analysis was conducted to answer the overarching question in this study: How are the National Reading Panel recommendations for teaching comprehension instructional strategies in the areas of story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers represented in four first-grade core basal reading programs? Two sub-questions of the research question were considered: (a) How are the four first grade core basal reading programs teachers' manuals organized and how are the units and lessons within them constructed? (b) What do these strategies look like in the four first-grade core reading programs and how often do the comprehension strategies appear and in what sequence? The results revealed that several themes emerged from the content analysis. These themes revolved around the following core basal reading program components: unit themes, literacy centers, morning message, building background, read-alouds, word work, and guiding comprehension. All four core basal reading programs presented the use of story structure, summarizing, and graphic organizers comprehension instructional strategies.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, my parents, Paul Franklin Lee and Christine Dulaney Lee; my sister and brother-in-law, Vicki Lee Watts and Timothy T. Watts; and my precious daughter, Mary Katherine Majors; who have supported and encouraged me throughout my lifetime. I will be forever grateful for their support as I became an educator, for their guidance of my educational goals and efforts, and for always understanding the hardships and challenges that have gone with this journey. Thank you for your lasting love and support, but especially for always loving and believing in me.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Reading skill is essential in a literate society; however, a significant number of children experience difficulty with the reading process (Calfee, 1984; Palinscar & Perry, 1995). Moates (1999) asserts that teaching reading is far more complex than most people realize. Reading is complex. It involves the reader and the text. It is defined as "getting information from the printed page" or "communication between an author and a reader" (Smith & Johnson, 1980, p. 201). *Put Reading First* (2003) asserted that too many children struggle with learning to read in today's schools. While there are no easy answers on how to increase reading achievement, The Report of the National Reading Panel (2000) began the effort to identify effective research in reading instruction and delineate methods that relate to reading success.

The National Reading Panel (NRP) convened in 1997 to assess the status of research-based knowledge and the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read (NRP, 2000). The National Reading Panel reviewed research in reading instruction, and they subsequently generated five components of reading instruction that they discussed in the report: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and text comprehension. They used set criteria to determine which empirical studies of these components would be used in the report. Criteria were established to focus the efforts of the panel. First, any study selected had to focus directly on children's reading development from preschool through Grade 12. Second, the study had to be published in English in a refereed journal. Third, study participants must be carefully described (age, demographics, and cognitive, academic, and behavioral characteristics. Fourth,

study interventions had to be fully described to allow replicability and include a full description of outcome measures. Fifth, the Panel used experimental or quasi-experimental studies of sufficient size or number of participants. After an extensive, exhaustive search of the literature, they examined the selected studies and provided a research synthesis for each component.

Three of the five components of reading instruction (fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) were unevenly supported across the grade levels in the Panel's review of research. The studies that examined phonics and phonemic awareness were distributed equably given the emphasis in early primary grades in which these components are typically introduced and taught (see Table 1). Of the 28 studies that fit the criteria for fluency instruction, that is, the effectiveness of both guided oral reading procedures and approaches that encourage students to read more, none of the studies were conducted in kindergarten or first grade. Of the 203 studies (see Table 1) that met the criteria for comprehension instructional analysis, only one study was conducted in kindergarten and first grade that focused on listening comprehension.

Table 1

Studies by Grade Level as Reported in the National Reading Panel (2000)

Literacy Component	Number of Studies	Studies in Grades K-1	Studies in Grades 2-8
Phonemic Awareness	52	47	5
Phonics	38	26	12
Fluency	28	0	28
Vocabulary	42	7	35
Comprehension	203	1	202

The research highlighted in the *Report of the National Reading Panel* (2000) forms the basis for the suggestions for effective instructions made by the Panel. Because the majority of the scientifically based reading research for fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary focused on

Grades 3 through 6, there is a need for additional research on comprehension strategy instruction in the primary grades (Stahl, 2004). The present study investigates whether core basal reading programs base their instruction on the comprehension instructional strategies, specifically story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers recommended by the National Reading Panel. Understanding how children learn, and particularly how they read, influences the instructional theoretical frameworks used by teachers.

Theories of Reading Comprehension

Behaviorism

Until the late 1950s and early 1960s, comprehension was assumed to occur once the reader decoded the written symbols and reproduced them as spoken language. According to this view, the teacher's role was to teach children how to discriminate among the different letters and decode the word. This view of reading as decoding was consistent with behavioral theory (Pearson & Stephens, 1993). This theory is described as teacher centered because it focuses on the teacher's active role as a dispenser of knowledge. Skinner (1974) explained that students learn to read by learning a series of discrete skills. Teachers use direct instruction methods to teach skills in a planned, sequential order. Information is presented in small steps reinforced through practice activities until students master it, because each step is built on the previous one. Traditionally, students practice the skills they are learning by completing fill-in-the blank worksheets. They usually work individually, not in small groups or with partners. Behaviorists believe that teachers control and motivate students through a combination of rewards and punishments (Tompkins, 2006).

Linguistics and Psycholinguistics

Behaviorist theory focused on the skills a student needed to decode the words; however, Chomsky's (1964) focus on linguistics emphasized the meanings of words. Therefore, comprehension was no longer assumed to be a process of stringing many decoded words together, but could be acquired though learning about language (Bigge & Shermis, 1999; Byrnes, 2001). Chomsky (1975) asserted that language, though very complex, was acquired by children easily and naturally through immersion in their social environment and that human beings were wired to naturally acquire language from their environment.

A comprehension reading theory that evolved out of linguistics is psycholinguistics. Psycholinguistic theorists found that children became skilled users of language by being active participants in their language environment (Bigge & Shermis, 1999; Byrnes, 2001). Researchers have examined what reading instruction would look like if children learned to read and write in the same way in which they learned to talk. Goodman (1965) found that oral reading errors made by children provided access to their comprehension process. He later developed a model that defined reading comprehension as the ability to simultaneously use three different cueing systems: syntactic cues, semantic cues, and graphophonemic cues. This model caused many educators to question the value of isolated skills instruction and controlled vocabulary in texts for beginning readers. Reading was no longer thought of as an assembly line model of skill learning (Dole, Duffey, Roehler, & Pearson, 1991), but as an interaction of language and thought.

Cognitive Theory

Students need to be active learners, orchestrating many strategies in order to construct and make meaning of the text, in what might be described as a cognitively based view of reading

comprehension. This view of reading comprehension emphasizes the knowledge students bring to the text while reading and the strategies students use to make meaning (Dole et al., 1991).

The cognitively based view of reading comprehension emphasizes reading instruction that teaches strategies students can use to comprehend and understand the text. Pardo (2004) described comprehension as a "process in which readers construct meaning by interacting with the text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experiments, information in the text, and the stance the reader takes in relationship to the text" (p. 272). Comprehension therefore occurs when there is a transaction between the reader and the text. The elements of comprehension involve the reader, the text, and the transaction (Butcher & Kintsch, 2003). Teachers can support readers in becoming better at comprehending text by building and activating prior knowledge and engaging students in personal response to the text. The transaction occurs when the reader, the context of the text, and the features of the text come together while reading. As the transaction occurs, students move through the text to construct meaning using comprehension strategies such as making inferences, summarizing, questioning, predicting, clarifying, and organizing the text in a structural analysis.

Schema theory describes a process in which mental models are created out of our experiences; these models are called schemata (Anderson, 1977; Piaget, 1926). The experiences which result in schematic models are described as a mental filing system organized in a hierarchical fashion (Bigge & Shermis, 1999; Byrnes, 2001). Schema theory emphasizes the connections readers make between a text and their prior experience (Pearson & Stephens, 1993).

According to Bigge and Shermis (1999), constructivism is a cognitive learning theory that provides a model for how readers create mental images and construct their own knowledge. It emphasizes the active engagement of learners in the process of making meaning as the reader

or learner joins new information to schemata or existing knowledge structures. Vygotsky (1978) explored this model and asserted that what was important for learners was that our social environment shapes our experience. He studied how readers or learners make meaning as individuals, in small groups, or in communities.

In the 1980s, the socio-psycholinguistic theory of reading instruction embraced meaning making as its central belief, building on Vygotsky's (1978) research. The socio-psycholinguistic theory of reading instruction also is known as process-oriented instruction and is constructive, learner-centered, and meaning focused (Pearson & Stephens, 1992). The whole language movement was based on this theory. Understanding how children learn, particularly how they read and make meaning of the text, influences the instructional theoretical frameworks that effective teachers use.

Comprehension Strategy Instruction

Children of the 21st century will face many challenges that require them to use reading to access printed and electronic text. In the new millennium's first decade, teachers are learning research-based approaches to teach reading that will prepare their students for the future. Reading is a process of constructing meaning. Reading is sometimes described as "saying all the words right." This notion, however, only focuses on the surface features of reading. In actuality, readers create meaning for the words in the book they are reading based on their own knowledge and experiences. Phonics, decoding, and reading aloud are all part of reading, but the essence of reading is the creation of meaning. The International Reading Association's position statement, *Honoring Children's Rights to Excellent Reading Instruction* (2000), emphasizes that all children

deserve reading instruction and support so that they become competent readers of all types of text in a variety of contexts.

A converging body of scientific evidence is available to guide the development of comprehension strategy instruction in Grades 2 through 6 (National Reading Panel, 2000). Other research has been done in the following areas regarding reading strategy instruction: review of research on comprehension strategy instruction (Dole et al.., 1991; Fielding & Pearson, 1994; NRP, 2000; National Research Council, 1998; NICHD, 1996; Pardo, 2004; Pearson & Fielding, 1991; Stahl, 2004), motivation needed to become a strategic reader (Paris et al.., 1983), mental modeling,(Duffy et al.., 1988), transaction strategy instruction (Pressley et al.., 1992), socio-cognitive model of literacy development (Dickinson & Smith, 1994), comprehension monitoring (Markman, 1977), reciprocal teaching (Palinscar, 1986), and scaffolding instruction (Clark & Graves, 2005). According to Owocki (2003), however, many studies on comprehension have occurred only with older students or adults. Stahl (2004) agreed when she noted a paucity of research in early primary grades regarding comprehension strategy instruction.

Over the years, notions of comprehension strategy instruction have evolved tremendously. Traditionally, many early childhood teachers spent a lot of time teaching children strategies for decoding text but little time teaching comprehension strategies. The focus was on ensuring that children would be able to recognize and identify words and read them with fluency. Although children were encouraged to read actual text, the language in the readers usually was controlled, creating text that is tedious and sometimes less exciting to read. Early childhood teachers recognize that although decoding is ultimately important to comprehending, learning to read requires much more than learning to decode words. Research has indicated that early childhood teachers take steps to ensure that along with decoding strategies, young students

develop strategies for comprehension (Ehri & Wilce, 1985; Fielding & Pearson, 1994; Paris et al., 1983; Stahl, 2004). In kindergarten and first-grade classrooms, a great deal of comprehension strategy instruction occurs through listening experiences and, over time, children become progressively more able to apply these strategies to become independent readers (Owocki, 2003).

In another study, Willingham (2006) investigated the usefulness of brief instruction in reading comprehension strategies and found that teaching strategies is a good idea; however, it is unlikely to help students before they are in the fourth grade. He suggested that comprehension strategy instruction in Grades K-3 needs to be explicit. He went on to state that the main effect of strategy instruction may be to push the reader toward a new understanding of reading. It is not just a matter of decoding words, but goes beyond to comprehending and to making meaning of what the author is trying to communicate. Willingham (2006) asserts that students have not truly read the material until they can fully understand the meaning of the passage.

Learning to be a strategic reader is rooted in development and instruction. Strategic readers are selective, active, and purposeful. They understand what they read in terms of what they already know and as they read, they may modify what they know. Readers activate strategies for managing their approach to a text, along with schemas for interpreting it. Readers may modify the strategy of reading and shift the context of interpretation as they go. New information becomes meaningful only as it is connected with meaningful patterns that the reader already knows (Paris et al., 1983). Failure to be a strategic reader may result from developmental inability or poor instruction. Teachers must use appropriate instruction and practice to improve strategic reading, (Paris et al., 1983).

Based on a synthesis of empirical research in the primary grades regarding comprehension strategy instruction, Stahl (2004) made recommendations for primary grades

teachers. The strategies recommended for use in the primary grades include guided instruction, retelling, story maps, teacher-generated questions, question/answer relationships, and reciprocal teaching. Through its earlier synthesis of research on comprehension instruction, the National Reading Panel (2000) identified eight effective instructional strategies based on the majority of research studies (N = 203) conducted in Grades 2 through 8. The strategies included comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, graphic and semantic organizers, story structure, question answering, question generation, summarization, and multiple strategies. This study focused on whether core basal reading program publishers followed the National Reading Panel's (2000) recommended comprehension instructional strategies and applied them in the design of their core basal reading programs, specifically story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers..

Core Reading Programs

Core reading programs have been described as a "primary instructional tool that teachers use to teach children to learn to read and ensure they reach reading levels that meet or exceed grade-level standards" (Simmons & Kameenui, 2003, p. 270). A core program should address the instructional needs of the majority of students in a school or district. Historically, core reading programs have been referred to as basal reading programs in that they serve as the "base" for reading instruction.

The contents of reading textbooks initially were comprehensive so as to allow readings for all subjects. As times changed, reading textbooks became more political, more literary, and finally were graded into series to accommodate different levels of reading skill. Reading textbooks gradually became programs that were expanded to include instructions for teachers as

well as worksheets and additional resources, so that today, core reading programs have the following features: a textbook or anthology of stories and accompanying workbooks, supplemental books, and related instructional materials at each grade level. Because of the influence of the Report of the National Reading Panel (2000), often just five components of reading instruction are emphasized in basal programs: Phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension instruction are coordinated with the reading selections and aligned with grade-level standards. Teachers' manuals provide detailed procedures for teaching the selection and the related skills and strategies. Instruction typically is presented to students in a whole group format. Testing materials also are included so that teachers can monitor students' progress. The companies present these books and associated materials as complete literacy programs.

Adoption of a core reading program does not imply that other materials and strategies are not used to provide a rich, comprehensive program of instruction. The core program, however, should serve as the primary reading program for the school, and the expectation is that all teachers in the primary grades will use the core program as the base of reading instruction. Such programs may or may not be commercial textbook series (Simmons & Kameenui, 2003)

The Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement (IDEA) at the College of Education at the University of Oregon released a *Consumers Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program: A Critical Elements Analysis,* (2003). The guide listed comprehension priorities similar to those found in the National Reading Panel Report and those identified by Stahl (2004). One section of this report was specific for first grade. High priority items for first grade comprehension were (1) to use think-alouds to identify story structure; (2) to provide many opportunities to listen to and explore narrative and expository texts and to make meaning of the

text through discussions; and (3) to explicitly teach critical comprehension strategies--main idea, literal, inferential, retell, and prediction. Discriminatory comprehension items included (1) use the text for initial instruction in comprehension such as using familiar vocabulary words, activate prior knowledge, use simple sentences, begin with short passages to help with understanding; (2) introduce story structure--beginning, middle, and end; and (3) have students discuss the story structure orally using oral retell.

Stahl (2004) indicated a need for comprehension instructional strategy research in the primary grades. In order to determine the viability of the present study, a content analysis was conducted on Unit 1 of Scott Foresman's *Reading Street* (2008) to determine which of the eight comprehension instructional strategies recommended by the National Reading Panel (2000) were presented for teaching and the context for that instruction.

Pilot Study

In order to provide a list of acceptable core basal reading programs for Alabama primary schools for the 2008 reading textbook adoption, the Alabama textbook committee met during the summer of 2007 and conducted a thorough analysis of nine kindergarten through third grade core basal reading programs using the *Consumers Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K - 3: A Critical Elements Analysis,* (2006). Of the four programs eventually listed as acceptable (see Table 2), the Alabama State Department Textbook Committee determined that Scott Foresman's *Reading Street* had the highest percentage of elements that met or exceeded their criteria. (Alabama State Department of Education, 2007). Therefore, *Reading Street* comprised the materials analyzed for my pilot study. Table 2 shows the percentages attained by

the top four core reading basal programs that consistently met and exceeded the criterion with merit.

Table 2

Percentage of Items Rated as Consistently Meets/Exceeds Criterion: Across Reading Programs and Grade Levels (Alabama State Department, 2007)

Program	K-3
Scott Foresman, *Reading Street* (2008)	114/171 = 66.7%
Harcourt, *Storytown* (2008)	96/171 = 56.1%
SRA/McGraw-Hill, *Imagine It* (2008)	84/171 = 49.1%
Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, *Treasures* (2007)	65/171 = 38.0%

The strategies included in Unit 1 of Scott Foresman's *Reading Street* were comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, use of graphic organizers, story structure, question generation, question answering, summarizing, and multiple-strategy teaching. The results of the pilot study, described in chapter 3, indicate that story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers were presented more times in the teacher's manual than were the other five comprehension instructional strategies. For the purpose of this study therefore the comprehension instructional strategies chosen to be analyzed in the top four core basal reading programs as determined by the Alabama State Department Textbook Committee (2007) were story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers.

Personal Perspective of Comprehension Instruction

During the middle to late 1990s, I defined reading instruction as enabling children to read through the text, with a goal of fluency. I thought that if a student could read the text fluently, then that student should and could make meaning of the text. If a student in first grade could read

the text, then that student was a successful reader. However, I did not realize that just because my students read the text, they may or may not have been able to understand the text. Nor did I realize that if my struggling decoders could not read the text it might be possible that they could still make meaning of the text. For my students, I thought that the text was what was important to teach, not building meaning for my students.

My goal as a first grade teacher was to teach children to read the text, not necessarily to comprehend it, believing that comprehension naturally occurred through just reading the text. Cullinan, Harwood and Galda (1983) reflected the same sentiment when they stated that reading educators were studying decoding and the role of phonics in beginning reading and at about the fourth grade the scores often dropped. According to Cullinan et al., this indicated that children were learning how to decode but not learning how to comprehend. It was not until 2000 when I began my doctoral program and was working on my Reading Specialist Certificate that I realized, through using a miscue analysis, running records, and oral and written retells, that some of my students could read fluently yet not comprehend the text or that some could not decode the text, yet through prior knowledge and context and picture clues could make meaning of the text.

While continuing work in 2002 on my Reading Specialist Certificate and meeting with other graduate students working on the same certificate, No Child Left Behind (2001) and National Reading Panel Report (2000) were beginning to be important topics of conversation within the community of reading specialists in this state at this time. The instruction in phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency became primary dialogue over comprehension in professional conversations.

From 2000 until the present, comprehension has been presented to me in many various professional development venues as a set of isolated strategies taught in a systematic, explicit

process. I have seen comprehension strategies in basal series taught the same way. Compelling research, however, shows that comprehension is an active process involving the reader and the text and that curricula should reflect this transaction (Cecil, 2003; Durkin, 1979; Duffy et al., 1988; Markman, 1977; Owocki, 2003; Pardo, 2004; Pressley, 2001; Snow et al., 1998; Stahl, 2004). The research described in the report of the National Reading Panel (2000) forms the basis for the suggestion for effective instruction made by the Panel. Because the majority of the scientifically-based reading research reported for fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary focused on Grades 3-6, there is a need for additional research on comprehension strategy instruction in the early primary grades.

Statement of the Problem

Reading failure among emergent readers is an issue of great concern to a literate, technologically-oriented society (National Assessment of Education Progress, 2006; National Institute Childhood Development, 1996; NLCB, 2000; NRP, 2000). Efforts to address this concern have focused on the implementation of various reading curricula ranging from commercial core basal programs to intervention scripted programs.

Since the National Reading Panel Report (2000) was published, its recommendations have become central to legislation (No Child Left Behind, 2001) and literacy reform (Alabama Reading Initiative and Reading First), The first statewide reading textbook adoption in Alabama since the 2000 report was begun in the summer of 2007 and concluded in the spring of 2008. The guiding question for this study addressed the efficacy of the core basal reading programs listed for adoption and the focus of this study was to describe what constitutes comprehension strategy

instruction, specifically story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers, in a purposeful selection of first grade basal readers that were adopted in the state of Alabama.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were as follows:

1. How are the National Reading Panel recommendations for teaching comprehension instructional strategies in the areas of story structure, graphic organizers, and summarizing represented in four first grade core basal reading programs?. Two sub-questions of the research question were considered: (1a) How are the four first grade core basal reading programs teachers' manuals organized and how are units and lessons within them constructed? (1b) What do these strategies look like in the four first grade core basal reading programs and how often do the comprehension strategies appear and in what sequence?

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations concerning this study. The limitations are as follows:

1. Only three (story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers) of the eight instructional comprehension strategies recommended by the National Reading Panel Report (2000) were analyzed; therefore, the results are not generalizable to the complete program of comprehension reading instruction in first grade core basal reading programs.

2. The four core basal reading programs analyzed were determined as being with merit by the Alabama State Department of Education Textbook Committee.

3. Only one state's recommendations of core basal reading textbooks with merit, as constructed by its State Department of Education Textbook Committee, were considered for content analysis.

4. Only the content in the core basal reading teacher's manual was analyzed. Additional resources, supplemental programs or intervention programs, of each core basal reading program were not included in the analysis.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions are offered for terms used in this study:

Comprehension--Reading comprehension is defined as "intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between the text and the reader" (Durkin, 1993, p. 518). Comprehension has come to be viewed as "the essence of reading" (Durkin, 1993). According to this view, meaning resides in the intentional, problem-solving, thinking processes of the reader that occur during an interchange with a text. The content of meaning is influenced by the text and by the reader's prior knowledge and experience (NRP, 2000). Reading comprehension is the construction of the meaning of a written text through a reciprocal interchange of ideas between the reader and the message in a particular text (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Comprehension monitoring--a strategy in which the reader learns how to be aware or conscious of his or her understanding during reading and learns procedures to deal with problems in understanding as they arise (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 4-6).

Comprehension strategies--Comprehension strategies are procedures that guide students as they attempt to read and write (NRP, 2000). One of the compendium of skills proficient readers use to connect to and gain personal meaning from literature (Cecil, 2003).

Cooperative learning--a strategy in which readers work together to learn strategies in the context of reading (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 4-6).

Core reading programs--a "primary instructional tool that teachers use to teach children to learn to read and ensure they reach reading levels that meet or exceed grade-level standards" (Simmons & Kameenui, 2003, p. 270).

Graphic organizer--a diagram or pictorial device that displays relationships" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 101). In teaching readers to represent text, teachers instruct students to organize their ideas through the construction of the meaning of relationships in a graphs of ideas based on what they have read, which is called "graphic organizer" (Cecil & Gipe, 2003). The use of graphs, or the construction of graphs, focuses the reader on concepts and their relations to other concepts and helps the reader construct meanings and organize the ideas presented in a text. They are particularly appropriate for expository texts used in content areas such as science or social studies, but they also have been applied to stories as story maps (Reutzel, 1984).

Multiple-strategy teaching--a strategy in which the reader uses several of the procedures in interaction with the teacher over the text. Multiple-strategy teaching is effective when the procedures are used flexibly and appropriately by the reader or the teacher in naturalistic contexts (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 4-6).

National Reading Panel (NRP)--The National Reading Panel was composed of 14 individuals, as specified by Congress, who were leading scientists in reading research,

representatives of colleges of education, reading teachers, educational administrators, and parents (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000).

Question answering--a strategy in which the reader answers questions posed by the teacher and is given feedback on the correctness (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 4-6).

Question generation--a strategy in which the reader asks himself or herself what, when, where, why, and what will happen, how and who questions (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 4-6).

Story structure--a strategy in which a story is "an imaginative tale shorter than a novel but with a plot, characters, and setting, as in a short story." (Harris & Hodges, 1995, pp. 243-244).

Summarizing--"a brief statement that contains the essential ideas of a longer passage or selection" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 247). To be able to create a summary of what is read, the reader must determine the most central and important ideas in the text (Brown & Day, 1983). The central aim of most summarization instruction is to teach the reader how to identify the main idea or central ideas in a paragraph (NRP, 2000).

Think-aloud--Think-alouds provide opportunities for teachers to model their thinking process by verbalizing thoughts while reading, processing information, or performing some learning task (Wilhelm, 2001). Think-alouds require a teacher to stop periodically to reflect on how a text is being processed and understood (Baumann, Jones, & Seifert-Kessell, 1993).

Summary

In conclusion, this chapter introduced the study, which focused on the efficacy of the core basal reading programs listed for adoption, and described what constitutes comprehension

strategy instruction. Chapter 2 provides a review of the research as related to the topics included in this study, specifically story structure strategy instruction, summarizing strategy instruction, and the use of graphic organizers.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Comprehension is the goal of reading instruction. Decoding the words, that is, recognizing them or being able to figure out how to pronounce them, is relatively easy compared to the challenge of constructing meaning after the words have been recognized (Sweet & Snow, 2003). Students must comprehend what they are reading to learn from the experience, they must make sense of their reading to maintain interest, and they must derive pleasure from reading to become lifelong readers. Students who do not understand what they are reading do not find reading pleasurable nor will they continue to read throughout their lives.

Comprehension is a thinking process. It is a creative, multifaceted process through which students engage with the text (Tierney, 1990). The comprehension process begins during pre-reading as students activate their background knowledge and preview the text, and continues to develop as students read, respond, explore, and apply comprehension strategies to their reading. Readers construct a mental picture or representation of the text and its interpretation through the comprehension process (van den Broek & Kremer, 2000). Whether comprehension is successful, according to Sweet and Snow (2003), depends on the interaction of the reader and the text. Teaching a variety of reading comprehension strategies leads to increased learning of the strategies, transfer to learning, increased retention of new passages, and general improvement in comprehension. Teacher's manuals from core basal reading programs provide teachers with guidelines for the of comprehension strategies and skills to be presented in specific grade levels. Additionally, core basal reading programs serve as the primary reading program for schools, and

the expectation is that most teachers in the primary grades will use the core program as the base of instruction (Simmons & Keme'enui (2003)

Basal reading programs include a scope and sequence of skills and strategies for each grade level, an organizational system. Various materials and items are delivered through a series of carefully selected stories, vocabulary, and activities. These programs make up the reading approach found in 80% of elementary classrooms (Simmons & Keme'enui, 2003). In a landmark study, Chall (1967) focused on the differences between two basal reading programs, pre-primer (3-2 levels) in the areas of story content, instruction, practice of new words, background preparation, and teacher presentation. She concluded that core basal reading programs provide an important means of instruction for children who are beginning to read.

Later, Beck and McGaslin (1978) examined eight early primary core reading programs to determine the design and organization of instruction in the lessons, which letter/sounds are taught, and how the teacher's manual prepares the teacher to teach the lesson. The results indicated that four of the programs analyzed were considered meaning-emphasis programs with phonics components and the other four programs were considered code-emphasis programs. The meaning-emphasis programs did not apply phonics skills to identify new words. Their primary focus was to include phonics practice while maintaining word recognition and comprehension. The code-emphasis programs presented reading as a process by teaching sounds in isolation, by progressing to word identification, and then to word recognition by the end of first grade. All eight of these programs asserted that their goals were to teach decoding and comprehension.

Durkin (1981) examined teacher's manuals from five core basal reading programs, kindergarten through sixth grade. She found that instruction, review, application, practice, preparation, and assessment procedures differed greatly from one program to another. She

concluded that the basal reading programs provided very little direct, explicit comprehension instruction with a tendency to offer many practice exercises.

Afflerbach and Walker (1992) conducted a content analysis of main idea instructional lessons in three basal series at Grades 1, 3, and 5. The basal series' instructional tasks fell under three main categories: identifying main idea, acknowledging strategies that mediate identifying the main idea, and monitoring main idea strategies. In all three basal textbooks, the teachers' instructions were to have students invent the main idea; in other words, they gave a brief summary in their own words. During the select task instruction, the students were to select main idea statements from the text. The researchers tallied how many times main idea strategy was acknowledged or not acknowledged throughout the basal units; this was categorized as acknowledging strategies that identify main idea. Results indicated that main idea instruction on specific main idea tasks was found across the three basal textbooks. Even though research has indicated that the summarization strategy is considered a late developing, difficult, main idea strategy to master, the data revealed that summarization strategy instruction occurred significantly more than any other task across the three basal series. Clearly, the analysis showed that the authors believed students in Grades 1, 3, and 5 could summarize the text when provided instruction on main idea.

Dewitz, Jones, and Leahy (2009) recently examined the instruction of reading comprehension strategies and skills in the top best-selling core basal reading programs focusing on Grades 3, 4, and 5. The researchers read every lesson in each teacher's manual and coded the manuals for three areas: (1) the comprehension skill or strategy being presented, (2) how the teacher presented the lesson, and (3) when the comprehension instructional strategy or skill was placed within the lesson. The results indicated that the five core basal reading programs

contained a mix of comprehension skills and strategies. When the five programs' teacher's manuals presented a comprehension skill or strategy, the teacher's manual tended to give some explanation of its value or procedure. In four of the five programs, questioning was the predominant instructional method. The other program's main instructional methods included modeling and providing practice. Core basal reading programs provide teachers with a scope and sequence indicating when to teach specific strategies and skills. These programs also provide the teacher with lesson plans in the general components of reading, specifically comprehension strategy instruction.

In this chapter, literature will be reviewed specific to comprehension strategy instruction as used to effectively motivate and teach readers to learn and to use comprehension strategies that will benefit the reader: story structure (Baumann & Bergerer, 1993; Buss, Ratliff, & Irion, 1985; Fitzgerald & Spiegel, 1983; Griffey, 1988; Greenwald & Rossing, 1986; Idol, 1987; Idol & Croll, 1987; Nolte & Singer, 1985; Short & Ryan, 1984; Speigel & Fitzgerald, 1986), summarizing (Gordon & Rennie, 1987; Sinatra, Stahl-Gemake, & Berg, 1984; Simmons, Griffin, & Kameenui, 1988), and the use of graphic organizers (Alvermann & Boothby, 1983, 1986; Darch, Carnine, & Kameenui, 1986; Reutzel, 1984, 1985, 1986). Story structure is one comprehension strategy instruction used to help students understand the structure of a story.

Story Structure

Story structure instruction is a procedure used extensively in reading comprehension of narrative texts. It is a method by which the teacher teaches the reader knowledge and procedures for identifying the content of the story and the way it is organized into plot structure (Mandler & Johnson, 1977).

Understanding Story Structure Improves Comprehension

Mandler and Johnson (1977) examined the structural characteristics of recall and looked at whether the students retold relevant parts in the story. They tested 21 first grade students, 21 fourth grade students, and 21 college students. The students listened to a story on tape. Ten minutes later, they recalled the first story. Minutes later on the same day, the students listened to another story on tape. Twenty-four hours later, the students recalled that story. Results indicated that adults recalled more than fourth grade students who, in turn, recalled more than first grade students. First grade students recalled settings, beginnings, and outcomes well. However, attempts, endings, and reactions were weak in recall among the first grade students. Most of the first grade students mentioned one or more of the main characters, the event that got the story going, and the outcomes, leaving out the reactions of the characters, what the characters did, and the final ending of the story. Fourth grade students showed a pattern of recall similar to those of the first grade students. As they recalled, however, they appeared to group recall of attempts and outcomes together.

The adults recalled settings, beginnings, outcomes, and attempts significantly better than first grade and fourth grade students. However, they had difficulty with endings and reactions of characters in the story, as well. As this study shows, young children are aware of the structure of stories and have schemata with which to organize and retrieve story information in a way similar to adults. It also is evident that story structure and story knowledge are developmental, as Mandler and Johnson (1977) asserted. The lack of recall does not primarily reflect a lack of comprehension but a lack of sufficient schemata which young children use to organize and retrieve information as they recall stories. In addition to learning the episodic content, the reader can learn to infer causal and other relationships between sentences that contain the content. This

learning gives the reader knowledge and procedures for deeper understanding of stories and allows the reader to construct more coherent memory representations of what occurred in the story (Stein & Glenn, 1979).

Stein and Glenn (1979) developed six story rules to teach story structure: setting, initiating event, internal response, attempt, consequences, and reaction. They examined story recall in terms of their six story rules. First and fifth grade students participated in the study. Four stories were analyzed for specific story grammar and the usage of the six story rules. Children from each grade were divided into two groups. Children in group 1 at each grade level were told the first two stories. Children in group 2 at each grade level were told the second two stories. The students listened to the story and then were asked to tell the story out loud exactly as they had heard it. One week later the students were tested again. They were asked to recall both stories they had heard in any order they could remember. The results revealed a significant grade-effect on recall, with fifth-graders recalling more information on immediate recall than first-graders. Fifth-grade students included more of each type of story rules and recall of information than first graders did. These results were similar to Mandler and Johnson's (1979) results.

Teaching children to notice and use the story structure in texts is one of the areas of research that the National Reading Panel (2000) examined. The NRP reviewed several studies including Fitzgerald and Spiegel (1983), Buss et al. (1985), Spiegel and Fitzgerald (1986), and Griffey, Zigmond, and Leinhardt. (1988) and determined that using text structure to guide reading, recall, and writing is an effective strategy for teaching comprehension.

In a study of average to below average students who had very little knowledge of story structure, Fitzgerald and Spiegel (1983) investigated whether direct instruction in story structure

would improve comprehension of narrative text. Twenty average and below-average fourth grade students were randomly assigned to one of two treatments: direct instruction in story structure or instruction in dictionary usage and word study. Three measures assessed knowledge of story structure three times: during screening, interim (at the end of phase 1), and final testing (at the end of phase 2). Two story structure tasks were used: (1) story production task--students read a story setting then finished the story, (2) scrambled story recall task--students read a story and unscrambled the story. Comprehension tasks were used at interim and final testing. The students read each story then answered nine literal and eight inferential questions. For the experimental group, the treatment consisted of two phases. Phase 1 instruction was short and intensive. It consisted of six, 30-45 minute sessions over a 2-week period which focused on story elements. Phase 2 was considered long-term instruction and consisted of ten 30-45 minute sessions over a 5-week period. This phase focused on how the story elements reinforced comprehension. Three activities were used: scrambled story tasks, sorting tasks, and retelling. Instruction for the control group focused on three main dictionary skills: using phonemic respellings to determine the pronunciation of a word, using a dictionary to determine the correct spelling of an inflectional word and choosing a meaning for a word from the dictionary, and writing stories using the words. Results indicated that for knowledge of story structure, there was an overall significant difference between treatment groups supporting the story structure group. The significant difference was shown with the production task, although no difference was found for scrambled story. Analysis for production tasks revealed that the story structure group demonstrated more awareness of sequential relationship. For accuracy of scrambled story recall, the story structure group recalled significantly more than the dictionary-word study group. The instruction in story

structure had a positive effect on story comprehension. Interestingly, however, the data revealed that regardless of which group a student was in, story comprehension did not increase over time.

Buss et al. (1985) used Stein and Glenn's (1979) six story rules to teach story structure. Buss and colleagues examined how instruction in story structure, specifically the six story rules by Stein and Glenn (1979), effected reading comprehension in third grade students who were identified as less skilled in story knowledge and comprehension. Twenty-one third grade students were randomly assigned to one of two groups: instructional group or control group. Instruction for the instructional group was 1 hour daily for 2 weeks and focused on the five story rules. Week 1 of instruction focused on story grammar rules. Week 2 of instruction focused on reinforcement activities: oral plays, puppet shows, making books of story rules. The control group received regular basal instruction for 10 days. Results indicated that instruction in story grammar improved story structure knowledge and comprehension over time and revealed that there was a relationship between story structure knowledge and comprehension of stories. Even though much improvement was seen for some measures, other measures had only slight improvement. Many of the students in this study had very little knowledge of story structure. It is possible that 2 weeks of story structure training may not be enough. Perhaps instruction over a longer period of time may result in more improvement in story structure knowledge and comprehension.

Spiegel and Fitzgerald (1986) examined the effects of direct instruction in teaching story parts to 20 fourth-grade students who were identified as having little knowledge of story structure. The students were randomly put into one of two groups: a story structure group or a word study/dictionary usage group. The groups read the same text. Instruction was given in two phases. Phase I consisted of intensive, direct instruction of six lessons, 30-45 minutes each, for 2

weeks. In Phase II, instruction was irregular with 10 lessons, 30-45 minutes each over 5 weeks. The students used this phase to practice what they had learned in Phase I (direct instruction of story structure). The teacher also emphasized in this phase that knowing the parts of a story can help reading comprehension and remembering stories better. Results revealed that direct instruction in story structure improved student's knowledge of story structure. For written retell, the story structure group wrote stories that had more structure compared to the word/dictionary group. The story structure instruction also helped the students' reading comprehension. The story structure group outperformed the word usage/dictionary group in both literal and inferential comprehension. Direct instruction in story parts and their order have a powerful effect on children's knowledge of story structure and their ability to comprehend stories.

Griffey et al. (1988) investigated the effects of self-questioning using the story structure strategy, CAPS: character, aim, problem, and solution, used to identify story structure elements in narrative texts. Twenty-seven third through fifth grade students were assigned to one of three groups: (1) group 1--self-questioning and story structure strategy group, (2) group 2--story structure strategy group, and (3) group 3--control group that received no strategy training. The intervention phase consisted of four, 30-minute sessions per group. Group 1 was instructed on how to ask themselves questions pertaining to story structure elements using the CAPS strategy. Group 2 received instruction in how to identify story structure elements using CAPS strategy; however the students were not taught questioning skills. Group 3 received no self-questioning or story structure strategy instruction. After reading a narrative story, the students were measured on how much they could retell. Results indicated that group 1 improved more than group 3. Clearly, story structure strategy instruction in addition to self-questioning strategy instruction was helpful in improving students reading comprehension of narrative text.

In summary, instruction in the content and organization of stories improves comprehension of stories as measured by the ability of the reader to answer questions and recall what was read. The research reviewed here indicated that improved comprehension is greater among less able readers. More able readers may already know what a story is about and therefore do not benefit as much from the training; however, using story structure strategies to improve comprehension aids both kinds of readers.

Story Grammar Guides Understanding of Story Structure

Story grammar is a component of story structure. It is designed to represent the structure of simple stories by asking who, what, where, when, and why questions. Mandler and Johnson (1977) developed the notion of a story grammar through a taxonomy they called story schema, which includes six nodes: setting, beginning, reactions, attempt, outcome, and ending. They asserted that children use this story schema or story grammar to guide their comprehension during reading and use the structure of stories to retrieve or recall information later. They suggested that a simple story is not defined by its length, number of events, or episodes, but by the fact that it has a single protagonist in each episode (Mandler & Johnson, 1977). Therefore, students should be able to predict and recall stories by being assured that even the most simple stories will have a structure and therefore students can be safe in using story grammar to recall information about stories that they have read (Short & Ryan, 1984). The National Reading Panel examined whether instruction in story grammar influences children's knowledge of story structure, and how it impacts children's comprehension (Greenwald & Rossing, 1986; Nolte & Singer, 1985; Short & Ryan, 1984).

Short and Ryan (1984) investigated the use of story grammar training and its effect on reading comprehension of less-skilled readers as compared to skilled readers. A group of fourth grade boys less skilled in comprehension were assigned to one of three groups. Group 1 was the total training strategy group, which was asked the five Wh questions (who, what, where, when, and why) during the training passages. Direct instruction in the use of story grammar as a comprehension monitoring strategy was taught during reading. The students were taught to recite the five Wh questions during reading. Group 2 was the attribute group. During instruction, they were reminded of the importance of effort in successful reading performance and recited the attribution self-statements before reading the text. Group 3, the control group, consisted of skilled readers. Results showed that strategy-trained, less-skilled readers did not differ from skilled readers in their ability to use story grammar for new information. However, story grammar training helped less-skilled readers recall more new story information as compared to the recall of the attribution group.

In a later study, Nolte and Singer (1985) examined the effects of training students to self-question before, during, and after reading using story grammar and ask questions about setting, main character, problem, and solution. For the next 3 days, the teacher modeled questioning using central story grammar structure before, during, and after reading. Then for another 3 days, the teacher gradually reduced her direct instruction. She divided the students into groups of two who asked each other questions as they read the text. Finally, the students worked independently asking their own questions before, during, and after reading. The control group was based on Durkin's (1979) study, which stated that very little direct instruction was spent on assessment type questions. A story was read silently each day followed by a comprehension test. Results

indicated that the treatment group outperformed the control group. The effect of the instruction appeared constant on the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th days of training.

In a different study using story grammar components, Greenwald and Rossing (1986) examined how story grammar components in traditional basal instruction using a modified version of Directed Reading Activity (DRA) affects story comprehension. Average fourth grade readers were assigned to either an experimental group or a control group. Treatment lasted for 4 weeks, three times a week for 30 minutes. Lessons for both groups were based on stories from a fourth grade basal. The treatment group had modified lessons from DRA, which included pre-reading and post-reading activities on story structure. A flow chart story mapping was used to teach the story parts: setting, character, initiating events, goal, problem, and resolution. The control group received DRA from the basal. Results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on the guided recall and retelling. Four weeks after treatment, the experimental group continued to outperform the control group on guided recall and written retelling.

In summary, stories often have problems that are faced by the characters in the story. Training in how stories and their plots are organized into episodes can help a reader in understanding the who, what, where, when, and why of narratives (Greenwald & Rossing, 1986, Nolte & Singer, 1985; Short & Ryan, 1984). By using story grammar, students learn to identify the main characters of the story, where and when the story took place, what the main characters did, how the story ended, and how the main characters felt.

Story Mapping Guides Story Structure

Story mapping is a visual and interactive tool used before, during, or after reading as a framework to organize and develop a sense of story by focusing on character, setting, conflict, and resolution. Basic elements of a story map are setting, characters, problem/conflict, events, resolution, and theme (main idea; Bauman & Bergerer, 1993). Students learn to construct a story map while reading narrative text by recording over time the setting, problem, goal, action, and outcome. A survey of the literature indicates that direct instruction in story structure using story mapping is an effective strategy (Bauman & Bergerer, 1993; Idol, 1987; Idol & Croll, 1987).

Story maps increase students' awareness that story characters and events are interrelated. Idol (1987) examined the use of a story mapping strategy instruction to improve reading comprehension with third and fourth grade students from a combined class of average, low-achieving, and learning disabled students. They were assigned to one of two groups: group 1 received direct instruction in story mapping before and during the reading of the text, which consisted of baseline instruction, intervention/model phase, intervention/lead phase, intervention/test phase, and maintenance phase. During baseline, the teacher introduced 10 general comprehension questions and discussed each question with the students. The students then read a story silently and answered the 10 comprehension questions. Baseline lasted 4 days. During intervention/model phase the teacher introduced a story map and modeled it on an overhead projector to all of group 1 while the students completed their own copy of the story map with the teacher calling on individual students for responses. The students then turned in their maps and books and answered the 10 comprehension questions about the story they had read. Throughout the intervention/lead phase, the teacher no longer modeled the use of a story map. Students independently filled in the story map as they read the story. They went over the

maps for accuracy, turned in the maps and books, then answered the 10 comprehension questions. For the intervention/test phase, students continued to independently and silently read stories using the story maps as they read. During the maintenance phase, students read silently, answering the comprehension questions without using the story maps. Group 2 received instruction in story mapping after the text had been read. There instruction was identical to group 1; however, baseline instruction lasted 8 days and they were taught to fill in the story map after they had read the story. Results indicated that group 1 and group 2 improved in story comprehension when using the maps without the teacher's assistance, and they continued to improve during maintenance, when they no longer used the story maps. All five low-achieving and learning-disabled students showed similar improvements in their progress. Both experimental groups improved on story comprehension as a result of learning how to use story mapping technique.

In a later study, Idol and Croll (1987) examined the effects of story mapping instruction with five learning-disabled students in second through fifth grade who had serious problems with comprehension. The students participated in an intervention program. Students read a story orally for 20 minutes. For the first 2 days, the teacher modeled how to use a story map (model phase). As the students read the passage, the teacher would stop the student, ask questions, and the students would write the correct responses directly on the story map. For the remainder of the intervention, the students independently filled in the details of the story map (lead phase) after they read the text. After students read each story, the baseline procedures were used again: the students orally retold the story and orally answered comprehension questions. The maintenance phase began when the students met 80% accuracy rate on answering comprehension questions and retelling. During maintenance, the students no longer used story mapping. During

maintenance, baseline procedures were used again to assess comprehension maintenance (test phase). Results indicated that four out of five students made significant gains on comprehension from baseline to maintenance in story retelling and answering comprehension questions. The researchers concluded that teaching learning-disabled students to fill in story map during reading is an effective way to increase recall and the ability to answer questions.

Baumann and Bergerer (1993) found results similar to those of Idol and Croll (1987). They examined first grade students' use of story mapping and how the instruction improved story structure elements in reading and recalling children's literature. The students were randomly assigned to one of four treatments: Story Mapping 1 (SM1), Story Mapping 2 (SM2), Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA), or Instructional Control (Control). The children in SM1 were taught to map stories using an explicit instruction model in which they would identify all the components of story grammar in a visual form. The group, SM2, received the same story mapping instruction. They also were taught how to write their own original stories from a story map. The DRTA group practiced using the directed reading thinking activity in which children predicted, read, and confirmed or disconfirmed their predictions. The control group students read the same stories as the other three groups; however, they did not receive explicit instruction in narrative elements or support in making predictions. Students in all of the treatment groups participated in 10 sessions for 40 minutes. Baumann and Bergerer concluded that explicit instruction in story grammar using the story mapping technique improved students' comprehension questions and oral retell of narrative stories both immediately after treatment and across time.

In summary, these three studies found that teaching story mapping as a component of story structure is an effective way to build recall and comprehension not only in first grade

students, but also in students who have learning disabilities. Baumann and Bergerer (1993) explicitly taught narrative elements and used story mapping to develop story schema and story narrative elements. In comparison to this study, Idol (1987) and Idol and Croll (1987) based their research on direct instruction in story mapping before, during, and after reading. No explicit instruction was given on narrative elements, but only on how to use story mapping as a technique to organize thoughts in order to recall and comprehend material read. Clearly, it did not matter whether the students learned narrative elements using story mapping as a tool for organizing information or using a story map to organize information before, during, and after reading text. The results in all three studies indicated that using story mapping as a technique for organizing schema was effective in teaching story structure using questions and recall as a measure to assess comprehension.

Research on Story Structure Not Included in the Report of the National Reading Panel

The National Reading Panel's research in the area of story structure has given us an idea of what story structure instruction looks like for students in middle elementary grades onwards. It was aimed at teaching the students how stories and their plots are organized into episodes by asking five Wh questions: who, what, where, when, and why. Knowing the structure of the story and its time, place, characters, problems, goals, solutions, and resolutions facilitates comprehension of and memory for stories. However, the National Reading Panel did not give us the whole picture of what story structure instruction looks like in a first grade classroom. Less attention has been paid to beginning readers' use of story structure knowledge to support reading comprehension. Instead, research on beginning reading has focused primarily on decoding and

phonemic awareness (refer to Table 1). The NRP did not include the following, important studies in their review.

Morrow (1984a) examined the effects of using structural elements in narrative text to prompt and guide retelling of stories. The treatment and control groups met once a week for 8 weeks. After the control group students heard their teacher read a story aloud, they drew a picture about the story. The treatment groups were prompted to recall the story. The teacher encouraged fuller recounts by prompting children to tell about the character, time, place, problem, solution, and put an ending to the story. Structural elements of the story were focused. The students were encouraged to introduce the characters and to describe the time and place of the story. Then they were asked to tell the main characters' problem or what the main character wanted to do in the story. Next, the students were asked how the main character tried to solve the problem and how it was solved. Finally, the students were asked to put an end to the story. Results showed that the experimental group demonstrated more gains than the control group on the number of story elements they included in their recalls.

In another study, Morrow (1984b) investigated the effects of Directed Reading Activities and story structure questioning on kindergarten students' comprehension of stories. Students in this study were randomly assigned to one of four groups: structured discussion group, traditional discussion group, combined structured and traditional discussion group, and control group. Treatment for the three experimental groups consisted of eight stories that were read to the students during their regular story time. For the first three stories, before reading, researchers posed questions for the students to think about while they heard the story being read. For the last five stories, students were given guidance to ask their own questions. During the reading, stories were not interrupted for discussion. After the story was read, the teacher asked questions to

encourage discussion. Each treatment group had their own focus set of questions: (1) the story structured group focused on setting, theme, plot episodes, and resolution; (2) the traditional discussion group focused on literal responses such as recalling facts and details, inferential responses such as interpreting characters' feelings and relating students' experiences; (3) the combined story structure and traditional group focused on both story structure elements and the traditional discussion elements; and (4) the control group was told the title, heard the story, looked at the pictures with no questions or discussions initiated by the teacher. The combined story structure and traditional group made the greatest gains in comprehension.

In a later study, Garner and Bochna (2004) examined whether first grade students, receiving intervention, could identify and use story grammar elements in recall and comprehension. Students were assigned to either of two groups: intervention or comparison. The intervention group received direct instruction and guided practice on how to identify main characters, setting, problem, and solution. Short periods of intervention occurred, 15-20 minutes, two times a day for 16 weeks. The comparison group followed the language arts basal program. Students listened to and read stories with comparable frequency to the intervention group. After listing to, or reading a story, a free recall or retelling of the story was elicited. Categories of responses were main character, minor characters, setting, problem, solution, and details. The results indicated that instruction in story grammar improved story comprehension.

In conclusion, Morrow (1984a, 1984b) did not teach children explicitly about story elements. Constant use of prompt, however, may have led students to infer story elements. He found that prompting students to recall stories with calls for recall of the elements improved their story grammar as well as their ability to use the story grammar to recall stories. However, Garner and Bochna (2004) found that when direct instruction was provided to first grade students, their

story comprehension improved. Summarizing is another comprehension instructional strategy recommended by The National Reading Panel (2000) that improves memory for what is read.

Summarizing

Another important comprehension instructional strategy is summarizing. A summary is "a brief statement that contains the essential ideas of a longer passage or selection" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 247). To be able to create a summary of what is read, the reader must determine the most central and important ideas in the text, generalize from examples, and ignore irrelevant details (Brown & Day, 1983). The central aim of most summarization instruction is to teach the reader how to identify the main idea or central ideas in a paragraph (NRP, 2000). Summarization training is effective (NRP, 2000; Rinehart, Stahl, & Erickson, 1986), because it can make students more aware of the way a text is structured and how ideas are related. In order to summarize, students have to pay closer attention to the text while they read (Rinehart et al., 1986). Summarizing includes the ability to identify underlying themes in literature and reveal personal opinions about the text (Brown & Day, 1983). The National Reading Panel (2000) discussed several studies using summarization as a comprehension instructional strategy (Afflerbach & Walker, 1992; Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987; Baumann, 1983; Brown & Day, 1983; Brown, Day, & Jones, 1983; Bean & Steenwyk, 1984; Jenkins, Heliotis, Stein, & Haynes, 1987; Rinehart et al., 1986; Taylor, 1982).

Using Summarizing Rules to Identify Central Idea

The aim of summarization instruction is to teach the reader to identify the main idea or central ideas of a paragraph or a series of paragraphs. Readers are taught to summarize

paragraphs by rule application mainly to delete trivial and redundant information and to identify or generate a main idea. The reader is taught through example and feedback to apply any of the following five rules in order to create a summary (Brown & Day, 1983): (1) delete trivial material, (2) delete redundant material, (3) substitute a superordinate term for a list of items (using flower for daisy or rose), (4) select a topic sentence, or (5) invent a topic sentence (Brown & Day, 1983).

Taylor (1982) investigated the effects of summarization instruction training using expository text structure on fifth grade students' comprehension. For 8 weeks, the treatment group read from a health and social studies textbook and received direct instruction on how to make a skeleton outline by attending to the structure of the text. They wrote summaries from their outlines. The control group read the same text; however, they answered questions at the end of the passage. The treatment group scored significantly higher on text recall compared to those students who did not receive summarization training.

Brown and Day (1983) investigated the efficacy of these rules for summarizing expository text. Fifth, 7th, and 10th grade students were taught the five macro-rules for summarizing listed above. The students read the expository text three times and then were instructed to write a good summary of the text. The students were then instructed to put the original summary away and write a 60-word summary of the expository passage. All of the students were able to delete trivial information and redundant material. The usage of selection and invention rules increased by age, which implies these are more difficult strategies and are developmental in nature. In a similar study, Brown and her colleagues (1983) indicated that these five basic rules made a difference in how students completed their task of summarizing. The text was well- known and the students participated in activities before and during the summarization

task. The 5th, 7th, and 11th graders in this study read two folk stories at home and learned the stories in their own words. After a week in which to learn them, the students wrote down all they could remember about the stories. The students summarized one of the texts, using the smallest amount of words. After this, the students reduced their summaries to 40 words or less. The results of the 40-word summarization task for the 7th and 11th grade students did not differ. All students were able to delete trivial information and redundant material. Fifth grade students also knew how to delete trivial and redundant information of text. However the 7th and 11th grade students significantly outperformed the 5th grade students in the use of more complex levels of rules.

Bean and Steenwyk (1984) examined the effects of two instructional strategy methods on students' summary writing and reading comprehension: rule--governed method and intuitive method. Sixth grade students were randomly assigned to one of three groups for summarization instruction: group 1, the rule-governed group, which consisted of Brown and Day's (1983) five rules of summarization plus one more rule, substituting a superordinate term or components of an action, group 2, GIST group (Generating Interactions Between Schemata and Text, which is a comprehension strategy mainly reading and summarizing the text--in other words finding the "gist" of the text), and group 3, the control group that received no direct instruction. Each group met for 12 instructional sessions, each of which was 25 to 30 minutes long, over a 5-week period. The rule-governed group was taught the six macro-rules of summarizing. The GIST group also followed the six rules; however, they were taught how to delete information to form a 15-word sentence that summarized the paragraph. The control group was taught how to write summaries by finding the main idea. Results showed that group 1, the rule-governed group, and group 2, the GIST group, achieved significantly higher reading comprehension scores than did

students in group 3, the control group. Both direct instruction methods for teaching summarization were equally effective methods for teaching reading comprehension instruction.

Similarly, Rinehart et al. (1986) examined the effect of direct and explicit summarization training on a group of sixth grade students using four of the five summarization rules identified by Brown and Day (1983). The experimental group was trained for 5 days using direct instruction in summarization: identifying and selecting main idea, deleting trivial information, deleting redundant information, and relating main idea and important information. The students read a social studies textbook and were taught how to find the main idea and write summaries of the text by using the four summarization rules. The control group did their usual reading group work, which consisted of stories and worksheets from grade-level basal readers. None of the skills lessons from the basal involved summary or main idea identification. The results indicated that the treatment group wrote summaries that were, overall, better than those of the control group.

A later study by Jenkins et al. (1987) examined the effects of restatement training on reading comprehension. Third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade learning disabled students with deficits in decoding and comprehension were trained in three different phases. Phase 1 students read narrative passages and named the most important person or major event that happened in each paragraph. For phase 2, students restated the major event in the fewest words possible. In phase 3, the students read a narrative passage and wrote a restatement. Results indicated that restatement-trained students performed better in comprehension than did the control group. These learning disabled students improved reading comprehension by using paragraph restatements.

In a similar study to Taylor's (1982), Armbruster et al. (1987) taught fifth grade students to recognize text structure in a social studies textbook and to use this structure to organize written summaries. They learned explicit rules on how to write a summary. Results indicated that students who were instructed in expository text structure and summarization instruction wrote summaries that included more main ideas from the passage they read compared to the traditional training group who had read the passages and answered questions.

In summary, instruction in summarization succeeds in that readers improve the quality of their summaries of text through identifying the main idea; leaving out extraneous detail, including ideas related to the main idea; generalizing; and removing redundancy. These results indicate that summarizing is a good method for integrating ideas and generalizing from the text information for upper elementary, middle, and high school students. Furthermore, instruction in summarization improves memory of what is read, both in free recall and in answering questions. This strategy of instruction is an important component when teaching reading comprehension. Identifying the main idea of a paragraph is another strategy used to help children summarize text. It is important to note that the above research studies did not include early primary grades.

Identifying Main Idea of Paragraph

Identifying the main idea in a paragraph means that readers must be able to recognize the essential details that together express the central idea in the paragraph. Thus, readers must learn to generalize in order to identify the main idea in a paragraph (Baumann, 1993). Integrating text through main ideas leads to a more organized, succinct, and coherent memory representative of what is read (Afflerbach & Walker, 1992).

Baumann (1983) examined how well third and sixth grade students comprehend main ideas after reading a passage from a social studies textbook. After silently reading three passages, 30% of third grade students and 40% of sixth grade students could write a main idea statement. Seventy percent of both third and sixth grade students could also identify the main idea when asked to select the main idea from a list of statements.

Afflerbach and Walker (1992) conducted a content analysis of main idea instructional lessons in three basal series at Grades 1, 3, and 5. The basal series' instructional tasks fell under three main categories: identifying main idea, acknowledging strategies that mediate identifying the main idea, and monitoring main idea strategies. For the identifying main idea instruction task, the strategy instruction in the teacher's manual was similar to Brown and Day's (1983) strategy of selecting and inventing summarization rules. In all three basal textbooks, the teachers' instructions were to have students invent the main idea; in other words, they gave a brief summary in their own words. During the select task instruction, the students were to select main idea statements from the text. The researchers tallied how many times main idea strategy was acknowledged or not acknowledged throughout the basal units; this was categorized as acknowledging strategies that identify main idea. For the category called monitoring main idea strategies, the instruction required that the students monitor the accuracy of main idea statements. Results indicated that main idea instruction on specific main idea tasks were found across the three basal textbooks. Even though research has indicated that the summarization strategy is considered a late developing, difficult, main idea strategy to master, the data revealed that summarization strategy instruction occurred significantly more than any other task across the three basal series. Clearly, the analysis showed that the authors believed students in Grades 1, 3, and 5 could summarize the text when provided instruction on main idea. This would indicate that

summarization strategy instruction can be taught in the early primary grades. However, more empirical research is needed in order to conclude the effectiveness of summarization strategy in early primary core reading basal programs. There is no current research on summarizing as a comprehension instructional strategy in the early primary grades. The use of graphic organizers is another comprehension strategy instruction recommended by The National Reading Panel (2000) that teaches students to organize their ideas in a visual way to remember what they have read.

Graphic Organizers

The use of graphic organizers has also been identified by the National Reading Panel (2000) as an effective comprehension instructional strategy. A graph is a "diagram or pictorial device that displays relationships" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 101). In teaching readers to represent the meaning of relationships in a text, teachers instruct students to organize their ideas through the construction of graphs of ideas based on what they have read, which is called using a "graphic organizer" (Cecil & Gipe, 2003). Constructing graphs focuses readers on concepts and relationships between concepts in a text and helps readers construct meanings and organize the ideas presented in a text. Graphic organizers teach readers to use diagrams of concepts and their relationships (Alvermann & Boothby, 1983). Graphic organizers are particularly appropriate for expository texts used in content areas such as science or social studies, but they have also been applied to stories as story maps (Reutzel, 1984). Graphic organizers help students focus on text structure while reading, provide tools to examine and visually represent textual relationships, and assist in writing summaries (Reutzel, 1986). The National Reading Panel investigated the use of graphic organizers as an effective comprehension instructional strategy (Alvermann & Boothby,

1983, 1986; Armbruster, Anderson, & Meyer, 1987; Baumann, 1983; Berkowitz, 1986; Darch et al., 1986; Gordon & Rennie, 1987; Reutzel, 1984, 1985; Sinatra et al., 1984; Simmons et al., 1988).

Using Graphic Organizers to Identify and Retain Relevant Information

Alvermann and Boothby (1983) investigated the use of a graphic organizer on the recall of relevant information as compared to irrelevant information from a fourth grade social studies textbook. Thirty-three fourth grade students were assigned to either an experimental or a control group. The experimental group was instructed on the use of graphic organizers as a way to organize a social studies text for inconsiderate text. For 9 days, the students were taught how to predict and fill in relevant information using a graphic organizer. The control group received no special instruction. Students who used graphic organizers began to delete more irrelevant ideas and were able to retain more relevant information in a written retell than students in the control group.

In a later study, Baumann (1984) investigated the effectiveness of direct instruction for teaching sixth-grade students main idea using a main idea "table" outline. Sixty-six, sixth-grade students were assigned to one of three groups: strategy group, basal group, or control group. All three groups received eight lessons of 30 minutes each. The lessons were taught over a 2.5 week period. The strategy group was taught how to find main idea in paragraphs and short passages while constructing main idea outlines. In lesson six, the students constructed a main idea "table," which consisted of an overall statement, and the supporting details were the legs. The basal group received instruction in main idea and supporting details as suggested in the teacher's manual of a basal reading series. The control group participated in eight lessons on vocabulary

development. The strategy group outperformed both the basal and control groups in their ability to recognize main idea in a paragraph and to compose an outline of the main ideas in the paragraphs of a passage.

Alvermann and Boothby (1986) examined the use of graphic organizers to recall information while reading social studies texts. Twenty-four fourth grade students were assigned to one of three treatments: two experimental groups and one control group. Experimental group one received instruction in the use of graphic organizers for 14 days while reading the social studies text. Experimental group two received the same training for 7 days. The control group received instruction in reading recitation. The eight students in the 14-day instructional group using graphic organizers comprehended and recalled significantly more information than students who received no instruction in graphic organizers.

Similarly, Berkowitz (1986) was interested in why middle school students had difficulty reading expository text and understanding the macrostructure of the text. She examined whether using study maps in this sixth grade classroom improved the students' ability to recall expository text. The experimental group tapped into prior knowledge about the content being read and made predictions. Then they read the text. The students were instructed in how to construct a map using a blank sheet of paper. The students first wrote the title of the passage in the center of the paper. Next, they skimmed the article to determine four to six main ideas and rewrote these ideas in their own words in clockwise direction around the title and underlined them. The students then found two to four important details to list under each main idea. Finally, they drew a box around each main idea and its supporting details and connected it to the title. The students used the maps to tell a partner everything they could remember about the text. The control group read the same text; however, students answered questions in writing. Students studied the questions, and then

they told a partner everything they could remember about the text. Berkowitz found that students who were taught to construct study maps could recall more main ideas from expository passages compared to students who were not trained in mapping main ideas. Berkowitz asserted that these gains were made because of the instructional emphasis on text structure using mapping strategies.

Research has indicated that using graphic organizers is an effective strategy for selecting and organizing information from the text which helps students recall more information after reading. Darch et al. (1986) asserted that using graphic organizers was an effective tool; however, she wanted to examine the effectiveness of using graphic organizers in a sixth grade social setting. The sixth grade students were assigned to one of four treatment conditions: (1) graphic organizer strategy group, in which graphic organizers were taught to the whole class, and the class worked together to complete the organizer; (2) graphic organizer strategy individual, in which graphic organizers were also taught in a whole-class setting, but the students read silently and worked independently; and (3) two other groups that each used a directed reading activity. Treatment of each group took place within the social studies classroom. The 45-minute lessons were presented daily for 15 days. All groups were presented the same content. The results showed that the graphic organizer group performed better on the posttest than the other three groups, followed by the graphic organizer individual group, then the SQ3R individual group, with the directed reading group having the lowest score.

Later Simmons et al. (1988) evaluated whether students' using graphic organizers before and after reading sixth grade science texts affected their comprehension and retention of content. The students were assigned to one of three groups: using graphic organizers before reading, using graphic organizers after reading, and learning through traditional classroom instruction

with a science basal. All groups were trained as follows in six, 30- minute lessons, which used the same content. The pre-reading graphic organizer group was taught to use a graphic organizer before reading. The teacher introduced the graphic organizer before reading the text. The post-reading graphic organizer group read the passage, then they were taught how to use a graphic organizer after reading the passage. The traditional group instruction consisted of activities from the science teacher's manual such as activating prior knowledge, questioning, and discussing. Students who received pre-reading graphic organizer instruction recalled more information compared to the other two groups.

Another type of graphic organizer called "framing" has been used to help students select and organize their thoughts. Armbruster et al. (1987) examined the effectiveness of instruction when using a graphic organizer called framing compared to instruction provided using the teacher's edition of a social studies textbook. Armbruster et al. (1987) described framing as a visual representation of the organization of important ideas in expository text. Frames, like other graphic organizers, are intended to help readers focus their attention on important text information. One type of frame used in this study by fourth grade students was similar to a flow chart. The fifth-grade students used a frame similar to a table or matrix. The participants of this study were 164 fourth-grade students and 201 fifth-grade students. They were assigned to one of three experimental conditions: student framing condition, teacher-led framing condition, and a control condition. The students in the student framing group discussed with the teacher what they already knew about topics, and they predicted what they thought the chapter was about before they silently read the social studies chapter. After the silent read, the students filled in their own copies of the frame provided by the teacher. After the frames were completed by the students, the teacher led another discussion about the frames, encouraging students to provide evidence from

the text to support their ideas. Students corrected any mistakes they made on their frame. The teacher-led framing group was taught in a similar way; however, the students read the chapter orally instead of silently. Then, the teacher led a discussion using the frame, asking students to provide evidence from the text to support their ideas. The teacher filled out the frame, while correcting any misconceptions about the chapter. After the teacher-led discussion, the students filled out a frame using information from the teacher-led discussion frame. For the control group, the teacher followed directions in the teacher's manual for any whole class activities or workbook assignments. The results indicated that framing is an effective technique for helping both fourth- and fifth-grade students' recall of information after reading the social studies textbooks. Students in the two framing groups scored significantly higher on recognition and recall questions as compared to the students in the control group.

In summary, research indicates that graphic organizers can help students, particularly middle grade students, learn from reading informational text, specifically before, during, and after reading the text. The effectiveness of graphic organizers is due to their role in helping students select and organize information in the text, which leads to understanding and better recall of information. Story maps, discussed above as an aid in comprehension, are a type of graphic organizer.

Using Story Maps as Graphic Organizers

Story maps are a visual representation similar to semantic mapping or webbing used to graphically organize concepts and events in a story (Reutzel, 1984). A story map helps teachers accomplish two major objectives: to better organize reading instruction and to help students perceive the organization of their reading material (Reutzel, 1984). Teachers can use story maps

as a pre-reading organizer to guide the introduction of the story, as discussed above in the section on story structure. A story map is also a visual device that helps students summarize the story or discuss and review the text after reading (Reutzel, 1985).

Reutzel (1984) investigated the use of story maps to improve fifth-graders' comprehension of narrative text. He used two treatment groups. One received a basal reading lesson using a story map to review a passage. The other group received a basal reading lesson using a discussion of oral and written questions to review the passage. The treatment lasted 2 days. He found that fifth grade students significantly improved in comprehension when story map instruction was used.

In a later study, Reutzel (1985) investigated the effects of story maps as an organizational structure for reading narrative and expository text with fifth grade students. One hundred and two, fifth grade students were randomly assigned to one of two instructional groups: story map group or DRTA (directed reading activity group). Both groups read two basal stories, one narrative and one expository. For the story map group instruction, the teacher instructed the students on how to read and use a story map before reading the story. After the story map strategies were taught, the students read the story silently. During instruction for the DRTA group, the teacher used a list of comprehension questions from the teacher's manual of the core basal reading program to provide a purpose for reading and to make predictions. After the teacher asked the comprehension questions, the students read the basal story silently. The students who were taught to read a story map recalled more information from the narrative and expository passages.

Sinatra et al. (1984) investigated the use of graphic organizers before reading to improve comprehension and recall. Their participants were 27, second through eighth grade reading-

disabled students enrolled in a university reading clinic. Because of their reading disabilities, each student was tested and given appropriate reading level text. Ten treatment lessons were conducted: five vocabulary and concept lessons (verbal readiness approach) and five map format lessons (mapping readiness approach). The sequence of presentations was randomly assigned for each student. For the verbal readiness approach, the teachers followed a traditional direct basal reading lesson. For mapping readiness approach, students were taught to use three types of maps to organize the passages: an episodic web for narrative content using story grammar, a thematic or descriptive map to relate story elements around a content theme, and a classification map to show how concepts, properties, and attributes are related and used with expository text. The before reading graphic organizers were used to guide the introduction of the story. The teacher constructed the graphic organizers as a preview of the text that the students were going to read. Results showed that the majority of students with reading learning disabilities who used graphic organizers before reading had higher total comprehension scores when mapping instruction was used.

In a similar study, Gordon and Rennie (1987) examined whether semantic webs of narrative and expository text could restructure background knowledge of fifth grade students who had misconceptions on a particular science topic. In treatment group I, the students listened to an expository text, read a narrative text, and wrote a summary of the story. Students in treatment group II received the same instruction as group I; however, after they heard the expository text read-aloud, they were given a semantic map. The students discussed the map and their own personal experiences. In the control group, the students read the narrative text only. The students who received semantic webs after hearing an expository passage were able to restructure their knowledge about the science content more times than the other groups. Reading

a narrative and expository text using the same topic and selecting and organizing the information using a semantic web helped the students restructure misconceptions they might have had prior to the treatment. Clearly, just reading a narrative text about a specific topic was not as effective as reading plus webbing at helping the students clear up misconceptions they had about a topic.

In conclusion, teaching students to organize the ideas that they are reading about in a systematic, visual manner increases the ability of the students to remember what they read. Their skills may transfer, in general, to enable better comprehension in narrative text, expository text, and content-area texts such as social studies and science.

Research on the Use of Graphic Not Included in the Report of the National Reading Panel

One significant second-grade study was completed after the National Reading Panel (2000) report was published. Williams, Nubla-Kung, Pollini, Stafford, Garcia, and Snyder (2007) developed and evaluated the effectiveness of a cause-effect instructional program using graphic organizers in a social studies curriculum. The researchers developed the program for second grade students who were at-risk for academic failure. The researchers used biographies, trade books, and specially constructed cause-effect paragraphs as the texts for social studies instruction. The students were divided into three groups for instruction: the text structure program group, the content only program group, and a no-instruction control group, though the study does not state what this group did. Twenty-two lessons were taught for each program group. During the second lesson in each topic for the text-structure program, the students read a social studies content passage and completed a graphic organizer for the targeted paragraph. They organized the three elements being taught: cause, effect, and clue words in a cause-effect structure. The students in the content-only program used the same social studies content and

materials as the students in the text-structure program, but did not focus on cause-effect structure. The first lesson for each topic included two graphic organizers, KWL chart, and an informational web. The informational web was constructed like a semantic web. In the center of the web was a labeled picture of a house, school, or job, surrounded by several blank circles connected by a line to the center picture. Students filled in the circle with information that they learned during the lesson. Results indicated that the effect of treatment on completing the graphic organizers was not significant for cause-effect. Both programs did better answering comprehension questions compared to the control group.

In summary, the use of graphic organizers, whether a KWL chart, informational web, or a simple graphic organizer helps students select, organize, and recall information in social studies content.

Summary

Research has shown that teaching comprehension instructional strategies, specifically, text structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers, has a positive effect on recall of information and comprehension. The majority of empirical research for these three comprehension instructional strategies has been conducted in the intermediate grades. When the National Reading Panel (2000) reviewed research in this area, they listed eight comprehension instructional strategies and did an extensive, exhaustive search for empirical studies for the eight comprehension instructional strategies. Only one research study that fit the National Reading Panel's criteria was found and used that was conducted in an early primary grade, specifically first grade. That was a study that showed the effect of using story structure on comprehension (Bauman & Bergerer, 1993).

Over 500 studies between the years of 1978 and 2007 focused on these comprehension instructional strategies; however, the majority of the participants were either intermediate students or the research was not from a credible journal. Five studies that investigated the use of story structure and one study that looked at using graphic organizers with participants in the early primary grades were reviewed here (Garner & Bochna, 2004; Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Stein & Glenn, 1979; Morrow, 1984a, 1984b; Williams et al., 2007).

In the following chapter, the methods of this research study are explained. Four core basal reading programs strongly recommended for 2007-2008 reading/language arts textbook adoption by the Alabama State Department of Education and noted as being comprehensive with merit as outlined in "A Consumer's Guide to Analyzing a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" (2006), were analyzed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The primary focus of this chapter is to describe the methodology used to investigate this study's research question: How are the National Reading Panel recommendations for teaching comprehension instructional strategies in the areas of story structure, graphic organizers, and summarizing represented in four first grade core basal reading programs? The two sub-questions of the research question were considered: (1a) How are the four first grade core basal reading programs teachers' manuals organized and how are units and lessons within them constructed? (1b) What do these strategies look like in the four first grade core basal reading programs and how often do the comprehension strategies appear and in what sequence? This study was a content analysis of a purposeful selection of four first grade core basal reading teacher's manuals that were the top four highly recommended core basal reading programs of those to be considered for adoption by school systems in the state of Alabama during the 2007-2008 academic school year.

Content Analysis

Content analysis has been defined as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages" (Holsti, 1969, p. 14). According to Hosti (1969), content analysis can be applied only to data that are long-lasting in nature. Content analysis allows researchers to look through large amounts of data in a systematic way (Weber, 1990).

Content analysis is useful for examining trends and patterns in documents and provides an empirical basis for monitoring shifts in public opinion (Stemler & Bebell, 1998). A common notion is that a content analysis simply means doing a word frequency count (U.S. Accounting General's Office, 1996). A content analysis, however, goes beyond single word counts. It is a "systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding" (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 13).

What makes the content analysis technique meaningful is its reliance on coding and categorizing the data. Weber (1990) defines a category as "a group of words with similar meaning or connotations" (p. 37). According to the U.S. Accounting General's Office (1996), "Categories must be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. The requirements of exhaustive categories are met when the data language represents all recording units without exception" (p. 20). A *priori* approach to coding data was used in this study to establish categories based on theory prior to the analysis. The categories then were applied to the data as it was coded (Weber, 1990).

The process of collecting and analyzing data in this project was framed with Krippendorff's (1980) structure for content analysis. He stated that six basic concepts must be addressed in every content analysis:

1. The analyst must be clear about which data should be analyzed. Krippendorf (1980) begins his consideration of data analysis by confirming that data are created through attention to what is truly interesting and important to the analyst. Therefore, "anything connected with the phenomenon of interest qualifies as data for content analysis" (p. 171). In this study, the researcher's interest in how publishers appropriated the National Reading Panel's Report (2000) meant that the core basal reading program would provide the data that should be analyzed.

2. The analyst must know the context relative to which the data are analyzed. Krippendorf (1980) states that boundaries of the analysis are subjective; therefore, they should be defined in such a way that there is some structural unity, some natural way of dividing the content into what is relevant and what is not. In this study, the logical limits of the context were the instructional texts, that is, the teachers' manuals, of the core basal reading programs.

3. The analyst's knowledge determines the construction of the context in which inferences are realized. Krippendorf (1980) recognizes that some of the variables in data are stable and others are not, and it is the analyst's knowledge of the conditions of data collection that helps to clarify how the data interacts with its context. In this study's comparison of several core basal reading programs, for example, reading comprehension strategies were labeled differently in each program, though they were substantively similar in presentation.

4. The target of the content analysis is, simply put, what the analyst wants to know.

5. The basic intellectual task of the analyst is to make inferences. The formation of these inferences utilizes the knowledge that the analyst is bringing to the content analysis to make inferences from the available data. Krippendorf (1980) draws together the previous four concepts in his discussion of inferences. He states that an analyst must have rules of inference that take into account the data, their context, the target, and her own knowledge. For this study, I conducted a pilot study to construct a process of data analysis that could be applied consistently across the four core basal reading programs.

6. Validity is the ultimate criterion of success in content analysis. For Krippendorf (1980), validity is directly related to the clarity of evidence and the replicability of the research. The process of content analysis of the core basal reading programs in this study was established in the pilot study, and replicated in the analyses of the four programs under consideration.

Data Collection

Selecting Core Basal Reading Programs

The content analysis data collection process began in 2006 with the identification of eight comprehension instructional strategies recommended by the National Reading Panel (2000). In March 2007, the Alabama State Department of Education textbook committee met and determined the top four highly recommended core basal reading programs to be considered for adoption by school systems in the state of Alabama during the 2007-2008 academic school year: Scott Foresman, *Reading Street;* McMillan/McGraw-Hill, *Treasures*; Harcourt, *Storytown*; and McMillan/McGraw-Hill – SRA, *Imagine It.* These four core basal reading programs have been the foundation of my data collection. A pilot study was conducted to determine which of the three comprehension instructional strategies would be analyzed for this study. Definitions used in the National Reading Panel Report for each of the eight comprehension instructional strategies were used as a baseline definition for the pilot study (see Appendix A). The three comprehension instructional strategies most frequently presented in the pilot study were story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers. After the three comprehension instructional strategies were determined from the pilot study, I began a content analysis of Scott Foresman, *Reading Street*. As I analyzed each core basal reading program, I recorded notes in the research log as to the overall organization and structure, tallied each comprehension strategy as it was presented in each teacher's manual, and recorded explicit observations in the research log as to how each core basal reading program presented the specific comprehension instructional strategies. Refer to Table 3 for a detailed timeline of the content analysis.

Table 3

Timeline of Content Analysis

Date	Steps In Planning Content Analysis
November, 2006	Identified eight recommended comprehension instructional strategies (National Reading Panel, 2000)
March, 2007	Identified four core basal reading programs
December, 2007	Purchased teacher's manuals for each core basal reading program to be analyzed
January, 2008	Conducted pilot study to determine which three of eight recommended strategies would be analyzed
February, 2008	Determined definitions for each target category
March, 2008	Began content analysis on first core basal, Scott Foresman's *Reading Street*
June, 2008	Completed content analysis of the four core basal reading programs

This study analyzed the content of the first grade teachers' manuals of four highly recommended, or meritorious, commercial reading programs: (1) Harcourt *Storytown*, (2). Macmillan/McGraw-Hill *Treasures*, (3) Scott Foresman, *Reading Street*, and (4) SRA/McGraw-Hill *Imagine It!*. The Alabama State Textbook Committee was responsible for recommending textbooks to the Alabama State Board of Education (Alabama State Department of Education, 2007). In February 2007 the Alabama State Board of Education began the process of adopting core basal reading programs for an 8-year cycle. The steps in the state adoption process are as follows: (1) the course of study is reviewed; (2) a State Textbook Committee is appointed; (3) publishers are invited to bid; (4) textbooks are reviewed by the State Textbook Committee to determine the degree to which each program aligns with scientific research; (5) recommendations are made to the state board; (6) state board sends out an approved textbook list to local education associations, which includes city and county school systems; (7) an approved textbook list is posted on the Alabama State Department of Education website; and (8) the local committees evaluate the textbooks and decide which textbook they will use for their system

(Alabama State Department of Education, 2007). As the State Textbook Committee reviewed and considered all of the information available for the current adoption, some comprehensive programs were determined to better address the needs of Alabama students than were other programs. These programs met the state course of study and had greater merit than other texts, as evidenced by the research outlined in "A Consumer's Guide to Analyzing A Core Reading Program K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" (Simmons & Kameenui, 2006). The four commercial reading programs identified below reflected the definition of a comprehensive reading program with merit:

> A comprehensive reading textbook/program with merit is defined as one that is sufficient to be used as the sole textbook/program for a particular grade or course and meets both 80% or more of the standards outlined in the state course of study and partially meets/meets or exceeds 90% or more of the research items outlined in "Consumer's Guide to Analyzing a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" (Simmons & Kameenui, 2006, p. 11)

Pilot Study

In order to determine what the targets of the analysis would be, a pilot study was conducted to identify the top three comprehension strategies of the eight recommended by The National Reading Panel. Scott Foresman's *Reading Street* was the first grade core basal reading program used in the pilot study, because it was determined by the Alabama State Department of Education to have the most merit of the top four highly recommended core basal reading programs of those to be considered for adoption by school systems in the state of Alabama (as discussed in chapter 1).

I used the eight strategies recommended for comprehension instruction from the National Reading Panel Report (2000) as the *priori* categories for the pilot study. These strategies were

comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, graphic organizers, story structure, question answering, question generation, summarization, and multiple strategy teaching.

Development of the coding system. Before the content analysis began for the pilot study, I trained a second person to code, using the categorical definitions (see Appendix A) and spreadsheets (see Appendix B) developed for this process. The second evaluator was an enrichment teacher at a local public school and an adjunct reading instructor at a local university. She has an Educational Specialist degree with 25 years of experience. For training purposes, I selected a different text, McMillan McGraw/Hill *Treasures* (2001). I selected the first grade Unit 1 from the teacher's manual for learning the coding scheme. Paper-pencil coding was used on Unit 1's five stories in this core basal reading program. During the practice session, we coded each story together, discussing why each strategy was or was not coded. Any questions, concerns, or misconceptions were addressed at this time. After the sample teacher's manual was analyzed and coded, each investigator separately coded Unit 1 of Scott Foresman.

Each investigator independently coded Unit 1, Week 1 of Scott Foresman's *Reading Street.* They read each of the unit's six lessons in its entirety looking for evidence of the eight recommended strategies. The investigators only coded strategies that went with passages that were printed in the student textbook. The rationale for only using the printed stories in the student textbook was that, generally, when school systems adopt textbooks such as core basal reading textbooks, they will adopt the student textbook and may not adopt the other resources that go with the core basal reading program such as read-alouds, leveled texts, or decodable texts. Therefore, read-alouds, leveled texts, or decodable texts were not considered for this study. As we read the lesson in the teacher's manual, we looked for the eight recommended

comprehension instructional strategies. When we found a lesson that presented a specific strategy, we put a tally mark under the strategy. For this Unit, interrater reliability was 93% as determined by the percentage of the eight comprehension instructional strategies that were coded in the same way.

The results indicated that story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers were most frequently presented in Unit 1 of Scott Foresman's, *Reading Street.* Thus, I used the results of the pilot study to define the target data for this project.

Definition of each target category. The following definitions of each category were used. It is important to note that the core basal reading programs sometimes named a particular activity as teaching a strategy: for example, summarization, when according to the conception of this strategy in the research literature, the activity taught story structure. In these instances, the activity was coded according to the following definitions rather than the labels from the publishing companies.

1. Story structure--A story is "an imaginative tale shorter than a novel but with a plot, characters, and setting, as in a short story" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, pp. 243-244), with a beginning, middle, and end (Morrow, 1983a). In this study, only narrative text was considered during the coding procedures for story structure.

2. Summarization--A summary is "a brief statement that contains the essential ideas of a longer passage or selection" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 247). To be able to create a summary of what is read, the reader must determine the most central and important ideas in the text (Brown & Day, 1983). The central aim of most summarization instruction is to teach the reader how to

identify the main idea or central ideas in a paragraph (NRP, 2000). In this strategy, narrative and expository text were considered.

3. Graphic organizers--A graph is a "diagram or pictorial device that displays relationships" (Harris & Hodges,1995, p. 101). In teaching readers to represent the meaning of relationships in a text, teachers instruct students to organize their ideas through the construction of graphs of ideas based on what they have read, which is called a "graphic organizer" (Cecil & Gipe, 2003). The use of graphs, or the construction of graphs, focuses the reader on concepts and their relations to other concepts and helps the reader construct meanings and organize the ideas presented in a text. They are particularly appropriate for expository texts used in content areas such as science or social studies, but they also have been applied to stories as story maps (Reutzel, 1984). In this study, narrative text (use of story maps) and expository text (all types of semantic webs and maps) was considered when coding for use of graphic organizers.

Data Analysis

Program Analysis

I examined and analyzed the teachers' manuals of each of the four identified core basal reading programs for evidence of three comprehension instructional strategies: story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers as defined above. The second evaluator coded 10% (Neuendorf, 2002)) of each program. Interrater reliability was 95%.

The following are steps that were taken in order to analyze each core basal reading program:

1. The four core basal reading programs were analyzed one at a time in order to capture a comprehensive look at the total program. The overall structure of each core basal reading

program was identified as were the three comprehension instructional strategies. I also noted the organization, general reading components, patterns, length of instruction, and technology for each core basal reading program.

2. All core basal reading units, or themes, in each of the four core basal reading programs were analyzed.

3. Each lesson in each unit, or theme, was read and analyzed. Only the lessons that related to the student basal reader were considered. Lessons that required read-alouds and leveled and decodable texts which were not included in the student basal reader were not considered.

4. As each lesson was read in its entirety, a spreadsheet (see Appendix C) was used to code all units of instruction that had specific terms as identified by the predetermined definitions given above. A tally mark was used for each mention of a strategy in each unit of instruction as outlined in the analysis section below.

5. As each comprehension lesson was read for strategy instruction use, I made notes on the ways in which strategies were taught in a research log.

Spreadsheets (see Appendix C) were used for each core basal reading program. These spreadsheets were used to keep a tally of how many times each comprehension strategy instruction was mentioned in the lessons.

Steps used in order to analyze the core basal reading programs. After deciding which core basal reading programs and comprehension instructional strategies were to be analyzed, I purchased all of the teacher's manuals for each core basal reading program from each publishing company. I completed the content analysis on Scott Foresman first because it was the core basal reading program that I had used in my pilot study, then I analyzed McMillan/McGraw-Hill, next,

Harcourt was analyzed, and last was McMillan/McGraw-Hill/SRA. As I began the content analysis on each core basal reading program, I looked at each teacher's manual first for the structure and design of each program in its entirety. Then, I took notes in my research log notebook, specifically noticing the structure of each program: how many units it contained, how many weeks per unit of instruction, whether or not the unit was theme-based, technology, differentiated learning, learning centers, correlations to Alabama Course of Study and standardized tests, the general components of reading, and additional word lists for main selection story.

After a careful analysis and documentation in the research log regarding the design and organization of each teacher's editions, I began to read each day's lesson looking for specific comprehension instructional strategies (story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers). As I read each lesson, I used a spreadsheet to tally the number of times the teacher was to present each specific strategy. In addition to making tally marks that represented each strategy presented, I made notes in my research log about how each comprehension instructional strategy was presented. On the spreadsheet, I tallied how many times each comprehension instructional strategy was presented. The research log gave me insight into what the comprehension instructional strategy looked like for each core basal reading program. I used the coding spreadsheet to tally each time a specific comprehension instructional strategy was presented in the teacher's manual.

Secondary Analysis of Coded Data

Story structure. I analyzed story structure strategy instruction with the narrative selections in the lessons. A spreadsheet (see Appendix C) was used to tally each time story

structure was presented in the teacher's manual. In the research log, I noted the specific elements of story structure presented in each core basal reading program: character; setting; problem; solution; story grammar (who, what, where, why, and when questions); and beginning, middle, and end.

Summarizing. For the analysis of summarizing instruction, a spreadsheet (see Appendix C) was used to tally each time summarizing was presented in the teacher's manual. I made notes in the research log as to the nature of summarizing instruction in each core basal reading program: the main idea (for example, in expository text) or central idea (in narrative text), and finding details.

Use of graphic organizers. A spreadsheet (see Appendix C) was used during the analysis of the use of graphic organizers. Narrative and expository text was considered while analyzing the use of graphic organizers. The investigator made notes in the research log as to when (pre-reading, during reading, or post-reading) and what types of graphic organizers were used during comprehension instruction.

Summary

Chapter 3 presented an account of the research methodology utilized in this study. The study used a qualitative design to answer the research questions. Data was collected and analyzed qualitatively and included data recording spreadsheets and a research log, which included the notes of the procedures as the investigator analyzed each core basal reading textbook. A discussion of the use of qualitative research design and a description of its

components were given. Procedures for the selection of textbooks and comprehension instruction strategies were explained. Data collection methods were described and methods used for data analysis were explained. Chapter 4 will discuss and describe the results of the data

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Core basal reading programs are widely used in most elementary classrooms (Hoffman, 1994). Over the past decade, basal textbooks have played a significant role in the "reading wars" (Strickland, 1995). Reyhner and Hurtado (2008) defined reading wars as the argument over the best way to teach reading that is carried out by supporters of the phonics approach and by supporters of the whole language approach to teaching reading. Anderson (2000) goes on to explain that those who favor traditional values in education tend to favor phonics instruction, while those who favor progressive or child-centered values in education tend to favor whole language instruction. Phonics instruction is regarded as the polar opposite of whole language (Anderson, 2000). Some basal texts are written to teach reading through authentic literature, a whole language approach, while others may use passages that are controlled text with highly decodable language and specific vocabulary, a phonics approach. Both sides in the debate have chosen the option of using state textbook adoption policies as an effective influence for change (Hoffman, 1997). Educators and politicians in Alabama, the state which is the focus of this study, in particular, have played significant roles in guiding early reading instruction through shifts in textbook adoption requirements (Alabama State Department, 2007). Basal publishers have begun to target their product development toward individual states, to include curriculum standards and state mandated assessment practices such as progress monitoring that corresponds with Dynamic Indicator of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Stanford Achievement Test (SAT 10), and AMRT (Alabama Math and Reading Test) practice questions.

A substantial amount of money is spent on textbook adoptions each year in the United States, specifically this academic school year (2008-2009) in Alabama, on core basal reading textbook adoptions. Because of No Child Left Behind (2001) and its direct impact on reading, energy, time, and money are spent adopting core basal reading programs. This study examines how The National Reading Panel (2000) recommendations in the area of comprehension strategy instruction, particularly story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers were presented in four core basal reading programs. In the sections below, I will discuss the following: (1) the general components of each of the four identified core basal reading programs, (2) the frequency of comprehension instructional strategy (story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers) was presented in each of the four core basal reading programs, and (3) what these strategies look like in each core basal reading program.

Core Basal Reading Program Components

This section will provide information about the design of each of the four core basal reading programs, describing each in detail and comparing them through an examination and analysis of the teachers' guide. The four programs described are Scott Foresman's *Reading Street*, McMillian/McGraw-Hill's *Treasures*, Harcourt School Publishers' *Storytown*, and McGraw/Hill: SRA's *Imagine It.* I chose one unit from each program that falls mid-year in the lessons, for comparison of lessons and resources within a unit.

Scott Foresman's Reading Street

Figure 1 gives a comprehensive outline of the specific components of the *Scott Foresman's Reading Street* Teacher's Manual.

A. Five units of instruction for six weeks, for a total of thirty weeks of instruction

B. Each unit is built around a specific theme

C. Each week's lesson is introduced to the teacher with a discussion of the following:

    a. Curriculum standards

    b. Technology

    c. Differentiated learning

    d. Literacy centers

    e. Assessments

D. Within each week's lesson, four main components of general reading are presented:

    a. oral language

    b. word work

    c. reading

    d. language arts.

E. At the end of each unit, a section on Teacher Resources provides the teacher with:

    a. Study skill bookmarks for narrative and expository passages

    b. Word lists with accompanying teacher information

Figure 1. Components of Scott Foresman's Reading Street teacher's manual.

Reading Street (2009) is Scott Foresman's K-6 core basal reading program. The first grade program has five units of instruction, each of which encompasses 6 weeks, for a total of 30 weeks of instruction. Each unit is built around a specific theme. For this study, I chose Unit 3, *Changes: What is changing in our world?* Each week of Unit 3 builds on the theme of change through the main selections and paired selections. These are written, or chosen, to make

connections to social studies and science objectives. The main and paired selections usually are read on succeeding days.

Each week of lessons in this 6-week unit is introduced to the teacher with a discussion of curriculum standards, technology, differentiated learning, and assessments (see Figure 1). Each week of lessons in *Reading Street* uses a main selection, which may be a narrative story or an expository text, and a paired selection, which might be a poem, letter, diagram, or short passage.

One unit at a glance. Each week's lessons, with all the resource pages, runs about 65 to 70 pages. The introduction to the week's work begins with a page of curriculum standards, the Alabama Weekly Skills Overview page. This page lists the Alabama English Language Arts Course of Study Standards aligned with the five components of literacy recommended by the National Reading Panel (2000); phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency and correlates to the week's lesson plans. The next page correlates the main selection with SAT-10, ARMT, and DIBELS assessments as well as Alabama Science and Social Studies standards taught during each lesson.

Technology is integrated through an online database of the student edition story of the week, leveled readers, and phonics decodable readers at www.PearsonSuccessNet.com. Each story can be downloaded at the school or at the student's home. Also available at the same website is a "My Lesson Planner" for the teacher, which gives access to electronic versions of the weekly lesson plans. Professional development in the form of videos or articles is provided through the website on instructional strategies like think-alouds or research such as "What Reading Does for the Mind" (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998).

A resource page for differentiated and small group instruction includes lesson plans for three leveled texts: strategic intervention, on-level, and advanced. This resource page includes the name of an accompanying English Language Learners (ELL) leveled text with notes about ELL instruction dispersed throughout each unit.

The Teacher's Manual in each unit provides two pages of ideas on how to set up and use literacy centers. The centers are divided into areas of listening, reading/library, word work, writing, science, and technology. The teacher's manual provides explicit directions for each center.

Throughout the lessons in the unit, references to Writing and Assessment direct the teacher to the following: writing genre instruction, scoring rubrics, fluency, and sentence reading charts. A different writing genre is associated with each unit, with a scoring rubric specific to that genre. The teacher's manual provides directions on how to monitor fluency and gives a chart to record progress. Sentences are provided on Day 5 of each week for the students to read in order to monitor their progress in phonics and high-frequency words.

The last section of the unit is labeled Teacher Resources. It has two components: a study skill bookmark and a word list with accompanying teacher information. The study skill bookmark has information about fiction and non-fiction that can be reproduced for students. The fiction bookmark asks questions such as "Who are the characters?" "Where does the story take place?" "What happens at the beginning, middle, and end?" Whereas, the nonfiction bookmark asks questions such as, "What did I learn?" "What is this mainly about?" The word list addresses each basal selection with specific phonics pattern words, spelling words, and high-frequency words. *Reading Streets* includes the lists for all 30 selections in the Teacher Resources section of each unit.

Within each week's lessons in a unit, the four main components of every lesson are oral language, word work, reading, and language arts; each of these teaches specific skills and strategies (see Figure 1). Oral language generally is a discussion of the big idea for the week. For Unit 3, Week 1, the specific question is: "How do we change as we grow?" The teacher and students brainstorm and discuss the big idea using the specific question. Then, the teacher follows the brainstorming discussion with a read-aloud. Word work includes phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, and high-frequency words. Reading includes comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Language arts includes writing, grammar, speaking, listening, viewing, research, and study skills. All of the skills and strategies of oral language, word work, and reading are presented in every week's lessons. Writing and grammar also are used weekly, with the other language arts skills and strategies included at some point during the unit.

One week's lesson at a glance. Table 4 gives a comprehensive look at the specific activities by the Teacher's Manual for each day's instruction for Unit 3, Week 1 of *Reading Street*. For each day, the table presents a selection of the lesson activities to describe the range of teaching suggestions in the *Reading Street* core basal program.

Table 4

Unit 3, Week 1: Skills and Strategies for Each Component

Unit Day	Oral language	Word work: phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, high-frequency words	Reading: comprehension, vocabulary, fluency	Language arts: writing, grammar, speaking, listening, viewing, research, and study skills
Day 1	Involve students in a shared read-aloud	Segment phonemes, vowel sound of y at the end of a word, give spelling pretest	Involve students in reading decodable reader (review high-frequency words, check comprehension, reread for fluency) discuss "how children change" to build background, and listening comprehension	Introduce steps of share writing, introduce action words
Day 2	Engage students in a shared read-aloud from Big Book	Substitute phonemes, introduce long vowels (CV), and dictation of sentences	Read decodable reader (same text as Day 1 and same skills as Day 1), introduce high-frequency words for main selection.	Review interactive writing (journal entry), practice action verbs, speaking and listening (follow directions)
Day 3	Include students in a shared read-aloud (same as Day 2)	Segment and blend phonemes, vowel sounds of y and long vowels (CV), practice spelling	Read the main selection, fluency (read with accuracy and appropriate rate, introduce vocabulary (antonyms)	Introduce conventions, Write with action words
Day 4	Display big book and guide students in a shared read-aloud	Segment and count phonemes, practice high-frequency words, review, VCCV (vowel, consonant, consonant, vowel) pattern words	Read paired selection and leveled readers, Fluency (read with accuracy and appropriate rate	Review writing across the curriculum (math story), review action words
Day 5	Involve students in a shared read-aloud (same as Day 4)	Review vowel sounds of y and long vowels (CV – consonant vowel), review high-frequency words, spelling test	Read leveled readers, monitor progress (students will read the sentences, read the story)	Develop conventions (identify capital letters and end marks), use action words, and alphabetical order

(*table continues*)

Day 1's emphasis on oral vocabulary takes the form of a shared reading activity from a big book of songs and poems, called *Sing with Me Big Book*, which is a supplement to the program. After the students sing the song, they do a phonemic awareness activity. They segment the word "my." The teacher models the sounds heard in "my": /m/ /ī/, then the students segment "my": /m/ /ī/. A list of words is provided for the students to practice phoneme segmentation. The phonics lesson focuses on the vowel sound of the letter "y" used at the end of a word, making the ē, for example, in "puppy," and the long ī, for example, in "fly." Again, a list of words is provided for student practice.

Day 2 includes a shared read-aloud from a big book, *Mr. George Baker,* with the purpose of building oral vocabulary. Phonemic awareness activity involves substituting phonemes with the teacher modeling the sounds heard in "he": /h/ /ē/, students then say the sounds /h/ /ē/. The teacher changes the letter e to i and says the word "hi." Then, she segments /h/ /ī/, while the students say the same sounds after her. Phonics instruction includes long vowels with the cv (consonant vowel) pattern; for example "hi," "my," and "me." The students read from a supplemental decodable reader to practice this skill. Students also practice high-frequency words that they will read in the main selection by reading a short passage that includes all the words in a paragraph written for that purpose. This page includes the high-frequency words the students need to know in order to read the main selection the next day.

Day 3 consists of shared reading activity (the same read-aloud as was used in Day 2). The teacher builds background with a discussion about how children change. A graphic organizer (t-chart) is used to compare how children change over time and how children stay the same. The students, with the teacher's support, read the selection of the week, *An Egg Is An Egg.*

Day 4 includes a shared read-aloud from the Scott Foresman *Read-aloud Anthology*, "Wait for Me, said Maggie McGee," and a paired selection from the basal (typically one to three pages long). *Nothing Fits*, the paired selection, is a realistic fiction story with a science theme related to changes, which is the unit theme.

Day 5 incorporates the shared read-aloud story from Day 4, "Wait for Me, said Maggie McGee," and a progress monitoring section, which is an assessment of phonics and high frequency words and a 1-minute sample of student's oral reading including fluency and comprehension.

Each day, the Teacher's Manual provides explicit lesson plans with which to teach each component as discussed above.

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill's Treasures

Figure 2 gives a broad outline of the specific components of the *Macmillan/McGraw-Hill' Treasures* Teacher's Manual.

A. Six units of instruction for five weeks, for a total of thirty weeks of instruction.
B. In addition to thirty weeks of lesson plans, Unit 1 provides an additional three weeks of reading readiness called, "Start Smart."
C. Each unit is built around a specific theme
D. Each unit contains the following sections:
    a. A page dedicated to research on a specific literacy topic
    b. National test alignment
    c. Differentiated learning
    d. Technology

e. Independent work stations

E. Within each week's lesson, four main components of general reading are presented:

a. oral language

b. word work

c. reading

d. language arts.

F. Additional resources are provided at the end of each unit:

a. Lesson plans for intervention

b. Classroom library trade book lesson plans

c. Theme bibliography

d. Word lists

Figure 2. Components of teacher's manual.

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill's *Treasures* (2007) (K-6) has a slightly different configuration than that found in Scott Foresman's *Reading Streets*. There are six units, with 5 weeks of lesson plans in each unit. Each unit is built around a specific theme. Unit 4, the mid-year unit, is titled *Theme: Nature Watch*. Prior to the 30 weeks of lesson plans, Unit 1 provides 3 weeks of a reading readiness review called "Smart Start." These lessons have shared reading, read-alouds, and oral language skills. The majority of the Smart Start lessons are presented as oral language development and listening comprehension.

One unit at a glance. Each week's lessons, with all the resource pages, run about 85 to 90 pages. Each unit is built around a specific theme. Each week of lessons is introduced with a

discussion of the following: a page dedicated to research and national test alignment, differentiated learning, technology, independent workstations, and additional resources at the back of each unit. Similar to *Reading Street,* each week of lessons in *Treasures* addresses the same four components of general reading instruction: oral language, word work, reading, and language arts.

At the beginning of each unit, a page is dedicated to Research: Why it Matters. This page gives a brief overview of related research and research-based best practices for one specific component of reading per unit: Unit 1--phonemic awareness; Unit 2--phonics; Unit 3--vocabulary; Unit 4--comprehension, and Unit 5--fluency.

Another page at the beginning of each unit is designated for a description of national test alignment with skills taught in the unit. The skills assessed in the unit are correlated with the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), TerraNova, the Second Edition (TerrNova/CAT6), Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS), and Stanford Achievement Test (SAT_10).

Resources for differentiated instruction include leveled readers, decodable readers, and ELL leveled readers with accompanying lesson plans describing how to use these readers. The leveled readers are called “approaching” (leveled text for students reading below grade level), “on level,” and “beyond” (leveled text for students reading above grade level). Literacy activities are provided on the inside back cover of each leveled text and in the ELL reader. Throughout the unit, suggestions for ELL instruction are given. This is true for Scott Foresman’s level of ELL instruction, as well.

The teacher can log on to www.Macmillanmh.com for online professional development, supplemental lessons, videos, opportunities to meet the author/illustrator, computer literacy

lessons, research and inquiry activities, oral language activities, vocabulary, and spelling activities. Contrasted with *Reading Streets* (Scott Foresman), the online technology support for *Treasures* does not include a database from which to download a leveled text or student edition text.

Treasures has a section at the beginning of each unit called Cross-Curricular Activities, which are independent workstations. All of the activities reinforce the week's skills. The stations include reading, word work, writing, and science/social studies.

At the end of each unit, additional lessons and resources are provided. These lessons plans are designed for intervention in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and study skills. Resources include classroom library trade book lessons, a theme bibliography, and word lists that include vocabulary words, spelling words, high-frequency words, decodable words, and story words for each selection that is included in each unit.

As mentioned earlier, Unit 4, the mid-year unit, is titled, *Theme: Nature Watch*. The Teacher's Manual is divided into four main components: oral language, word work, reading, and language arts. Oral language consists of oral vocabulary from shared read-alouds and phonemic awareness, which Scott Foresman included in word work. Word work contains phonics, spelling, vocabulary, and vocabulary words. Comprehension, fluency, and differentiated reading such as leveled readers and ELL leveled readers make up the component of reading. The language arts component contains grammar and writing.

The Teacher's Manual provides a theme project that incorporates research and inquiry and cross-curricular projects linking theme study to science and social studies. *Treasures* Teacher's Manual provides the teacher with whole group lesson plans, small group instruction, and independent workstations that reinforce the week's skills.

One week's lesson at a glance. The Unit 4, Week 1 sub-theme is "birds." Table 5 describes the skills and strategies used to teach the four components. Following the table, I discuss a selection of these activities from each day.

Table 5

Unit 4, Week 1: Skills and Strategies for Each Component

Unit Day	Oral language: oral vocabulary, listening comprehension, and phonemic awareness	Word study: phonics, spelling, high-frequency words, and vocabulary	Reading: comprehension and fluency	Language arts: grammar and writing
Day 1	Discuss focus question (different question each day), identify and generate rhyme /o/, oral vocabulary	Practice long /ō/ - o_e pattern, give spelling pretest, build vocabulary, and introduce high-frequency words	Read decodable reader, read a page from the basal (practice vocabulary words for main selection), practice comprehension (reread and inferences), fluency (word automaticity)	Introduce was and were, use picture prompt writing, model shared writing (persuasive writing)
Day 2	Discuss focus question, phoneme categorization, oral vocabulary (same as Day 1)	Review: phonics (same as Day 1), word sort, same high-frequency words as Day 1, same vocabulary words as Day 1	Read the main selection, comprehension (same as Day 1), Fluency (changing reading speed)	Practice grammar (same skill as Day 1), use daily writing prompt, model interactive writing (persuasive writing)
Day 3	Discuss focus question using a shared read-aloud, phoneme blending, oral vocabulary (same as Day 1)	Review: phonics (same as Day 1 and 2), same spelling word sort as Day 2, same high-frequency words as Day 1 and 2, vocabulary strategy (dictionary/multiple meaning	Reread main selection, main idea and details,	Review grammar (same skill as Day 1), capitalize proper nouns, respond to read-aloud, guided persuasive writing (prewrite and draft)

Unit Day	Oral language: oral vocabulary, listening comprehension, and phonemic awareness	Word study: phonics, spelling, high-frequency words, and vocabulary	Reading: comprehension and fluency	Language arts: grammar and writing
Day 4	Discuss focus question, involve students in a shared read-aloud, oral vocabulary (same as Day 1), phoneme categorization	Introduce inflectional ending (er, est), review high-frequency words (same as Day 1), vocabulary (same as Day 1)	Read paired selection, literary element (repetition), echo – read	Review grammar (same skill as Day 1), use daily writing prompt, guided persuasive writing (revise and edit)
Day 5	Discuss focus question, develop oral vocabulary (same as Day 1), phoneme blending – /ō/	Review: long /ō/ (o_e) pattern, spelling test, high-frequency words (same as Day 1), vocabulary (same as Day 1)	Read main selection, reread and inferences, echo-read	Review grammar (same skill as Day 1), use daily writing prompt, guided persuasive writing (publish and present)

Day 1 begins oral language instruction for the week with the focus question, "Pretend you are a bird. What would it be like?" The same oral vocabulary words are presented each day using a shared read-aloud. Oral vocabulary (group and behavior) is presented in a discussion of birds as a group of animals and of bird behaviors that the students have observed. The phonics lesson introduces the /ō/ sound using the o_e pattern. The teacher uses place cards with each card representing a different letter, to teach the lesson. The teacher places a letter card for each letter (n – o – t – e) in front of the students, then guides the students to make a sound for each letter, reminding them that the letter "o" in this word says /ō/, because, when you see the o-e pattern, the sound is /ō/. More words are provided for guided practice. In the reading component, students read a decodable reader and a two page passage in the student textbook; practicing the skills of re-reading, making inferences, and word automaticity. The last component on Day 1 is

language arts. It consists of a grammar lesson using “was” and “were” and writing. This occurs through using a picture prompt and a persuasive shared writing activity.

Day 2 uses the same instruction for oral language and oral vocabulary (group and behavior) as was used on Day 1; however, a different question is asked. Phonics instruction is the same as on Day 1, using a spelling word sort of the word endings –oke, -ose, and –ote, with the same high-frequency and vocabulary words as on Day 1. The students read the main selection, *Pelican Was Hungry,* from their basal textbook. The Teacher’s Manual directs teachers to use the main selection to develop the comprehension strategy of re-read, and the comprehension skill of making inferences. Macmillan/McGraw Hill labels comprehension strategy and skill instruction as developing comprehension whereas Scott Foresman labels these as guiding comprehension. Grammar skills and the interactive writing topic are the same as on Day 1.

Day 3 consists of oral language instruction via an interactive read-aloud focusing on listening comprehension and developing oral vocabulary (group and behavior). Phonemic awareness concentrates on phoneme blending showing students how to orally blend phonemes. The teacher, for example, models the sounds in “cone”: /c/ /ō/ /n/. Then the teacher blends the three sounds: /kōōōnnn/. Students then say the word with her. Additional words are given for guided practice. This process is different from Scott Foresman, *Reading Street,* in that *Reading Street* does not elongate the three sounds such as /kōōōnnn/, but blends them more precisely like /k/ /ō/ /n/. Phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and grammar are the same skills as were found in Day 2. The main story from the student textbook is re-read.

Day 4 uses another interactive read-aloud from *The Read-Aloud Anthology* for oral language development, again focusing on listening comprehension using the same oral vocabulary words (group and behavior). Phonics instruction includes the structural analysis of /ō/

final e word patterns and inflectional endings –er and –est. A one page poem called "Seagull" is paired with the basal story. As in *Reading Street,* this is called "paired selection" and is found in the student textbook. With the teacher's guidance, the students read and discuss the literary element, repetition, and make inferences to gain meaning from the poem.

Day 5 finds a unique approach in *Treasures* because it is designed for review and assessment of phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, and writing. The last page of the Day 5 portion of the unit provides the teacher with weekly reading assessments, fluency assessments, and alternative assessments (ELL practice and assessments, and leveled reader assessments).

Harcourt School Publishers' Storytown

Figure 3 gives a broad outline of the specific components of the *Harcourt School Publishers' Storytown* Teacher's Manual.

A. Five themes of instruction for six weeks, for a total of thirty weeks of instruction.
B. Each unit is built around a specific content focus
C. Each unit contains the following sections:
    a. Spreadsheet called "Theme at a Glance"
    b. "Introducing the Book"
    c. Technology
    d. Differentiated learning
    e. Use of literacy centers
D. Within each week's lesson, four main components of general reading are presented:

a. daily language

b. word work

c. skills and strategies

d. language arts.

E. Additional resources are provided at the end of each unit:

a. Lesson plans for small group instruction

b. Assessments

c. Word lists

d. Correlations

Figure 3. Components of teacher's manual.

Storytown (2009) is Harcourt School Publisher's K-6 core basal reading program. The first grade program has five themes of instruction, each of which consists of 6 weeks of instruction, for a total of 30 weeks of instruction. Similarly to the 5- or 6-week units in *Treasures* and *Reading Street*, each *Storytown* theme is built around a specific content focus. Theme 4, for instance, is *Wild and Wonderful.*

Each week's lesson focuses on four components of general reading instruction, using a get-started story, main selection, and a paired selection, all of which are included in the student textbook. Each unit is introduced with a spreadsheet of a theme at a glance, a discussion introducing the student textbook, technology, and differentiated learning, use of literacy centers, and additional resources at the end of each unit: lessons on small group instruction, assessments, resources, and correlations.

One theme at a glance. Each week's lesson, with all the resource pages, is approximately 90-95 pages. The introduction to the week's work begins with a laminated chart called "Theme at a Glance." The chart lists all of the lessons, the name of the get-started story, main selection, paired selection, and the skills and strategies that will be taught in specific categories such as phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, high-frequency words, focus comprehension skill, focus comprehension strategy, fluency, robust vocabulary, grammar, and writing. At the bottom of each page in each week's lessons, the English Language Arts Alabama Course of Study Standards and Objectives are provided, which are not found in either *Reading Street* or *Treasures.*

The next section in the Teacher's Manual is labeled "Introducing the Book," which is a two-page discussion on how the student textbooks are organized, which provides an introduction of specific strategies. The Teacher's Manual gives instructions for directing students to find particular features in their textbook that helps the students navigate through the textbook and understand the main reading selections. The features include contents, comprehension strategies, theme overview, lesson overview, get started stories, words to know, genre study, focus strategy, paired selection, connections, reading-writing connections, and glossary. In each theme, specific strategies are presented such as think-alouds, retelling, and summarizing. The teacher explains that these strategies will help the students think about ways in which they can better understand what they read. Each theme is divided into fourths. The page is titled "Comprehension Strategies" with each section labeled one of the following labels: Before You Read, While You Read, Set a Purpose, and After You Read. Each section has a brief discussion of the comprehension strategy.

Similarly to Scott Foresman, technology is integrated through an online database of the student e-books, which consists of the main selection of the week, intervention readers, and leveled readers at www.harcourtschool.com/storytown. Each story can be downloaded at the school or at the student's home. Available for the teacher at the same website is "Online TE (teacher's edition) & Planning Resources," which give access to electronic versions of the weekly lesson plans. Professional development in the form of videos for podcasting and instructional strategies such as think-alouds are provided through the website. Transparencies for electronic projection are provided as an instructional tool. An online assessment is provided with weekly lesson tests, a student profile system to track student growth, and prescriptions for re-teaching.

A resource page for differentiated and small group instruction includes lesson plans for three leveled texts: below level, on-level, and advanced. This resource page includes the name of the ELL leveled text with notes about ELL instruction dispersed throughout each theme. This is comparable to what is found in the Scott Foresman and Macmillan basals.

The Teacher's Manual provides two pages of ideas on how to set up and use literacy centers. The centers are divided into the areas of listening/speaking, reading, writing, word work, writing, and letters and sounds. The Teacher's Manual provides objectives and a copy of a "Literacy Center Kit" cards.

There are four sections at the end of each theme that are labeled small-group instruction, assessment, resources, and correlations. The section labeled small-group instruction provides lesson plans for students below, on, or above grade level for all areas of instruction. They are divided into a specific week's worth of lessons. Theme 4, for example, is divided into small-group instructional lesson plans for Lessons 13 through 18.

The assessment section provides the teacher with research about what good assessment is and how to use it. It lists the curriculum-based assessments built into *Storytown:* benchmark assessments, theme tests, and weekly lesson tests (which are all available on-line). This section gives the teacher an idea of how to monitor progress on a daily basis and provides a list of weekly tests by lessons.

Discussion and proper formation of handwriting are found in the section called Resources, along with additional readings for teachers, introducing a study skill, professional bibliography, and a scope and sequence chart. Theme 4's skill, for example, was introducing the glossary. Placed in this section is a word list that includes the words that appear in each specific theme, which is similar to Macmillan/McGraw-Hill. The words that appear in the Get-Started stories and decodable books for each specific theme are listed as well. Similarly to Scott Foresman, a cumulative word list for Themes 1 through 4 of the main section stories, get-started stories, and decodable books also is included.

The last section is called Correlations, and lists the Alabama English Language Arts Content Standards. This correlation shows where the Alabama English Language Arts Content Standards are developed in the teacher's edition for Grade 1 in reading, literature, writing and language, research and inquiry, and oral and visual communication.

The four general components of each lesson are daily language, word work, skills and strategies, and language arts. Daily language consists of oral language, high-frequency words, shared reading, and phonemic awareness. Daily language generally has a different discussion question each day that deals with the overall theme. For Theme 4, Week 1, Day 1 the specific question is "What does a firefly look like? What does it do?" The teacher and students brainstorm and discuss the big idea, which is information about fireflies. Then the teacher

follows with a read-aloud to answer the questions. Word work includes phonics, spelling, and high-frequency words. Skills and strategies include reading, fluency, comprehension, and robust vocabulary. Language arts includes grammar and writing. All of the skills and strategies of daily language, word work, and language arts are presented in every week's lessons.

One week's lesson at a glance. Table 6 is a thorough look at the specific activities that the teacher's manual suggests for each day's instruction for Theme 4, Week 1. Following Table 6, I discuss a selection of the lesson activities for each day as a means of describing the range of teaching suggestions in the core basal program.

Table 6

Theme 4, Week 1: Skills and Strategies for Each Component

Unit Day	Daily language: oral language, high-frequency words, shared reading, phonemic awareness	Word work: phonics, spelling, and high-frequency words	Skills and strategies: reading, fluency, comprehension, build robust vocabulary	Language arts: grammar and writing
Day 1	Discuss question of the day, shared read-aloud, and phoneme deletion	Introduce digraphs (/ch/, , spelling, high-frequency words	Read get started story, intonation, shared read-aloud to preview sequencing, introduce robust vocabulary	Introduce names and days of months, daily proofreading, modeled writing: sequence story
Day 2	Discuss question of the day, shared read-aloud, phoneme deletion	Review same diagraphs, spelling, introduce words to know in main selection	Read main selection, introduce sequencing and use of graphic organizers, intonation, retelling, build robust vocabulary (same words as Day 1)	Same grammar skill and writing skills as Day 1

(*table continues*)

Unit Day	Daily language: oral language, high-frequency words, shared reading, phonemic awareness	Word work: phonics, spelling, and high-frequency words	Skills and strategies: reading, fluency, comprehension, build robust vocabulary	Language arts: grammar and writing
Day 3	Discuss question of the day, shared read-aloud (same as Day 2), phoneme deletion	Review digraph /ch/ and /sh/, spelling, high-frequency words (same as Day 1)	Read the main selection and paired selection, review sequencing, build robust vocabulary	Same grammar skill and writing skills as Day 1
Day 4	Discuss question of the day, shared read-aloud, phoneme deletion	Introduce inflection: -es, review spelling words, high-frequency words (same as Day 1)	Read main selection for fluency, review sequence, build robust vocabulary (same as Day 3)	Same grammar and writing skills as Day 1
Day 5	Discuss question of the day, shared read-aloud (same as Day 4), phoneme deletion	Review inflection (-es), spelling test, high-frequency words (same as Day 1)	Read main selection for fluency, review sequence, build robust vocabulary (review all of the words from Day 1 – 4)	Same grammar and writing skills as Day 1

Day 1's emphasis on oral language takes the form of a question of the day, for example; "What does a firefly look like? What does it do?" The teacher discusses with the students what they know about fireflies. Then the teacher reads a shared read-aloud from a big book, called *Fireflies, Fireflies, Light My Way*, which is a supplement to the program. After the shared read-aloud, the students work on phonemic awareness. They delete initial phonemes from words. The teacher says, "'Cat' without the /k/ is 'at.'" The teacher says a list of words and the students delete the beginning sound. A list of words is provided to practice phoneme deletion. The phonics lesson focuses on word blending using /ch/ ch, tch. The teacher demonstrates each step with letter cards and a pocket chart. The teacher puts the letters c, h, o, p in the pocket chart and

blends the letters to make the word "chop." Again, a list of words is provided for student practice. The students read the get-started story, *Rich Gets Big,* from the student edition while the teacher monitors comprehension skills such as sequencing, making inferences, and drawing conclusions. The students check their comprehension by re-telling. Fluency is monitored by repeated reading of *Rich Gets Big* as a partner-read. Building robust vocabulary is a listening/speaking skill found in the skills and strategies component using words from either the daily read-aloud or words from the main selection. Specific words from Day 1 and Day 2's read-aloud typically are used to build robust vocabulary on Day 1 and 2. On Day 3 and Day 4, specific words are found in the main selection. On Day 5, the teacher reviews the robust vocabulary.

Day 2 includes a shared read-aloud from a *Big Book of Rhymes and Poems* called *The Inchworm* with the purpose of building oral language. Students also practice high-frequency words that they will read in the main selection by reading a short passage that includes all of the words in a paragraph written for that purpose. Students read the main selection, *A Butterfly Grows*, while the teacher monitors comprehension skills and strategies such as use of graphic organizers, sequencing, compare and contrast, details, and making inferences.

Day 3 consists of a shared reading activity and discussion of the question of the day using the same read-aloud as used on Day 2. The students read the main selection for fluency and also read the paired selection, *Caterpillars*, to practice monitoring comprehension. Students continue to review names of days and months in grammar and write a sequence story.

Day 4 includes a shared read-aloud from *Big Book of Rhymes and Poems* called *Fuzzy Wuzzy, Creepy Crawly,* with a discussion of the question of the day. Students read the main

selection to practice fluency and appropriate intonation. Students continue to review the same skills in the other general components of reading.

Day 5 incorporates the shared read-aloud poem from Day 4 as a means of discussing the question of the day. Students continue to review the same phonemic awareness, phonics, high frequency words, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills as were mentioned in Days 1-4. The main selection, *A Butterfly Grows*, is performed as Reader's Theater. The Teacher's Manual provides explicit lesson plans for each day to teach each component as discussed above.

McGraw/Hill: SRA's Imagine It

Figure 4 gives a broad outline of the specific components of the *McGraw/Hill: SRA's Imagine It* Teacher's Manual.

A. Ten units of instruction for three weeks, for a total of thirty weeks of instruction.
B. Unit 1 provides reading readiness called "Getting Smart"
C. Each unit is built around a specific theme
D. Each unit contains the following sections:
    a. Differentiated learning
    b. Inquiry investigation
    c. Concept/question board
    d. technology
E. Within each week's lesson, three main components of general reading are presented:
    a. Part 1: Preparing to read

b. Part 2: Reading and responding

c. Part 3: Language Arts

d. Instructional and management routine

Figure 4. Components of teacher's manual.

Imagine It (2008) (K-6) is designed differently than is Scott Foresman's *Reading Street*, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill's *Treasures*, and Harcourt's *Storytown* in regard to the level of direct instruction and routines (see Appendix D) included for the teacher to follow. There are 10 units, with 3 weeks of lesson plans in each unit. Prior to the 30 weeks of lesson plans, Unit 1 provides 10 days of a reading readiness review called "Getting Started," which is similar to *Treasures*. These lessons also introduce and review key management routines of the program such as listening and coming to the circle. These lessons have daily warm-ups, classroom routines (specific routines set up in "Getting Started" and referred to in each lesson), phonemic awareness, letter recognition, reviewing sounds and letters, dictation, oral language using a read-aloud, environmental print, writing, and workshop. The majority of the Getting Started lessons are presented as oral language development and listening comprehension.

One unit at a glance. Each week's lessons, with all the resource pages, run about 100 to 105 pages. Each unit in *SRA Imagine It* is organized around a central theme: for instance, Unit 6 is called North, South, East, West. Each unit is made up of a number of sections: differentiated learning, inquiry investigation, concept/question board, technology, and three general reading components.

Each unit begins with an inquiry investigation in Lesson 1 that develops across the unit. At the end of each unit, students present the results of their investigation through a variety of formats. Inquiry is designed to deepen students' comprehension, and to help them learn to organize information in order to present it to their classmates and to collaborate with other students.

Every unit has a Concept/Question Board, a bulletin board where students post newspaper clippings, magazine articles, information taken from the internet, photographs, and other items about the theme topic that might be of interest to or helpful to their classmates. The board has a place set up where students can ask questions that arise from their inquiry. The questions can be written on a sheet of paper attached to the board or can be written on sticky notes. The questions then become a catalyst for further investigation. The board changes as the themes change. For example, for Unit 6, the teacher will display postcards that show famous places, articles about travel, and road maps, travel magazines, and brochures. Students can use these items in their assignments and presentations. The teacher uses the Concept/Question Board as a springboard for the students' inquiry question: "How do we use maps and globes?" Students research the theme North, South, East, and West using specific inquiry steps laid out in the lessons in the Teacher's Manual.

Imagine It provides electronic versions of the teacher's and students' editions, on-line assessments, an electronic lesson planner, white-board tools, e-Presentations, and e-Skills. The electronic lesson planner allows the teacher to pace lessons for the entire year and provides instructional tools for each lesson. The interactive White Board Tools allow the teacher to present lessons in a dynamic way and actively engage students. E-Presentation has tools for

teachers such as animated sound/spelling cards and e-Phonics. E-Skills include activities like e-Phonics, e-Games, e-Spelling, e-Vocabulary, and e-Writing to build student skills.

All lessons are divided into three parts, which are comparable to the four general reading components in the other three programs. Part 1 includes "preparing to read," which focuses on learning most common rules for sound/spelling; that is, phonetic spelling, and applying the rules to decode words. Part 2 includes "reading and responding, which "addresses vocabulary, comprehension, and inquiry. Part 3 includes "language arts," which contains the writing process, penmanship, grammar usage and mechanics, listening, speaking, and viewing.

Instructional and management routines are incorporated into each part of the lessons. *SRA Imagine It* has a "workshop," which is its version of small-group instruction. The workshop develops over time as students understand the routines and can work independently. During workshop, the teacher works with a small group of students in rotation while the others practice and review skills, develop listening skills, work on fluency, read a wide range of materials, write, and engage in inquiry. Workshop is used for differentiating instruction on four levels: approaching level, on level, English learner, and above level.

One week's lesson at a glance. Table 7 is a thorough look at the specific activities that the Teacher's Manual suggests for each day's instruction for Unit 6, Week 1. Following Table 7, for each day, I discuss a selection of the lesson activities in some depth to describe the range of teaching suggestions in the core basal program and note the differences between this program and the other three discussed above. The lessons are delivered using a direct instruction approach.

Table 7

Unit 6, Week 1: Skills and Strategies for Each Component

Unit Day	Preparing to read: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, spelling	Reading and responding: comprehension, vocabulary	Language arts: writing, penmanship, grammar, listening/speaking/viewing
Day 1	Introduce sound/spelling /ō/ spelled oa and ow, phonemic awareness (listening for /ō/), phonics (blending sounds), reading a decodable book	Introduce shared read-aloud, discuss the read-aloud, concept/question board	Begin to model the writing process (prewriting) and penmanship
Day 2	review /ō/ spelled oa and ow	Build background, build vocabulary, read the main selection from a big book, comprehension strategy (predicting), discuss the main selection, print and book awareness	Model prewriting stage, model how to form letters correctly (penmanship), begin discussion on capitalization and punctuation
Day 3	Introduce sound-spelling (/ū/ spelled _ew and _ue), listening for /ū/ (phonemic awareness), blend /ū/ -ew and _ue, fluency (read decodable book)	Review vocabulary, comprehension (compare and contrast), reading with a writers eye (patterned repetition), fine art (discussing artist of big book), social studies connection (map skills)	Model writing instruction (drafting), review capitalization and punctuation
Day 4	Review /ū/ spelled _ew and _ue	Build background, preview and prepare, build vocabulary, read a poem, comprehension strategies (visualizing and clarifying), elements of poetry, discuss the poem	Model writing instruction (revising), involve students in listening/speaking/viewing
Day 5	Review /ō/ spelled _oa and _ow, and /ū/ spelled _ew and _ue, fluency/reading a decodable book	Discuss the inquiry process, model how to use the inquiry process	Model writing instructions (editing and publishing), review penmanship, review capitalization and punctuation

Day 1, Part I of the each day's lesson begins with a daily warm-up. Every day, the teacher writes a morning message on the board, reads the message aloud to the students, and discusses it with them. Next the teacher presents daily language review; for example, how to form plural nouns that end with the consonant "y" as in "puppy" to "puppies."

The teacher introduces sound/spelling card #30, the long "o" sound: /ō/. Routine 1, the first of 18 explicit routines that are to be followed exactly, introduces the different spellings that create the sound. The sound/spelling card has a capital O and a lowercase o and the letters o, _ow, o_e, oa_, which represent all the sounds of /ō/. The teacher points to the long o card and asks students to tell what they already know about the card. Then the teacher points to the oa_ and the _ow and explains that these are the other ways to spell the /ō/ sound, even if the students already recognize these spellings. The students use their index fingers to write the "new" spellings in the air, on their palms, and on a surface in front of them as they say the sound.

The phonemic awareness activity is listening for the /ō/ sound. The teacher reads aloud from a group of words provided in the Teacher's Manual, while the students listen, signal thumbs-up, and say the sound when they hear a word with /ō/.

The phonics lesson uses three routines: Routine 2, sound by sound blending, Routine 3, whole word blending, and Routine 4, blending sentences, or reading.

Because this program does not provide students with a reader until the end of Unit 6, decodable books provide the passages for the phonics skills instruction. For example, "fluency/reading a decodable book" uses Routine 9 to have students read and respond to *Crow and Goat.*

Part 2 of Day 1's lesson begins with a shared read-aloud, *The Way to Captain Yankee's.* The read-aloud activates students' prior knowledge about journeys and maps, develops

theme-related vocabulary, and helps students make predictions about the unit. The teacher uses this time to set unit reading goals; for example, "understand concepts related to maps, print sentence boundaries, and master formation of particular letters." The goals include introduction to the Concept/Question Board.

Part three of Day 1's lesson begins with a modeled lesson on how to write instructions for getting from one place to another using the writing process. The teacher and students brainstorm about how to get from one place to another place in the school, for instance library, cafeteria, gym, and principal's office. The teacher models how to form lower case u, m, v, w, k, and z correctly.

Day 2 follows the same pattern Day 1 for Part I. For Part 2, another shared read-aloud using Routine 12 (see Appendix D) helps activate students' prior knowledge about maps, teaches table of contents, and sets a purpose for reading, among other skills. Routine 12 is called "Reading the Selection." It provides explicit instructional plans before, during, and after reading. The "before reading" plan is to build background by activating prior knowledge, browse the selection and set the purpose for reading, and to develop understanding of key selection vocabulary. "During reading" provides suggestions of how to model and use strategies (early in the year) then have students later in the year use strategies independently. The "after reading" suggests having students make connections, discuss new information learned from the selection, and respond to the selection through writing (for a full explanation of Routine 12, see Appendix D). The students do not actually read on Day 2.

Part 3 uses a sequence map on Day 2 as a pre-writing graphic organizing tool for writing clear instructions. Penmanship is the same as on Day 1. For grammar, usage, and mechanics, the teacher discusses the names of cities, states, and countries (proper nouns) with the students.

Day 3's daily warm-up uses a different question than was used previously, but daily language review is the same as on Day 1. Lessons for phonics, phonemic awareness, and sound/spelling use Routine 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11 (see Appendix D) to introduce /ū/ spelled _ew and _ue. The students read the decodable book, *Rescue that Cat!,* for fluency. The teacher uses a sequence map to draft sentences for writing instructions. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are the same as on Day 2.

Day 4 uses another different question for daily warm-up. The same routines and skills are used to teach long u, /ū/. The teacher reads a poem from a big book to build vocabulary, discuss elements of poetry, and teach comprehension strategies, such as visualizing and clarifying. Students, again, only listen to text. The teacher models how to revise and rearrange sentences to clarify.

Day 5 uses a fifth question for daily warm-up. Lesson plans for phonics include a review of /ō/ and /ū/, using the same routines. The students read a decodable reader, *Eat at Joan's*, for fluency. The teacher models how to edit, publish, and share the revised instructions. Penmanship is the same as on Days 1 and 2. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are the same as Days 2 and 3.

Conclusion

The four core basal reading programs described above share several common components and methodologies. Each has a common structure used throughout the text represented by the four general reading components of Scott Foresman, Macmillan, and Harcourt, and the three Parts of SRA structure the daily lessons. All of the programs use decodable text for phonics and fluency practice and read-alouds to develop oral language. In the

next section, I discuss how often each program mentions comprehension strategy instruction in story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers in weekly lessons.

Frequency of Comprehension Strategy Types in Core Basal Programs

Each of the core basal programs used comprehension strategies throughout their lessons. This study looked at how the four publishing companies presented three comprehension instructional strategies recommended by the National Reading Panel Report (2000): story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers. Story structure refers to the organizational structure of a story. A story is an "imaginative tale shorter than a novel but with characters, plot, and a setting as in a short story" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, pp. 243-244), and its structure includes a beginning, middle, and end (Morrow, 1983). A summary is a "brief statement that contains the essential ideas of a selection" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 247). A graphic organizer is a "diagram or pictorial device that displays relationships" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 101). These three comprehension strategies were included in all of the core basal reading programs, but there were differences in the duration and frequency of use among them.

Some of the instructional strategies were spread evenly throughout the 4- to 6-week units, while others were uneven, clustering strategy instruction in particular weeks. The use of graphic organizers was the most consistently used in instructional strategy in the core basal reading programs, while story structure and summarizing were more erratic in their use.. Table 8 gives an overview of the total number of times the strategy was mentioned in the teacher's manuals.

Table 8

Frequency of Comprehension Strategy Use in All Units of First Grade Core Basal Reading Programs

Core basal program	Story structure	Summarizing	Use of graphic organizers
Scott Foresman	113	69	102
Macmillan/McGraw-Hill	70	74	69
Harcourt	127	64	91
SRA	64	117	75

Note that story structure in Scott Foresman and Harcourt was presented more frequently than the other two core basal reading programs. The other two publishers did not include story structure more consistently in their lessons, although research shows that story structure is important to children's ability to understand a narrative (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Morrow, 1983; Stein & Glenn, 1979). Summarizing is taught most often in the SRA program, even though there is little research that supports this strategy in early primary grades. The frequency of use of graphic organizers is consistent throughout the four core basal reading programs, which reflects its regular use throughout the units.

The frequency table (Table 9) represents not only direct instruction of the overall strategies, but also includes skills that make up each strategy. For example, recognizing plot is a skill that is necessary to understanding story structure. Plot was presented 32 times in the Scott Foresman core basal reading program, but it is counted as story structure strategy instruction in the data collection because, as mentioned above, plot is included as part of story structure. In the sections below, a more fine-grained analysis brings out these distinctions.

The Treatment of Story Structure Used As a Comprehension Strategy Instruction in Four Core Basal Reading Programs

Scott Foresman: Reading Street. In the comprehension section of the lessons in which story structure was the focus strategy, several skills were highlighted. These skills included students' ability to recognize the important elements of a story: what happens (plot), where and when it takes place (setting), who the story is about (character), and the big idea of the story (theme).

The first lesson occurs in Unit 1. The teacher's manual (p. 98g) suggests the teacher introduce the strategy by explaining that knowing the important parts of a story--the characters, the setting, and what happens in a story--can help students understand and remember the story. The teacher should then model a think-aloud about the use of story structure: "When I read a story, I ask myself who the story is about, where and when it takes place, and what happens." In a subsequent lesson, the Unit 3 teacher's manual (p. 40g), suggests that the teacher review the structure of a story: every story has a beginning, middle, and an end. The teacher should next model a think-aloud recognizing plot: "As you read, ask yourself, "What was the first thing that happened? What happened in the middle? What happened at the end of the story?" Unit 5's teacher's manual guides the teacher toward modeling story structure by explaining that good readers think about important parts of the story, the characters, the setting, and the plot, to help them understand what they read. The teacher is instructed to model the think-aloud by saying "I know that fiction stories have three parts: a beginning, a middle, and an end. As I read each part, I ask myself what happens, who the characters are, and where the events take place" (p. 14g).

While there were 113 presentations of story structure overall, 2 of those were specifically about what the strategy was and how to employ it, and these were placed at the very beginning of the program and at the end. The other 111 presentations were teaching the skills mentioned

above. Table 9 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the specific story structure instructional skills presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 9

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Story Structure Strategy Instruction in the Scott Foresman Core Basal Reading Program (N = 111)

Skill	Number of times presented	%
Plot	32	29
Character	48	43
Setting	19	17
Theme	12	11

The core basal reading program presented the skills in a particular order. Three of the four skills were introduced in the first unit. Of these, recognizing character was the first skill presented and was found in lesson 1. The other skills were presented subsequently: plot in lesson 2 and setting in lesson 3. Theme was presented only in Units 3, 4, and 5. The lesson scripts, which included a narrative as the main selection, required the teacher to ask students about character in every case. This was true for the other skills of story structure strategy instruction as well.

Scott Foresman presented the use of story structure in each unit. Some units presented the use of story structure more times than other units. Table 10 shows the breakdown of story structure strategy instruction by unit.

Table 10

Breakdown of Structure Strategy Instruction by Unit

Scott Foresman: Story Structure	Number of times presented
Unit 1	17
Unit 2	4
Unit 3	24
Unit 4	37
Unit 5	31

Story structure was presented more times at the end of the 30-week period of lesson plans in Units 3, 4, and 5 while Unit 1 presented the use of story structure strategy only 17 times. This is in contradiction to the research, which shows that even kindergarten students benefit from strategy instruction in story structure (Morrow, 1983), implying that the story structure instruction should be consistent throughout the units and lessons. The use of story structure often is presented in narrative text, which explains the strategy being presented more often in the last three units. Four of the six main selections in the unit were narrative fiction, while two main selections were expository nonfiction. As discussed in chapter 2 and chapter 3, the use of story structure strategy is not presented in expository text.

The use of story structure strategy in Unit 2 was presented even less frequently than in Unit 1, only 4 times. Three of the five main selections were expository nonfiction, while the other three main selections were narrative fiction. This would account for the fewer times in which the use of story structure strategy was presented, because more expository nonfiction main selections were presented in Unit 2. The story structure strategies presented in Unit 2 were plot, character, and setting. In Units 3, 4, and 5, all four skills were presented: plot, character, setting, and theme.

As discussed earlier, the use of story structure is found only in narrative fiction, and the majority of main selections in Units 3 through 5 were narrative fiction, which accounts for the greater frequency of story structure lessons in those Units. In Units 3 and 4, five of six main selections were narrative fiction, while in Unit 5 half of them were narrative fiction. The others were expository fiction and biography.

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, Treasures. In Unit 1 of the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill teacher's manual (p. 83a), the teacher introduced the story structure strategy by explaining that story structure is how the author organizes information. Words very similar to those in Scott Foresman are used:

> A story has many parts, a beginning, middle, and an ending. In the beginning, readers learn who the characters are and where the story takes place. In the middle, things happen to the characters. At the end, the characters may be different than they were at the beginning because of what happened in the story. (p. 83a)

The teacher's manual gives further instructions to the teacher regarding explaining to the students that "the people or animals in the story are the characters and the setting of the story is where the story takes place. The setting can be shown with words and pictures. "This week we will pay special attention to the characters and setting" (p. 83a).

The teacher's manual then provides a think-aloud for the teacher. According to Wilhelm (2001), the purpose of a think-aloud is to slow down the reading process and let students get a good look at how skilled readers construct meaning from a text. The teacher thinks aloud:

> The story says Percy lived in a house. All of the events in the story take place in different parts of Percy's house. Even when he is dreaming, Percy is in his bed, in his own house. This is the setting of the story. At the beginning, Percy lived in the house that was all his own. Then Toto arrived. Toto tagged along everywhere Percy went. This made him upset and grouchy. I wonder if Percy will still be upset with Toto by the end. I'll keep reading to find out. (p. 83a)

The teacher's manual guides the teacher to encourage the students to talk about what happened at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of this story, and about the story's characters and setting.

In Unit 3, the teacher's manual (p. 13g) guides the teacher to review with the students focusing on the idea that stories are organized in a certain way, a nearly exact repetition of the explanation found in Unit 1 in the teacher's manual: they have a beginning, middle, and an end. The teacher's manual states that good readers figure out the three parts of a story to help them understand it better. The teacher is directed to remind the students, "Let's pay attention to the beginning, middle, and end of the story" (p. 13g). The teacher models a think-aloud analyzing story structure: "I know this story is called *Kate's Game.* The writer begins the story showing us an elephant with a ball. That tells me about one of the characters. I read that Kate likes to make up games" (p. 13g). After the students have read four pages of the main selection, the teacher models another think-aloud:

> I think the elephant is Kate. I want to think about how the parts of the story fit together. Let's see. In the beginning of the story, Kate was playing with a ball. Then Tom and Jake came to play a game with her. I thought the story was going to be about playing a game. Now in the middle of the story, what is happening? (p. 13g)

The Unit 3 lesson continues to guide the teacher with similar detailed instructions for analyzing story structure through a think-aloud, with the goal of developing student comprehension and guiding reading of this main selection.

Unit 4's teacher's manual (p. 113j) guides the teacher in reminding the students that there are three parts to a story. These three parts are called the plot: the beginning, the middle, and the end. There usually is a problem in a story and the problem often is solved in the story. The teacher is guided to say, "Today we are going to read about a rabbit and some other animals. Pay attention to what happens at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the story" (p. 113j).

After the students read two pages of the main selection, the teacher's manual continues to guide the teacher to develop comprehension through plot analysis by asking the following questions, "Where is Little Rabbit?" "What is he doing?" What is he thinking?" (p. 113j). Specific teacher-modeled think-alouds and guiding questions analyzing and developing comprehension are provided for the teacher throughout Units 1 through 6.

While there were 70 presentations of story structure as a strategy overall, 22 of those were specifically labeled and presented as story structure, and the majority of those were placed at the beginning of the program. This is different from the Scott Foresman program, because Scott Foresman specifically labeled and presented the use of story structure strategy two times, once at the beginning of the 30 weeks of lessons and once at the end. Scott Foresman, otherwise, taught specific skills: recognizing plot, character, setting, and theme. The other 48 presentations in Macmillan/McGraw-Hill were teaching the skills of recognizing character, setting, plot, and problem and solution.

Table 11 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the specific story structure instructional strategy and skills presented in the core basal reading program. Macmillan/ McGraw-Hill combined two of the skills, character and setting, to be presented together, unlike Scott Foresman, which presented character and setting as two different skills. A unique skill was presented in Macmillan/McGraw-Hill: problem and solution. This skill was not presented in Scott Foresman; however, theme was presented in Scott Foresman, but not in Macmillan/ McGraw-Hill.

Table 11

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Story Structure Strategy Instruction in the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, Treasures Core Basal Reading Program (N = 70)

Skill	Number of times presented	%
Story Structure	22	32
Character and Settings	29	41
Plot	10	14
Problem/Solution	9	13

The Macmillan/McGraw-Hill core basal reading program presented the skills in a particular order. In Lesson 1, Unit 1, recognizing components of story structures was the first skill presented. In the next lesson, character and setting were introduced. Plot and problem and solution were not presented until Units 4, 5, and 6. The lesson scripts, including a narrative as the main selection, required the teacher to ask students about character, setting, plot, and problem and solution in every case.

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill presented the use of story structure in each unit except Unit 6. Some units presented the use of story structure more times than other units. Table 12 shows the breakdown of story structure strategy instruction by unit.

Table 12

Breakdown of Structure Strategy Instruction by Unit

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill: Story Structure	Number of times presented
Unit 1	30
Unit 2	1
Unit 3	16
Unit 4	10
Unit 5	13
Unit 6	0

Story structure strategy was presented more frequently at the beginning of the 30-week period of lesson plans. This is different from Scott Foresman, which presented story structure strategy more times at the end of the 30-week period of lesson plans. Unit 1 presented the use of story structure strategy 30 times. Three of the five main selections were narrative fiction including fantasy, rhyming story, and realistic fiction. The other two main selections were expository nonfiction, which included a nonfiction article and expository nonfiction. In contrast to Unit 1, the use of story structure strategy in Unit 2 was presented only one time. Interestingly, the number of narrative and expository main selections was identical to Unit 1. Three of the five main selections were narrative fiction, while the other two main selections were expository nonfiction.

Similar to Units 1 and 2, the main selections of Units 3, 5, and 6 consisted of three narrative fiction and two expository nonfiction. The narrative main sections for Unit 3 consisted of fantasy, realistic fiction, and a play, whereas, the nonfiction main selections included two informational nonfiction. Subsequently, Unit 5 had two fantasies and one realistic fiction, and two informational nonfiction texts. Unit 6 consisted of one mystery, one fantasy, and one realistic fiction, one nonfiction article, and a nonfiction photo-essay.

Unit 4 was the only unit to present the skill of plot. This skill was presented 10 times in the two lessons out of five that used narrative fiction. The genres of the main selections also were different from the other five units. Two of the five main selections were narrative, which included fantasy and narrative fiction. Three of the five main selections were expository, in which all three main selections were informational nonfiction.

Harcourt. In the comprehension section of the lessons in which story structure was the main strategy, several skills were presented. These included students' ability to recognize character, setting, problem/solution, plot, and resolution. Harcourt referred in the teacher's manual to themes rather than units, the terminology used in the other core basal reading programs. The manual provided specific think-alouds and guiding questions for analyzing and monitoring comprehension throughout Themes 1 through 6. In Theme 2 of the teacher's manual (p. T341), the teacher introduces the strategy of story structure by explaining that a story has three parts: the beginning, the middle, and the ending. The teacher is directed to use the story "Book! Book! Book!" to illustrate simple story structure. The teacher's manual then provides a think-aloud:

> When "Book! Book! Book! starts, the children who live on the farm go back to school and farm animals become bored. The animals follow the hen to town and end up at the library. That is the beginning of the story. The next part of the story, when each animal goes to the library, is the middle. The last part of the story, when animals go back to the farm, is the ending. (p. 341)

The students have a Focus Skill page in the student edition that corresponds with the skill taught. On student edition page 124, for example, the focus skill is titled "Beginning, Middle, Ending." This student edition page reiterates what the teacher has presented in the teach/model stage of the lesson. It states that "Stories have a beginning, a middle, and an ending" (p. 124). This order helps stories make sense. An activity practicing the particular skill then is presented on the same page, such as "Look at the pictures and tell what happens at the beginning, middle, and end" (p. 124). Neither Scott Foresman nor Macmillan/McGraw-Hill had student edition pages that corresponded with specific comprehension strategy instruction. As the teacher guided the reading, the manual suggested that the teacher monitor comprehension by asking questions such

as, “What animal is missing? (identifying character) “What has happened so far in the story?” (p. 124) (story structure).

Theme 3 of the teacher’s manual (p. T326) suggested that the teacher introduce the skill of plot by telling the students that the plot of a story is the series of events that make up the story: the main events that happen in the beginning, the middle, and the end. The manual guides the teacher to read the story “How Bat Learned to Fly,” but adds the instructions to actually interject the words, “beginning, middle, and end” before the appropriate part of the story.

The next direction to the teacher is to model a think-aloud describing plot in this way:

> In the beginning of the story, Mouse can’t play football well. He can’t hold onto the ball because his hands are very small. In the middle of the story, Mother Earth gives him an idea for how to play better. In the end, Mouse is very happy because he can play football and even do something that the other animals cannot do--fly!

The students are directed to the following student edition page (p. 142) to remind them of plot. The students read the main selection while the teacher’s manual guides the teacher to monitor comprehension by asking questions such as, “What is Jill doing in the story?” “What are two hard things that Jill has done so far in the story?” “What is happening in the middle of the story?” (p. 142).

Theme 6’s teacher’s manual (p. T238) guides the teacher to review with the students that the characters in a story are people and animals who take part in the action. The teacher also is to review setting and plot. The teacher is guided to read-aloud an excerpt from the *Read-Aloud Anthology* selection “Well Done, York.” The teacher then is asked to model a think-aloud on how to recognize story elements.

> The characters that I have met so far are York, Mist, and Farmer McLean. The setting is morning in the glen, which is the area between two hills. Part of the plot is that York seems to be afraid of sheep. I think he is afraid because it says he trembles when he saw them. (p. T238)

The students are guided to look in the student edition, page 104, to read about the focus skill, story elements. Harcourt uses the term, story elements, as a catch-all in the manual for referring to the skills of recognizing character, setting, plot, and theme.

Harcourt also uses the term, story grammar, in its discussion in the teacher's manual, although this term also is not used for presentation to the children. Story grammar, another type of story structure, uses the specific words *Who? What? When?* and *Where?* to discuss the structure of a story. Neither Scott Foresman nor Macmillan/McGraw-Hill distinctively labeled any skills as 'story elements' or 'story grammar'. Both programs, however, have discussed each component of story element: character, setting, plot, and theme.

In Theme 6 (p. T414), the teacher's manual directs the teacher to explain that identifying details in a story can help readers answer the questions, *Who?, What?,* and *Where?*. The manual guides the teacher to read an excerpt from "The Ugly Vegetables." Then, the teacher is given a scripted lesson to model a think-aloud to the students on how to identify details in a story.

> The girl notices that her neighbors' plants have leaves and the plants in her garden look like grass. This is an important detail because it shows me that neighbors planted something different in their gardens from what the girl and her mother planted in their garden. (p. T414)

The students are directed to turn to page 184 in the student edition and review the *Who? What? When?* and *Where?* of a story

There were 127 presentations of story structure as a strategy overall, and 20 of those were specifically about the strategy. The majority of those were placed in the middle and at the end of the program. As noted previously, Scott Foresman only presented story structure as a strategy twice, and Macmillan McGraw-Hill identified story structure as a strategy more times at the beginning of the program. The other 107 presentations by Harcourt were teaching the skills

mentioned above. Table 13 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the specific story structure instructional strategy and skills presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 13

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Story Structure Strategy Instruction in the Harcourt, Storytown Core Basal Reading Program (N = 127)

Skill	Number of times presented	%
Character	30	23
Setting	19	15
Problem/Solution	23	18
Story Structure	20	16
Story Map	1	1
Plot	17	13
Resolution	1	1
Story Elements	11	9
Story Grammar	5	4

The core basal reading program presented the skills in a particular order. Four of the nine skills were introduced in Theme 1. Analyzing character, setting, problem, and solution of a story were the first skills presented. Subsequently, Theme 2 presented story structure; Theme 3 and Theme 4 added story map and plot; Theme 5 introduced resolution; and Theme 6 presented the elements of a story as one skill: character, setting, and plot and presented the terminology of story grammar *Who?, What?, Where?,* and *When?,* which is a different type of story element. Typically, once a strategy or skill was presented in the teacher's manual, the skill or strategy often would be revisited throughout the 30-week period of lesson plans.

Harcourt presented the use of story structure in each theme. Some themes, however, presented the use of story structure more times than other themes. Story structure strategy was presented more times at the end of the 30-week period of lesson plans, which is similar to Scott

Foresman, but contrasts with Macmillan/McGraw-Hill's presentation of skills. Table 14 shows the breakdown of story structure strategy instruction by theme.

Table 14

Breakdown of Structure Strategy Instruction by Unit

Harcourt, *Storytown*: Story Structure	Number of times presented
Theme 1	7
Theme 2	17
Theme 3	29
Theme 4	5
Theme 5	24
Theme 6	45

All three reading programs, Scott Foresman, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, and Harcourt, included rhyming stories, fantasies, realistic fiction, plays, informational nonfiction, and photo-essays as a main selection. Both Scott Foresman and Macmillan/McGraw-Hill included biographies as a main selection; however, Harcourt did not. In contrast, neither Scott Foresman nor Macmillan/McGraw-Hill included a mystery as one of the main selections, as did Harcourt.

SRA. In the comprehension section of the lessons in which story structure was the focus strategy, several skills were emphasized. These included students' ability to recognize important events in a story: where and when it takes place (setting); what happens in the beginning, middle, and end (plot); who the story is about (character); and story problem. Only that comprehension strategy instruction in the teacher's manual for story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers that corresponded with the student edition were considered as data. During the third week of Unit 5, the students received their first student edition of the text; in the

preceding weeks, the teacher read from a Big Book and presented skills and strategies from the read-aloud.

The first lesson on skills occurred in Unit 5, reviewing setting. After reading the main selection, *Snow is Good!,* the teacher's manual (p. T283) suggests that the teacher review the meaning of setting and how the author uses the setting to tell about the topic. The teacher is directed to ask the students to identify the setting of the story. Unlike the other three core basal reading programs, SRA did not use think-alouds to present story structure strategy.

Unit 7's teacher's manual (p. T417) guides the teacher to remind students that characters are the people in a story and that the main character is the most important of these people. The teacher then is guided to ask who the main characters were in the main selection "Winners Never Quit!" Interestingly, the SRA, Unit 7 presentation did not guide the teacher to discuss that characters also could be the animals in the story, as did Scott Foresman, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, and Harcourt. On the very next page, the teacher is guided to remind the students that "plot refers to the events in the story." "A plot has a beginning, a middle, and an end." The teacher is directed to explain that often in a story plot, characters have problems they need to resolve. "The problem usually is presented at the beginning of the story" (p. T419). On page T423 of the teacher's manual, the teacher also is guided to remind the students again that "story plot has a beginning, a middle, and an end." The teacher is instructed to ask questions of the students concerning plot: "What happens at the beginning of the story?" "What happens in the middle of the story?" On page T425 of the teacher's manual, the teacher is guided again to remind the students that "a story has a beginning, a middle, and an end." The teacher is directed to ask the question, "What happens at the end of the story?" This recursive reference is typical of the instruction throughout the units. In Unit 10, story structure is presented as a comprehension

strategy. The teacher's manual guides the teacher to have students think about the way the author, Nancy Carlson, organized the ideas in the story main selection, *There's a Big, Beautiful World Out There!,* and to recognize that the story is changing from page to page. The teacher is guided to direct students' attention to page 191 in the student edition and refer to the pictures discussing that the girl is beginning to imagine fun things. The teacher is directed to ask the following questions: "What does the character imagine on pages 187-191?" "How are these thoughts different from her thoughts at the beginning of the selection?" (p. T425). On page T169, the teacher is guided to continue reviewing how the selection has changed to this point by asking the questions: "How does the story begin?" "Where is the girl imagining things?" "Why do the girl's thoughts begin to change?" and " How does the story end?"

As discussed above in Units 5, 7, and 10, neither modeling nor think-alouds were used to present story structure in the SRA core basal reading program as seen in the other three core basal reading programs, Scott Foresman, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, and Harcourt. The teacher's manual in SRA, typically directed the teachers to remind the students of a particular skill such as plot. Then, the teacher asked questions about the main selection that dealt with specific comprehension skills such as "What happened at the end of the story?" In other words, story structure strategy instruction was presented differently in SRA compared to its' presentation in the other three core basal reading programs.

SRA presented story structure strategy instruction 64 times throughout Units 5-10. Table 15 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the specific story structure instructional skills presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 15

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Story Structure Strategy Instruction in the SRA Core Basal Reading Program (N = 64)

Skill	Number of times presented	%
Setting	6	10
Plot	11	17
Character	29	45
Story Problem	3	5
Story Structure	15	23

The SRA core basal reading program presented the skills in a particular order. One of the five skills was introduced in Unit 5. Recognizing setting was the first skill presented, in Unit 5, Lesson 11. The other skills were presented subsequently: plot and character in Unit 6, story structure in Unit 7, and story problems in Unit 10.

SRA, *Imagine It!* presented skills based on the use of story structure in each unit. Some units presented the use of story structure more times than other units. Table 16 shows the breakdown of story structure strategy instruction by unit.

Table 16

Breakdown of Structure Strategy Instruction by Unit

SRA: Story Structure	Number of times presented
Unit 1	0
Unit 2	0
Unit 3	0
Unit 4	0
Unit 5	3
Unit 6	6
Unit 7	23
Unit 8	6
Unit 9	7
Unit 10	19

The skills based on story structure strategy instruction were presented more times in Units 7 and 10. This is comparable to Scott Foresman in that story structure strategy instruction was presented more times at the end of the 30 weeks of lessons. As was true with Scott Foresman, the other three programs, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, Harcourt, and SRA, presented skills related to story structure in main selections that contained narrative text. Units 5 and 6 presented the use of story structure strategy only three and six times. Three of the five main selections in the unit were narrative fiction, while the other two main selections were expository nonfiction.

The use of story structure strategy in Unit 7 was presented more frequently than in Units 5 and 6, that is, 23 times. All of the six main selections were narrative fiction, including fantasy, rhyming fiction, fable, and realistic fiction. This is different from the other three core basal programs, because none of the Units contained only narrative fiction as main selections. All had expository main selections presented within the Units. The story structure strategies presented in Unit 7 were character and plot.

Out of the six main selections in Unit 8, three were narrative fiction in which character and plot were presented, and three were expository nonfiction. Subsequently, in Unit 9 and Unit 10, narrative fiction was found in two main selections and five expository main selections were found in Unit 9, with only story structure strategy presented but no other skills. In Unit 10, all six main selections were narrative fiction as seen in Unit 7, with character, story structure, and story problem presented.

The Treatment of Summarizing Used As a Comprehension Strategy Instruction in Four Core Basal Reading Programs

ScottForesman, Reading Street. In the comprehension section of the lessons in which summarizing was the focus strategy, summarizing was presented as a strategy with only one skill to be taught: recognizing main idea. This is different from story structure strategy, which included four specific skills: plot, character, setting, and theme.

The first summarizing lesson occurred in Unit 1 of Scott Foresman. The teacher's manual (p. 34g) suggested that the teacher introduce the strategy by explaining that when readers want to understand or remember what they read, they think about the most important parts. They think of how to tell what happens in a short way. The teacher is instructed to have the students recall the story *Sam, Come Back!*, which was the main selection from the previous week. The teacher is guided to model a think-aloud about how to summarize a story: "When I read *Sam, Come Back!* I asked myself who the story was about and what were the most important things that happened. The story was about Sam, a cat, who ran away and came back." The teacher is directed to remind the students to ask themselves specific questions as they read the main selection, *Pig in a Wig.* "Who is the story about?" and "What are the most important things that happen in a story?" As the students read the main selection, the teacher continues to guide comprehension by asking questions such as: "What is a short way to tell what happened in the story?" The teacher is guided to present another think-aloud at the end of the main selection. "As I read, I remember the most important parts of the story. They help me tell what happens in a short way: Pig ate too much. A woman helped Pig feel better. Pig did a jig" (p. 45a).

Continuing in Unit 1, Week 3, the skill of identifying the main idea is presented. The teacher is guided to define the main idea: "The main idea is what a story is mostly about. Good readers think about the important things, or details, that happen in a story to find the main idea."

The teacher further is guided to introduce the selection by using a shared read-aloud from a paired selection from the student edition, *The Family Fox*, and model how to identify main idea:

> To find the main idea, I think about the most important things that happen. Jake sees two foxes in his backyard. He and his mom watch them and talk about them. I ask myself what this story is mostly about. It is mostly about Jake watching and learning about foxes. (p. 41a)

The students then read the main selection, *Fox and Kit*, while the teacher is instructed to guide comprehension by asking the question, "What is a *Fox and Kit* mostly about? Then the teacher's manual guided the teacher to model a think-aloud recognizing the main idea:

> I can look back through the selection to help me remember what it is mostly about. Each page tells me about things that a fox and her kit do. The foxes nap, eat, and play. The main idea is things that foxes do. (p. 45a)

In a subsequent lesson, the Unit 3 teacher's manual (p. 40g) suggested that the teacher explain summarizing as when readers want to understand or remember what they read, they think about how to tell the most important parts of the story in a short way. This is very similar to what the teacher was directed to explain in the Unit 1 teacher's manual explanation of summarizing. The teacher then is instructed to ask the students to recall the previous main selection read, *The Farmer in the Hat,* and model a think-aloud:

> When I read I ask myself who the story is about, where it takes place, and what happens. Then I use my answers to tell about the story. For example, *The Farmer in the Hat* was about a group of children getting ready for a play at school. They made masks, and a cat ended up wearing the farmer's hat. (p. 40g)

The teacher next is guided to remind the students to ask themselves specific questions as they read the main selection, *Ruby in Her Own Time.* "Who is the story mostly about?" "Where does the story take place?" and "What are the most important things that happen?"

Unit 5's teacher's manual guided the teacher to define main idea as follows: "The main idea is what a story or article is mostly about. Good readers look for the main ideas to help them

understand what they read" (p. 111a). For Day 3 of the week's lesson, the teacher's manual then directed the teacher to remind the students, "As you read, think about the most important ideas. Ask yourself what the story or article is mostly about. Look for details, or small pieces of information, that tell more about the main idea." The teacher's manual next guided the teacher to explain that good readers identify the main idea and use it to help them tell what they have learned from a story or article. The teacher models a think-aloud on how to summarize a story or article stating to the students that main idea is what a story or article is mostly about. Basically, the teacher continued the same instruction as in Unit 1. As the students read the main selection, *Simple Machines,* the teacher is instructed to guide comprehension by asking questions such as, "What is the main idea?" (p. 116). The teacher's manual directed the teacher to model a think-aloud with identifying main idea as the focus. Again, the teacher thinks aloud: "As sentences are read in a passage, you should ask yourself what the sentences are mostly about" (p. 116). The lesson scripts included narrative and expository as the main selections for the strategy of summarizing. For the skill, main idea, expository selections were used exclusively.

While there were 69 presentations of the comprehension strategy of summarizing overall, 39 of those were specifically labeled and presented as summarizing. The other 30 presentations were specifically labeled and presented as the skill associated with learning to summarize, being able to find the main idea. Table 17 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the strategy summarizing and the instructional skill, finding main idea, presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 17

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Summarizing Strategy Instruction in the Scott Foresman Core Basal Reading Program (N = 69)

Skill/Strategy	Number of times presented	%
Summarizing	39	57
Main Idea	30	43

The strategy of summarizing and the skill of finding the main idea were introduced in the first unit. Summarizing was introduced in Week 1 of Unit 1. Then in Week 3 of Unit 1, the ability to identify the main idea was introduced. Both of the skills of summarizing and main idea were presented throughout the other units, Units 2-5.

Scott Foresman presented summarizing in each unit. Some units presented the summarizing more times than other units. Table 18 shows the breakdown of story structure strategy instruction by unit. Summarizing was presented evenly throughout Units 1-3 and Unit 5, with a decline in presentation in Unit 4.

Table 18

Breakdown of Summarizing Instruction by Unit

Scott Foresman: Summarizing	Number of times presented
Unit 1	14
Unit 2	16
Unit 3	11
Unit 4	9
Unit 5	19

Macmillan/McGrawHill. In those lessons in which comprehension was presented with summarizing as the focus strategy, summarizing was presented as a strategy with only one skill

to be taught: recognizing the main idea. This is done in exactly the same way in the Scott Foresman program. Scott Foresman, though, also taught summarizing as a main strategy and main idea as the only skill.

The first section in Unit 1 of Macmillan/McGraw-Hill is "Start Smart." For 3 weeks, the teacher used a shared read-aloud from Big Books to model and present specific comprehension strategies and skills. There was no corresponding instruction in the student edition; therefore, these data were not coded. Only the comprehension strategy instruction in the teacher's manual for story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers corresponding with the student edition were considered as data.

The first lesson identifying main idea occurred in Unit 1, Week 5. Summarizing did not occur until Unit 2. This is different from Scott Foresman, which introduced summarizing as a strategy first, then later on, introduced identifying the main idea as a skill. The teacher's manual, Unit 1, Week 5 (p. 107) guided the teacher to present the skill of identifying the main idea by requesting that the students reread page 107 of the main selection, *What Pets Need*. The teacher is directed to tell the students to "think about what the text says and what is shown in the photograph" (p. 107) and to ask the students, "What is the main idea?" Again, this is in contrast to Scott Foresman, which introduced the skill with a modeled think-aloud. Macmillan/McGraw-Hill did not present summarizing or identifying the main idea in the previous lessons; however, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to ask the students to state the main idea.

Because Macmillan/McGraw-Hill presented summarizing and identifying the main idea more frequently in this lesson (16 times), I discussed more from this lesson regarding the use of using summarizing as a strategy and identifying the main idea as a skill. In a succeeding lesson, the Unit 2 teacher's manual (p. 13g) suggested the teacher remind students that a summary "does

not include all the details from a selection, just the most important information" (p. 13g) and that "good readers can summarize the important information in order to help them understand and remember what they have read" (p. 13g). The teacher was directed to tell the students to pay close attention to the most important parts of the main selection, *Animal Moms and Dads*, so they can summarize. Macmillan/McGraw-Hill teacher's manual guided the teacher to remind the students what a summary is, which is interesting, because the strategy had not been introduced to the students previously.

In the same lesson, the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill teacher's manual guided the teacher to identify the main idea by asking the students to think about the most "important points that the author is trying to make, the main idea" (p. 13g) as they read the main selection, *Animal Moms and Dads.* As the students read the main selection, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to develop comprehension by identifying the main idea and using the strategy of summarizing. The teacher's manual instructed the students to read specific pages in the main selection, *Animal Moms and Dads*, and ask questions such as "What is the most important idea that you find out on these pages?" (p. 16). The teacher's manual further directed the teacher to model the summarizing strategy:

> What have I learned in the selection so far? I found out that animal mom and dads do a lot for their babies. On these pages, the chipmunk and the eagle are giving their babies food. I can summarize the selection so far by saying one thing animal moms and dads do for their babies is feed them. (p. 18)

The teacher's manual guided the teacher to continue to develop comprehension in this main selection by asking students to identify the main idea as the students read specific pages in the main selection and the teacher continued to model think-alouds using summarizing.

In Unit 6's portion of the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill teacher's manual, all lessons that teach summarizing and identifying the main idea instruct teachers to state that "summarizing

texts is the same as stating the most important ideas in a selection" (p. 245l). The teacher goes on to instruct the students to pay special attention to the most important ideas in the main selection as the students read the main selection, *A Tiger Cub Grows Up*. The teacher's manual guided the teacher to develop comprehension by conducting a teacher think-aloud on how to summarize a story:

> I want to stop here and think about how I can summarize what I have learned so far. This story is about a tiger cub named Tara. I know that she is a newborn cub that lives in an animal park. She drinks milk and does not like her bath. As I read, I will look for more information about Tara. (p. 249)

The teacher's manual continued to develop comprehension by suggesting the teacher ask questions and model think-alouds about how to summarize the main selection. This was typical for the lessons seen in Units 2 through 6. The lesson scripts included narrative and expository selections as the main selection for the strategy of summarizing, which is similar to Scott Foremsan. Scott Foresman, however, only used expository text as the main selection when identifying main idea, whereas Macmillan/McGraw-Hill used narrative and expository pieces as the main selection when identifying main idea.

Overall, there were 74 presentations of the comprehension strategy summarizing, 45 of those were specifically labeled and presented as summarizing. The other 29 presentations were specifically labeled and presented as the skill associated with learning to summarize, being able to identify the main idea. Table 19 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the strategy of summarizing and for the instructional skill, identifying the main idea, presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 19

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Summarizing Strategy Instruction in the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Core Basal Reading Program (N = 74)

Skill/Strategy	Number of times presented	%
Summarizing	45	61
Main Idea	29	39

The skill of identifying the main idea was introduced in Unit 1, whereas summarizing was introduced in Unit 2. Summarizing and the ability to identify the main idea were presented more frequently in Unit 2 than in the other units. Both summarizing and identifying the main idea were presented throughout the other units, Units 3-6. Some units presented summarizing more times than other units. Table 20 shows the breakdown of summarizing strategy instruction by unit. Summarizing was not presented evenly throughout units. Unit 2 had the most presentations. Units 4 and 5 were similar in numbers of presentations as were Units 3 and 5. Unit 1 was unique in that it presented the skill of identifying main idea only one time.

Table 20

Breakdown of Summarizing Instruction by Unit

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill: Summarizing	Number of times presented
Unit 1	1
Unit 2	33
Unit 3	7
Unit 4	15
Unit 5	4
Unit 6	14

Harcourt. In the comprehension section of the lessons in which summarizing was the focus strategy, summarizing was presented as a strategy with one skill to be presented:

identifying the main idea. This is similar to Scott Foresman and Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, because these two programs name summarizing as a strategy and identifying the main idea as a skill.

The first summarizing lesson occurred in Theme 1, Week 3. After reading the get-started selection, *Miss Jill,* the teacher's manual (p. T66) suggested that the teacher introduce the strategy by having the students summarize *Miss Jill*, by telling about Miss Jill's job. The teacher was instructed to guide the students with the following questions: "What is Miss Jill's job?" How does she get the milk to school?" "What happens to the milk?" (p. T66). The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher write the students' responses then read them aloud. This is the first lesson on summarizing for which the teacher is not asked to model or demonstrate how to summarize. The teacher's manual, however, guided the teacher to ask questions about the expository text, to accept the students answers to the questions posed by the teacher, to write the responses on the board, and then to ask the students to read the responses.

Continuing in Theme 1, Week 3, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to have the students summarize the main selection, *Big Rigs,* by revisiting a graphic organizer about the details the teacher and students had completed while reading *Big Rigs.* The students used the graphic organizer and picture cards from the story to summarize the main selection. Again, the teacher did not model or demonstrate this strategy.

In a subsequent lesson, the Theme 3 teacher's manual (p. T238) suggested that the teacher monitor comprehension by asking specific questions such as "What have you learned about plants so far?" while the students are reading the main selection, *Plants Can't Jump*. Again, at the end of reading the main selection, the teacher was guided to ask the students to

recall details about the plants, then the students used three cards with specific pictures related to the main selection to summarize the story.

Theme 6's portion of the teacher's manual guided the teacher to tell the students that "good readers retell what they have just read" (p. T506). The teacher then modeled a think-aloud on how to summarize:

> I can retell what happens in "The Tale of Mr. Jeremy Fisher," (a get-started story in this week's lessons), using only a few sentences. In the story, a frog named Mr. Jeremy Fisher tries to catch fish for dinner with his friends. He has a miserable experience and is not able to catch any fish. He still has a nice time with his friends. (p. T506)

The teacher's manual guided the teacher to create a graphic organizer with beginning, middle, and end on it. As the students read the main selection, *Frog and Toad Together*, they were guided to complete the chart. The teacher was to guide the students to use the chart to summarize the main selection. This is very similar to using story structure to retell the story through relating the beginning, middle, and end; however, the above-modeled think-aloud suggests that the students used only a few sentences to tell what has happened in the story. This was the only modeled think-aloud used in the teacher's manual related to summarizing.

Overall, there were 64 presentations of the comprehension strategy summarizing; 43 of those were specifically labeled and presented as summarizing. The other 21 presentations were specifically labeled and presented as the skill associated with learning to summarize, identifying the main idea. Table 21 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the strategy summarizing and the instructional skill, finding the main idea, presented in the Harcourt core basal reading program.

Table 21

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Summarizing Strategy Instruction in the Harcourt Core Basal Reading Program (N = 64)

Skill/Strategy	Number of times presented	%
Summarizing	43	67
Main Idea	21	33

The strategy of summarizing and the skill of finding the main idea were introduced in the first theme. Summarizing was introduced in Week 3 of Theme 1. Then, in Week 2 of Theme 2, the ability to identify the main idea was introduced. Both summarizing and finding the main idea were presented throughout the other themes, Themes 2-6.

Harcourt presented summarizing in each theme. Summarizing and identifying the main idea were presented evenly throughout the 30 weeks of lessons, with the exception of Theme 4, which presented the strategy and skill two times more than the other themes. Table 22 shows the breakdown of story structure strategy instruction by theme.

Table 22

Breakdown of Summarizing Instruction by Unit

Harcourt: Summarizing	Number of times presented
Theme 1	9
Theme 2	9
Theme 3	8
Theme 4	18
Theme 5	10
Theme 6	10

SRA. In the lessons where summarizing was the focus comprehension strategy, it was presented as a strategy while identifying the main idea was presented as a skill. This is identical to Scott Foresman, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, and Harcourt's organization.

For Units 1-4 and Unit 5, Week 1, the teacher used a shared read-aloud from *Big Books* to model and present specific comprehension strategies and skills. There was no corresponding instruction in the student edition; therefore, these data were not coded. Only that comprehension strategy instruction in the teacher's manual for story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers that corresponded with the student edition was considered as data.

The first lesson identifying summarizing in which the student edition was used in concert with the teacher's manual occurred in Unit 5, Week 2. As the students read the main selection, *Clouds, Rain, Snow, and Ice*, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to monitor comprehension strategies by asking specific comprehension questions and presenting teacher modeled think-alouds:

> To make sure that I understand what I've read, I'm going to stop and summarize. Clouds are made of droplets of water and there are different kinds of clouds. If there are few droplets, they make cirrus clouds. If there are many droplets, they make cumulus clouds. When droplets in clouds get really big, they fall to the ground as rain. (p. T200)

The teacher's manual continued to guide the teacher throughout the day's lesson to model and think-aloud the strategy of summarizing in a manner comparable to that used with the previous think-aloud.

Identifying the main idea was presented in Unit 5, Week 3. The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher review with the students that the main idea is "the most important idea in the selection" (p. T266). The teacher's manual then directed the teacher to have the students reread pages in the main selection, *Deserts*, and ask what the main ideas is and to give details to support this idea.

In Unit 7, summarizing was presented basically in the same way as described in Unit 5. The teacher's manual guided the teacher to monitor comprehension using modeled think-alouds throughout the lessons. An example occurred in Unit 7, Lesson 17, using the main selection, *Winners Never Quit*, "We know that summarizing helps good readers follow a story and check their understanding of what they have read. Who can give me a brief summary of what has happened in the story so far?" (T398).

Using summarizing as a strategy and identifying the main idea was found to have been presented more times in Unit 9 when compared to the other units in SRA. The lessons presented in Unit 9 were similar to the other lessons presented in Units 5-8. The teacher's manual continued to use the main selections to guide the teacher to monitor comprehension strategies by prompting the teacher to use think-alouds or ask questions. For example, in Unit 9 Week 3, using the main selection, *Homes Around the World*, the teacher conducted a think-aloud: "We know that summarizing helps us follow a selection and check for understanding of what we have read. Which sentences summarizes what this selection is about?" (p. T137) Later, during the same lesson, the teacher's manual suggested that the teacher remind the student that "Summarizing is when readers put the information in their own words" (p. T204).

After the students read the main selection, *The White House*, in Unit 9, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to support the reading by presenting a lesson on identifying the main idea. The teacher is instructed to tell the students that, "When reading a story, it helps to identify the main idea as they are reading" (p. T264). The teacher then models a think-aloud:

> Identifying the main idea and supporting details helps readers remember the most important ideas in a reading selection. Identifying the main ideas and details can also help readers better understand what the selection is about. Identifying the main ideas and details as you read, you will better understand what you read. (p. T264)

The teacher's manual guided the teacher to choose a short reading selection, ask a volunteer to read the selection aloud, and have the students identify the main idea. The teacher is guided to model the skill of identifying the main idea with the first two pages of each selection.

The SRA teacher's manual continued to present the strategy of summarizing and the skill of identifying the main idea in the same way as was presented in Units 5-10. Typically, this was accomplished by using the main selection or paired selection. The teacher's manual guided the teacher to use a modeled think-aloud or by asking students to summarize a section or identify the main idea.

While there were 117 presentations of the comprehension strategy of summarizing overall; 112 of those specifically were labeled and presented as summarizing. The other 5 presentations specifically were labeled and presented as the skill associated with learning to summarize, being able to identify the main idea. As seen in Table 23, there was a huge difference in the frequency of the times summarizing was presented as compared to the amount of times identifying the main idea was presented. Table 23 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the strategy of summarizing and the instructional skill, identifying the main idea, presented in the SRA core basal reading program.

Table 23

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Summarizing Strategy Instruction in the SRA Core Basal Reading Program (N = 117)

Skill	Number of times presented	%
Summarizing	112	96
Main Idea	5	4

The strategy of summarizing and the skill of identifying the main idea were introduced in SRA's Unit 5. Summarizing and the ability to identify the main idea were presented more frequently in Unit 9 than in the other units, almost two times more frequently. Both summarizing and identifying the main idea were presented throughout the other units. Table 24 shows that summarizing and identifying the main idea were presented more times at the end of the 36 weeks of lessons as compared to the beginning and middle of the 36-week period. Some units presented summarizing more times than did other units. Table 24 shows the breakdown of presentation of summarizing strategy instruction by unit.

Table 24

Breakdown of Summarizing Instruction by Unit

SRA: Summarizing	Number of times presented
Unit 1	0
Unit 2	0
Unit 3	0
Unit 4	0
Unit 5	10
Unit 6	5
Unit 7	19
Unit 8	15
Unit 9	40
Unit 10	28

Graphic Organizers

Scott Foresman, Reading Street. Graphic organizers were used as a pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading comprehension instructional strategy tool in the comprehension section on Day 1 and Day 3 of each weeks' s lessons. The first lesson using graphic organizers occurred in Unit 1, Week 1, Day 1. The teacher's manual (p. 10r) suggested that the teacher draw

a web on chart paper (use Chart 18 if available) and label the middle circle "Taking Care of Pets." The chart that is referred to is part of the supplemental materials that may or may not be purchased with the basic teachers' manuals and students' editions of the program. The teacher is directed to have the students turn to pages 10 and 11 in the student edition. The teacher is instructed to guide the students to the pictures on the pages and help the students identify words that tell what responsibilities pet owners have in order to take care of their pets. The teacher then records the words in the smaller circles as the students name words that describe how pet owners care for pets. The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher display the chart for use throughout the week. This is an example of a pre-reading and after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

In Unit 1, Week 1, Day 3, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to build background for the main selection, *Sam Come Back*, by drawing a web and writing "Things Cats Do" in the middle circle. The teacher is instructed to ask the students to brainstorm cat behaviors. The teacher then writes student responses in the web. This is considered a pre-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

During the same day's lesson (Unit 1, Week 1, Day 3), the students read the main selection, *Sam Come Back.* The teacher's manual guided the teacher to develop comprehension by using a story sequence chart. A story sequence chart guides the students to use the text and pictures to fill in the story events that have happened so far in a story. This is considered a during-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

Unit 3, Week 1, Day 1 teacher's manual guided the teacher to draw a T-Chart and label it "Baby" and "Now." The teacher then is directed to discuss the things babies do and list them on the "Baby" side of the chart. Each time a child responds, the teacher is instructed to ask the

question “How have you changed?” (p. 10r). As students responded, the teacher’s manual suggested that the teacher write the students’ responses on the “Now” section of the chart and display and use the chart throughout the week. The teacher is instructed to discuss pages 10 and 11 in the student edition and to add to the T-chart if more responses are given by the students. This is an example of a pre-reading and after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

Similar to Unit 1 (discussed earlier), a graphic organizer is found in Unit 3, Week 1, Day 3. The teacher’s manual guided the teacher to draw a T-Chart and write “How Children Change Over Time” at the top of the left column and “How Children Stay the Same” at the top of the right column. The teacher is instructed to solicit responses for each column from the students and write their responses on the chart. This T-Chart helped build background knowledge before the students read the main selection, *An Egg Is an Egg*. This is an instance of a pre-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

During the same day’s lesson (Unit 3, Week 1, Day 3), the students read the main selection, *An Egg Is an Egg.* The teacher’s manual guided the teacher to develop comprehension by using a different T-Chart. The teacher’s manual suggested that the teacher draw a T-Chart, have the students read page 22 in the student edition, and tell how things are the same and how they are different. This is an example of a during-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

In Unit 5, Week 4, Day 1 (p. 110r), the teacher’s manual guided the teacher to build background by drawing a T-Chart and labeling the first column “Great Ideas” and the other column “How the Idea Makes Life Easier.” The teacher is directed to have students suggest ideas that make life easier, and write the response in the first column. Then the teacher is directed to have student’s brainstorm how each idea makes life easier and write the responses in the second column. The teacher’s manual guided the teacher to read and discuss pages 110 and 111 in the

student edition. The teacher is directed to add any other responses after reading pages 110 and 111 and then display the T-Chart throughout the week. This is an illustration of a pre-reading and after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

Similar to Unit 1 and Unit 3, a graphic organizer is used during the same week as discussed in the above lesson (Unit 5, Week 4, Day 1). Unit 5, Week 3, Day 3 (p. 114e) in the teacher's manual guided the teacher to build background by using a T-Chart. The teacher is instructed to write "Tools" in Column 1 and "How They Are Used" in Column 2. The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher ask the students to "think about tools they know, like hammers, saws, or shovels" (p. 114e) and write the responses from the students under Column 1 and Column 2. This is an example of a pre-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

As the students read the main selection in Unit 5, Week 4, Day 1 (same day as above lesson), *Simple Machines*, the teacher is directed to guide comprehension by using a Main Idea Chart to tell about inclined planes. The teacher is guided to ask the students "What is the main idea and details on page 22?" (p. 123). This is an instance of a during-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

While there were 102 presentations using graphic organizers as a tool for comprehension instruction overall, 60 of those were used as a pre-reading strategy, 12 were used as a during-reading strategy, and 30 were used as an after-reading strategy. Table 25 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the use of graphic organizers as a pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading strategy presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 25

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Use of Graphic Organizers in the Scott Foresman Core Basal Reading Program (N = 102)

Scott Foresman; Use of graphic organizers	Number of times used as a pre-reading strategy	Number of times used as a during-reading strategy	Number of times used as an after-reading strategy
Unit 1	12	3	6
Unit 2	12	0	6
Unit 3	12	3	6
Unit 4	12	2	6
Unit 5	12	4	6

The use of graphic organizers was introduced in Unit 1 and was used consistently across units as a pre-reading strategy, during-reading strategy, and after-reading strategy. In every unit, on Day 1 of each week, a graphic organizer was presented as a pre-reading strategy to build background knowledge using the paired selection in the student edition. After the graphic organizer was completed by the teacher and students, the graphic organizer was used as an after-reading strategy, because the teacher's manual guided the teacher to display the graphic organizer and use it throughout the week.

On Day 3 of each week in Units 1-5, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to present a graphic organizer as a pre-reading strategy (different from Day 1) to build background knowledge for the main selection. As Table 25 shows, some units presented a during-reading strategy. It should be noted that all of the during-reading strategies occurred on Day 3 of each week.

Scott Foresman presented a variety of graphic organizers in each unit. Table 26 shows the breakdown of the different types of graphic organizers used as a tool for comprehension strategy

instruction. As seen in Table 26, webs and T-charts were presented more frequently throughout Units 1-5.

Table 26

Breakdown of Different Types of Graphic Organizers in the Scott Foresman Core Basal Reading Program (N = 102)

Type of Graphic Organizer	Number of times presented	%
Web	30	29
T-Chart	30	29
Classification Chart	2	2
Venn Diagram	6	6
Sequencing Chart	6	6
3-Column Chart	4	4
Story Maps	4	4
2-Column Chart	2	2
Cycle Diagram	2	2
4-Block Chart	2	2
Calendar	2	2
How to Diagram	1	1
Main Idea Chart	4	4
List Chart	2	2
Prediction Chart	2	2
KWL Chart	3	3

McMillan/McGraw-Hill. Graphic organizers were used as a tool for during-reading and after-reading strategy for comprehension instruction in the comprehension section of lessons. The first lesson using graphic organizers occurred in Unit 1, Week 1, Day 3. Before reading the main selection, *Pam and Sam,* the teacher's manual (p. 13G) suggested that the teacher draw a Character Chart (use Chart 8 if available) and label Column 1 "Pam Can" and Column 2 "Sam Can." A note to consider, the charts that are referred to in each lesson below using graphic organizers are part of the supplemental materials that may or may not be purchased with the basic teachers' manuals and students' editions of the program. The manual suggested that as the

students read *Pam and Sam*, the teacher is to develop comprehension by asking the students to share their ideas about the characters, Pam and Sam. By the end of reading *Pam and Sam*, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to complete the chart and record all of the student responses. This is an example of a during-reading strategy using a graphic organizer. On the same day as the above lesson described, the teacher's manual suggested that the students use the Character Chart to retell the story and share ideas about the characters, Pam and Sam. This is an instance of an after-reading strategy using graphic organizers.

Similar to an earlier lesson, the teacher's manual (p. 47G) suggested that the teacher draw a Compare and Contrast Chart (use Chart 50 if available) and guide the students to complete the chart as they read the main selection, *Kids Can Help.* The chart had three columns: Column 1 was labeled "Jobs," Column 2 was labeled "Kids in One Place," and Column 3 was labeled "Kids in Another Place." At the end of reading the main selection, the teacher is directed to complete the Compare and Contrast Chart using guiding questions and writing the responses of the students on the chart. Again, as in Unit 1, this is an example of a during-reading strategy using a graphic organizer. After the students read *Kids Can Help,* the manual guided the teacher to remind the students that as they read the main selection, they should use the chart to organize the selection, *Kids Can Help*. The teacher is instructed to request that the students use the information on the chart to retell *Kids Can Help.* The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher say "A graphic organizer can help us put all of our ideas together" (p. 62/63). Again, as in Unit 1, this is an instance of an after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

Somewhat differently from Units 1-4, Unit 6, Week 1, Day 1 (p. 161B) began the week with a paired selection using a graphic organizer, typically an after-reading strategy. The teacher's manual guided the teacher to read the paired selection, "Where Has Freddy Gone

Now?," with the students. The teacher is instructed to tell the students that this week they will use illustrations while reading texts. The teacher's manual suggested that after the students read the paired selection, the teacher should draw a Use Illustrations Chart (use Teaching Chart 133 if available). The chart has two columns. In Column 1 the teacher is guided to write "Illustration" and in Column 2, "What It Shows." The manual then suggested that the teacher guide the students to read the second and third paragraphs of "Where Has Freddy Gone Now?." The manual suggested that the teacher direct the students to study the illustrations and then discuss their observations. The manual guided the teacher with questioning, "What do you see in the picture? "Where is Fern searching for Freddy?" "Why can't she find him?" (p. 161B). The teacher is directed to probe the students as to what they observed in the illustrations and write their responses on the Use Illustrations Chart. For practice, the students are directed by the teacher to reread "Where Has Freddy Gone Now?" and complete the Use Illustrations Chart. The suggestions in the teacher's manual does not give explicit directions for the students to draw their own chart; however, they are to complete one in the practice stage. This is an example of an after-reading strategy using graphic organizers.

On Day 2 of the same week discussed above (Unit 6, Week 1, Day 2), the teacher's manual guides the teacher to draw another Illustrations Chart (use Teaching Chart 133 if available) and label "Illustrations" and "What It Shows," as described in previous lessons. The teacher's manual guided the teacher to develop comprehension by using the Illustrations Chart as a during-reading strategy. The students are instructed to read the main selection, *Dot and Jabber and the Big Bug Mystery*, while the teacher's manual guided the teacher to ask questions and to discuss the illustrations in the text. As the students read the main selection, the teacher guided the students to stop on pages 170 and 171 look at the illustrations on the pages:

> Look at the illustrations on page 170 and 171. What is it a picture of? Now look closely at the picture again. What else do you see in the illustrations? Why is it difficult to see them? Let's add this information to our Illustrations Chart. (pp. 170-171)

The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher follow the pattern as discussed above, looking at and discussing the illustrations. As discussed in Units 1 and 3, this is a during-reading strategy using a graphic organizer. The Illustrations Chart was used as an after-reading strategy when the manual guided the teacher to ask the students to share their ideas written on the chart.

Overall, there were 69 presentations using graphic organizers as a tool for comprehension instruction; 25 of those were used as a during-reading strategy and 44 were used as an after-reading strategy. Table 27 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the use of graphic organizers as a pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading strategy presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 27

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Use of Graphic Organizers in the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Core Basal Reading Program (N = 69)

McMillan/McGraw-Hill: Use of graphic organizers	Number of times used as a pre-reading strategy	Number of times used as a during-reading strategy	Number of times used as an after-reading strategy
Unit 1	0	4	6
Unit 2	0	4	5
Unit 3	0	4	5
Unit 4	0	5	10
Unit 5	0	4	10
Unit 6	0	4	8

The use of graphic organizers was presented in Units 1-6 and was used as a during-reading strategy and after-reading strategy. As a note, pre-reading strategy using a graphic

organizer was presented using a read-aloud on Day 3 of many weeks; however, data were only coded that related to the lessons presented in which the student edition was used.

The use of graphic organizers as a during-reading strategy was included consistently throughout the Units, although after-reading strategies using graphic organizers were intensified near the end of the year. In Units 1-6, the same graphic organizer was used for different purposes. When the main selection was read, a during-reading strategy graphic organizer was used to guide comprehension. As an after-reading strategy, it was used to either summarize or retell the main selection.

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill presented a variety of graphic organizers in each unit. Table 28 shows the breakdown of the different types of graphic organizers used as a tool for comprehension strategy instruction.

Table 28

Breakdown of Different Types of Graphic Organizers in the Mcmillan/McGraw-Hill Core Basal Reading Program (N = 69)

Type of Graphic Organizer	Number of times presented	%
Character Chart	2	3
Retelling Chart	6	9
Sequence Chart	3	4
Setting Chart	1	1
Author's Purpose Chart	2	3
Main Idea Chart	6	9
Prediction Chart	7	10
Compare/Contrast Chart	8	12
Character/Setting Chart	2	3
Inference Chart	9	13
Drawing Conclusions Chart	3	4
Plot Chart	3	4
Fantasy/Reality Chart	3	4
Problem/Solution Chart	3	4
Cause/Effect Chart	5	7
Classification Chart	3	4
Illustration Chart	3	4

Harcourt, Storytown. Graphic organizers were used as a during-reading and after-reading comprehension instructional strategy tool in the comprehension section of Themes 1-6. Only in Themes 2 and 3 were graphic organizers used as pre-reading strategy. The first lesson using graphic organizers occurred in Theme 1, Week 1, Day 2. The teacher's manual (T58) suggested that the teacher draw an Answer Question Chart on chart paper (use Transparency GO7 if available). A note to consider, the transparencies that are referred to in each lesson below using graphic organizers are part of the supplemental materials that may or may not be purchased with the basic teachers' manuals and students' editions of the program. The Answer Question Chart is a flow chart of five blocks going down the paper with arrows pointing to subsequent blocks. The teacher directs the students as they are reading the main selection, *Let's Tap*, to work together to fill in the chart by telling what happens in the story. The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher monitor comprehension by asking questions about the main selection as the students read and by allowing the students to fill in the chart during their reading of *Let's Tap*. While the students read the main selection, they are instructed by the teacher to complete the Answer Question Chart. This is an example of a during-reading activity using a graphic organizer. As the students completed reading *Let's Tap*, the teacher's manual suggested that the teacher display the completed chart and guide the students to use the information to help them remember and summarize the selection. This is an instance of an after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

Harcourt's Theme 2, Lesson 5 used graphic organizers as a comprehension instructional tool four times as a pre-reading strategy and as a during-reading strategy, and two times as an after-reading strategy. On Day 1, the teacher's manual guided the students to read the Get Started Story, "Jobs," while the teacher monitored comprehension by asking questions about the

selection. When the students completed reading the selection, the teacher asked the students what happened at the beginning, middle, and end of "Jobs." The teacher's manual suggested that the teacher use a Beginning, Middle, Ending Chart to record the students' responses. This is an example of an after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

The very next day (Day 2), the teacher's manual guided the teacher to present a pre-reading strategy before reading the main selection, *Dot and Bob*. The manual suggested that the teacher draw a Story Grammar Map (use Transparency GO2 if available) using three columns: Column 1, "Who"; Column 2, "Where"; and Column 3, "What." The teacher then models a think-aloud using a paired selection, "Yoshi's Feast," from a previous week.

> In "Yoshi's Feast" there are two characters. Yoshi and Sabu are who the story is about. Yoshi and Sabu live near each other in a neighborhood. That is where the story takes place. Yoshi and Sabu have an argument. That happens at the beginning of the story. Other things happen in the middle and ending. As you ask read, ask yourself questions. Who is the story about? Where are they? What is happening? (p. T267)

The teacher is instructed to tell the students that they will fill in a "Who," "What," "Where" chart as they read the main selection, *Dot and Bob*. As the students read the main selection, they are guided to add more information and review the information during the reading of the main selection (during-reading strategy using a graphic organizer). After the students have read the entire selection, they are guided by the teacher to retell *Dot and Bob*, using the chart as an after-reading strategy.

Harcourt's Theme 3, Week 1, Day 1's teacher's manual suggested that the teacher guide the students to read the paired selection, *Ten Eggs*, and use a Retelling Flowchart as an after-reading strategy to monitor comprehension. This was similar to Theme 2's lesson plans.

The very next day (Theme 3, Week 1, Day 2), the manual (p. T58) guided the teacher to draw a T-Chart (use Transparency GO1 if available) and label Column 1 "What Little Red Hen

Asks" and Column 2 "What the Characters Say and Do." The teacher is instructed to tell the students that as they read the main selection, *Little Red Hen Gets Help*, they will fill in the chart during and after reading the selection and that this chart will help them understand the selection better. Before the students are directed to read the story, the teacher further is instructed to say "To answer questions about the story, think about the words you read. Use what you already know to figure out answers, too" (p. T59). As the students read *Little Red Gets Help*, the teacher is guided to monitor comprehension by asking questions and helping the students complete the T-Chart. After reading the main selection, the teacher's manual suggested that the teacher display the chart and guide the students to use the chart to summarize what the characters do and say.

The above lesson was similar to the lesson in Theme 2. The above lesson continued to be comparable to the lesson presentations in Themes 4-6: an after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer with the paired selection on Day 1, then on Day 2, using a graphic organizer as a during-reading strategy and after-reading strategy (the same graphic organizer) with the main selection.

While there were 91 presentations using graphic organizers as a tool for comprehension instruction overall, 4 of those were used as a pre-reading strategy, 30 were used as a during-reading strategy, and 57 were used as an after-reading strategy. Table 29 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the use of graphic organizers as a pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading strategy presented in the core basal reading program.

Table 29

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Use of Graphic Organizers in the Harcourt Core Basal Reading Program (N = 90)

Harcourt: Use of graphic organizers	Number of times used as a pre-reading strategy	Number of times used as a during-reading strategy	Number of times used as an after-reading strategy
Theme 1	0	1	3
Theme 2	3	3	5
Theme 3	1	6	12
Theme 4	0	6	12
Theme 5	0	6	12
Theme 6	0	6	12

The use of graphic organizers was presented in Themes 1-6 and in every lesson was used as a during-reading strategy and after-reading strategy. Using graphic organizers as a pre-reading strategy was used in Themes 2 and 3. As a note, the pre-reading strategy, using a graphic organizer, was presented using a read-aloud on various days of the week; however, data were only coded that related to the lessons presented in which the student edition was used. This was similar to the pre-reading strategy, using graphic organizers, in Macmillan/McGraw-Hill's teacher's manuals.

The use of graphic organizers as a during-reading strategy and after-reading strategy was used less consistently in this text than in Scott-Foresman and Macmillan/McGraw-Hill. Table 29 indicates that the frequency of after-reading strategy doubled in the amount of times presented compared to the during-reading strategy. In Themes 3-6, an after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer was used on Day 1 with the paired selection. On day 2, a during-reading and after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer (the lesson plans suggested using the same graphic organizer during and after reading) was used to either summarize or retell the main selection.

Harcourt presented many types of graphic organizers in each unit. Table 30 shows the breakdown of the different types of graphic organizers used as a tool for comprehension strategy instruction.

Table 30

Breakdown of Different Types of Graphic Organizers in the Harcourt Core Basal Reading Program (N = 90)

Type of Graphic Organizer	Number of times presented	%
Main Idea Chart	3	3
Retelling Chart	5	6
Retelling Chart	5	6
Web	4	4
Beginning/Middle/End Chart	22	24
Who/What/When Chart	6	7
T-Chart	8	9
Compare/Contrast Chart	2	2
Story Map	21	23
KWL Chart	2	2
Sequencing Chart	5	6
Story Events Chart	3	3
3-Column chart	5	6
Problem/Solution Chart	2	2
Inference Chart	2	2

SRA, Imagine It!. Graphic organizers were used as a pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading comprehension instructional strategy tool in the comprehension section. A note to consider, the transparencies that are referred to in each lesson below using graphic organizers are part of the supplemental materials that may or may not be purchased with the basic teachers' manuals and students' editions of the program. The first lesson in which data were coded using graphic organizers occurred in Unit 5, Week 2, Day 4. Note that Units 1-4 lessons did include graphic organizers; however, they were presented as teacher read-alouds and did not include a

student edition. For this study, only lessons presented using graphic organizers in direct relationship to the student edition were considered. The teacher's manual (p. T216) suggested that the teacher review the ideas of cause and effect with students using a Cause and Effect Chart (use Transparency 14 if available). No other directions were given for the teacher to follow. The students were guided by the teacher to read the main selection, *A Good Day for Kites*, as the teacher asked guiding questions about the main selection. At the end of the selection, the teacher is directed to instruct the students to reread page 14 in the student edition. Then, the teacher is guided to ask the following question and have students respond where on the Cause and Effect Chart to record the responses, "What happens to make Kim's kite look like a wind sock?" (p. T223). The teacher is then directed to ask, "The effect is that it is a good day for kites. What is the cause?" (p. T223). These directions were the extent of the directions given to the teacher in the teacher's manual lesson plans.

In Unit 7, a 3 Column Chart (Transparency 58 if available) was used in every week's lesson plans on Day 2 and Day 3. Day 2 the graphic organizer was used as a during-reading strategy and Day 3 it was used as an after-reading strategy. The 3 Column Chart was labeled "Clues," "Problems," and "Wonderings." On Day 2, the teacher's manual guided the teacher to point out the title of the story, *The Kite*, to the students and tell them that the title gives a "clue" that the story is about a kite. The teacher is further guided to ask the students if they have ever read or heard of other Frog and Toad stories, if so, they can use the other stories to predict what this story will be about. In the first column labeled "Clues," the teacher is directed to record "The title, '*The Kite*' and '*Frog and Toad*' stories" (p. T51). In the second column labeled "Problems," the teacher is to direct the students to look for any problems such as unfamiliar words they notice while looking at the words in *The Kite*. The teacher's manual suggested that

the teacher record students' observations as they look over the text and find problems they may encounter within the text. The teacher is further guided to record what the students wonder about the story, as the teacher records the responses in the third column labeled "Wonderings." On Day 3, the students return to the "Problems" column and discuss any problems not answered as the students read the main selection.

In Unit 8, a KWL chart was used most often. The KWL chart is a three column chart labeled KWL, in which "K" stands for "What I Know," the "W" stands for "What I Wonder or What I Want to Know," the "L" stands for "What I Learned." In Unit 8, Week 2, Day 1, the teacher's manual suggested that the teacher guide the students to browse the main selection, *Green and Growing,* for familiar concepts and for things they are curious about and would like to know more information. The teacher is further guided to use a KWL chart (transparency 103 if available) to record the responses of the students as they browse the main selection.

On Day 2 of the same week's lesson as above, the teacher is guided to return to the KWL Chart and allow students to decide which responses on the chart need further discussion. The teacher is further guided to explain to the students that "The information from the text is correct based on what they know and on information they have learned from previously read selections" (p. T254). This is an example of an after-reading strategy using a graphic organizer.

While there were 75 presentations using graphic organizers as a tool for comprehension instruction overall, 12 of those were used as a pre-reading strategy, 32 were used as a during-reading strategy, and 31 were used as an after-reading strategy. Table 31 shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the use of graphic organizers as a pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading strategy presented in the core basal reading program. Again, note as mentioned above,

graphic organizers were used in Units 1-4; however, they were used with teacher read-alouds. Only those lessons where the student editions were used were coded for data.

Table 31

Breakdown of Skills That Make Up Use of Graphic Organizers in the SRA Core Basal Reading Program (N = 75)

SRA; Use of graphic organizers	Number of times used as a pre-reading strategy	Number of times used as a during-reading strategy	Number of times used as an after-reading strategy
Unit 1	0	0	0
Unit 2	0	0	0
Unit 3	0	0	0
Unit 4	0	0	0
Unit 5	1	2	1
Unit 6	0	4	2
Unit 7	0	10	6
Unit 8	2	8	8
Unit 9	4	4	7
Unit 10	5	4	7

SRA presented a variety of graphic organizers in each unit. Table 32 shows the breakdown of the different types of graphic organizers used as a tool for comprehension strategy instruction.

Table 32

Breakdown of Different Types of Graphic Organizers in the SRA Core Basal Reading Program (N = 75)

Type of Graphic Organizer	Number of times presented	%
Cause and Effect Chart	5	7
Main Idea Chart	3	4
Sequence Map	2	3
T-Chart	9	12
Draw Conclusions Chart	8	11
Sequence of Events Chart	1	1
Inference Chart	2	3
Clues/Problems/Wonder Chart	26	35
Character Web	1	1
Venn Diagram	1	1
KWL Chart	16	21

Summary

This chapter presented the data analysis and findings from a content analysis of four first grade core basal reading programs. The chapter overviewed the means used in the data collection. This chapter then focused on the discussion surrounding the research questions. The design, organization, frequency of comprehension strategy instruction (story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers), and how each strategy was presented in each of the four core basal reading programs were detailed utilizing analysis of data contained within the content analysis describing each core basal reading program in detail and comparing them through an examination and analysis of the teachers' guide.

Chapter 5 summarizes the present study and provides conclusions and recommendations drawn from the present study's findings. The conclusions include a summary of the findings using descriptive statistics from the content analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the present study's implications and directions for further research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 5 presents the discussion of the findings and recommendations of this study. It is organized into four sections and begins with an overview of the present study. The second section presents conclusions and a discussion of the major findings from the data analysis. Following the discussion of major findings, the third section gives the limitations and implications. The fourth section concludes the chapter with recommendations for further research.

Introduction

The National Reading Panel Report (2000) on comprehension strategy instruction became the cornerstone for such instruction in the No Child Left Behind Act. Many states and communities use these comprehension instructional strategies as the basis for core basal reading program decisions. Such usage becomes problematic when these educational stakeholders employ the eight comprehension instructional strategies identified in The National Reading Panel Report as being effective strategies for kindergarten and first grade because only one study in early primary grades was included in the Report's synthesis of literature reviewing comprehension strategy instruction. These recommendations for primary grades were based on research from elementary grades, and so become challenging for educators, administrators, teacher education programs, and publishing companies. The challenge results from the different goals and methods used in effective instruction in kindergarten and first grade where children are

learning to read in comparison to the intermediate grades during which the children already are reading. Decisions about teaching comprehension instructional strategies in kindergarten and first grade therefore need to be based on studies that are conducted in those grades.

The primary purpose of the present study was to analyze three comprehension instructional strategies (story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers) that were presented in lessons in four purposefully selected first grade core basal reading programs. The present study provided a description of how each core basal reading program was designed to present lessons within each unit using technology, centers, research, routines, and differentiated learning. The study also described how different components of literacy were labeled and used to present the lessons in a systematic way. This study additionally analyzed the frequency and description of lesson presentations of the three comprehension instructional strategies. The overarching question guiding the study was "How are the National Reading Panel recommendations for teaching comprehension instructional strategies in the areas of story structure, graphic organizers, and summarizing represented in four first grade core basal reading programs?" Two sub-questions of the research question were considered: (1a) How are the four first grade core basal reading programs teachers' manuals organized and how are units and lessons within them constructed? and (1b) What do these strategies look like in the four first grade core basal reading programs and how often do the comprehension strategies appear and in what sequence?

Discussion of Findings

The present study's findings addressed and provided evidence responding to its overarching question and two sub-questions. This section presents the conclusions of the study

and discusses major findings. I have organized the section by discussing each of the research questions.

Research Sub-question 1a

Research Sub-question 1a directed my study on how the four first grade core basal reading programs teachers' manuals were organized and how the units and lessons within them were constructed. Core basal reading programs are highly organized reading textbooks used to teach reading and associated skills to students (Cecil, 2004). Selections are chosen to illustrate and develop specific reading skills, which are taught in a sequence (Squire, 1989). Core basal textbooks contain stories in which limited vocabulary is introduced in a controlled way from certain word lists that gradually become more difficult (Squire, 1989). Special features of core basal reading programs include components of literacy such as phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency; supplementary materials such as workbooks, leveled text, activity sheets, a teacher's manual, and assessments.

Several patterns emerged from the content analysis and descriptive statistics conducted. These patterns revolved around the following basal components: instructional unit themes, literacy centers, morning message, building background, read-alouds, word work, and guiding comprehension.

All four of the core basal reading programs were found to be organized around instructional unit themes, which are the big ideas of each unit. Each week the teacher introduced an essential question that developed one aspect of the unit theme. The question guided instruction for the week as students explored concepts and skills. Many of the themes in the core reading basal programs addressed everyday knowledge that only introduced a minimal amount of

new content or vocabulary words to students through daily lesson plans. Some actual themes from the four reading programs are as follows: “Changes: What is changing in our world?,” “Nature Watch,” “Wild and Wonderful,” and “North, South, East, and West.” These themes concentrate on the process of reading without building significant content or new vocabulary. Each unit theme connected to learning in other curriculum areas, typically in literacy centers.

Each of the four core basal reading programs made available explicit directions for each theme on how to set up specific literacy centers. The literacy centers provided a hands-on approach for students to practice and apply the target skills and concepts of the week. In center activities, students used reading to explore new ideas and apply strategies and skills in other curriculum areas. This study’s findings were similar to those of Cecil and Gipe’s (2003), who found that an essential way to integrate other curriculum areas in early primary grades is through center activities using the unit theme to build activities and lessons around specific curriculum areas such as math, science, and social studies. As seen in the present study, the four core basal reading programs integrated other curriculum areas using the main selection and the paired reading selections. Each of the teacher’s manuals provided specific, detailed activities to integrate the other curriculum areas. Even though the teacher’s manuals provided specific activities to integrate other curriculum disciplines into the main selection or paired selection, it should be noted that all of the standards from the other curriculum disciplines were not presented through integration.

All four basal reading programs presented a calendar or morning message each day. The morning routine brought students together for a whole-group class meeting. The calendar and morning messages added to the development of oral language and vocabulary. Each message included a question of the day and opportunities for skills to be reviewed such as high-frequency

words, phonics skills, vocabulary words, and writing skills. In each of the four core basal reading programs, each day, after morning message, a designated passage or book typically was read aloud by the teacher. Developing oral language, specifically in kindergarten and first grade is vital for social, emotional, and cognitive development. As stated earlier, all four core programs provided a morning message or calendar to promote oral language. It is imperative that teachers take time to encourage children to discuss the specific questions for the day, otherwise, just asking the question of the day, calling on one student ,then moving on to the next "section" does not promote oral language needed for developmental growth. It should be noted that core basal reading programs' teacher's manuals assume that teachers will encourage oral language through daily discussion; however, the teacher's manuals do not stress for the teacher to do this.

All four of the core reading programs devoted time to read-alouds, in agreement with Gaskins' (2003) findings that a critical way to build vocabulary and word knowledge is through stories that are read aloud and through the discussions that follow. The daily read-alouds in all four core basal reading programs introduced specific vocabulary. The teacher's manuals, in addition, guided teachers to build background knowledge about the story content before reading the stories. During the shared read-aloud, the students were introduced to a comprehension strategy and a comprehension skill. Before reading the main selection, students practiced the specific strategy and skill of the week using the teacher shared read-aloud. Harvey and Goudvis (2000) indicated that when students learn to connect a story or a selection to another text, to themselves, or to the world, it builds background and helps them understand the main selection. As mentioned earlier, all four of the core reading programs devoted time to read-alouds. This is important in the early primary grades because, as Ivey (2002) noted, teacher read-alouds can be a good starting point for introducing critical strategies for comprehension when students are not

yet reading text on their own. During a shared read-aloud, the students can focus on the strategy by just listening to the story and not spending energy trying to read the words and make meaning at the same time. Morrow (1984a) indicated from her research that read-alouds are critical when used in kindergarten to begin teaching the structure of story. After the students heard a read-aloud, they drew a picture about the story. The students then conducted a retell of the story. The teacher encouraged fuller recounts by prompting children to tell about the character, time, place, problem, solution, and put an ending to the story. Structural elements of the story were focused. Read-alouds, therefore, are important to use in early primary grades in order to introduce or present comprehension strategies. The teacher shared read-aloud also provides an opportunity for the teacher to have conversations with the students in order to build background knowledge for the topic of the week. Having grand conversations about the read-aloud will develop social, emotional, language, and cognitive skills.

The teachers' manuals provided activities in each of the four core basal reading programs that activated the students' prior knowledge and built background for the topic in the main selection of the student textbook. Gaskin (2003) indicated that student's understanding of what they read is based on their experiences and knowledge. Teachers must do whatever they can to help students fill in the gaps in their background knowledge. This is in agreement with Pearson and Duke's (2002) assertion that comprehension improves when teachers design and implement activities that support the understanding of the texts that students will read in the classroom. The teacher's manuals in each of the four core basal reading programs provided multiple ways, such as talking, listening, and singing, to help activate prior knowledge and build background for the concept of the week. Duke and Pearson (2002) concluded that for best learning to happen, students should think about what they already know about a topic and gather new information to

help their understanding of new ideas that students may come across in a text. Comprehension in essence is the result of students' using their prior knowledge or schema as they interact with text as it is being read, either by the student who is reading alone (reading comprehension) or during a read-aloud (listening comprehension). The core basal reading programs provide teachers with specific comprehension guiding questions or think alouds, implying that teachers can rely on these materials to teach comprehension.

Word work instruction for each core basal reading program included phonics, phonemic awareness, and high-frequency words. The teacher's manual provided explicit instructions for letter-sounds and word parts. Phonemic awareness activities in the four core basal reading programs incorporated letters with the sounds, which provided a bridge for phonics instruction. The National Reading Panel (2000) stated that it is expected that teaching phonemic awareness with letters would facilitate greater transfer to reading and spelling than teaching phonemic awareness without letters. Additionally, if the student does not understand the alphabetic code and cannot break the alphabetic code, learning the rules of phonics will result in an ineffective use of time.

The teachers' manuals in all four core basal reading programs suggested that the teacher guide students' comprehension by using a think-aloud or by asking students to respond to questions that address specific comprehension strategies or skills. Duke and Pearson (2002) asserted that using teacher think-alouds with explicit modeling is most likely to improve students' comprehension of the text. Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez (2005) stated that students made higher level responses when engaged in text-supported active thought processes during reading. In the four core basal reading programs, if the students had difficulty answering

specific comprehension questions, the teacher would model a response. It should be noted that the teacher-modeled think-aloud did not occur every time the teacher asked a question.

Research Sub-question 1b

Research Sub-question 1b directed my study of the frequency of comprehension strategy instruction in the areas of story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers. Not only did I count the number of times each strategy was presented in each core basal reading program, but I also kept a research log to make notes about how the strategies were presented. This was important because the findings of the study support other research that showed reading basals include comprehension instructional strategies, even if previous research only confirmed that they are effective in upper grades. Research has indicated that first grade students are capable of recognizing story structure in narrative texts (Bauman & Bergerer, 1993; Garner & Bochna, 1994; Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Stein & Glenn, 1979). There is, however, a paucity of research investigating summarizing (Afflerbach & Walker, 1992) and the use of graphic organizers as comprehension instructional strategies for Grade 1.

Afflerbach and Walker (1992) conducted a content analysis of main idea instructional lessons in three basal series at Grades 1, 3, and 5 and found that summarization strategy and recognizing main idea are considered as late developing, difficult strategies. Even so, their data revealed that summarizing strategy instruction occurred significantly more than did recognizing main idea across the three basal series. These results are similar to the findings of the present study. All four core basal reading programs presented the strategy of summarizing more times than they presented identifying main idea. The National Reading Panel (2000) did not present any studies that had Grade 1 as a treatment group; however, they recommended that

summarizing should be presented as a comprehension instructional strategy. The body of research is not conclusive in regard to whether summarizing is an appropriate strategy for first grade.

The use of graphic organizers also has been identified by the National Reading Panel (2000) as an effective comprehension instructional strategy. Graphic organizers teach readers to use diagrams of concepts and their relationships (Alvermann & Boothby, 1983). The National Reading Panel (2000) did not include any studies using students in Grade 1 as a treatment group. This lack of inclusion seems to be at least partly because little such research exists. The only significant study found in my search of the literature dealt with second grade students; there were none using Grade 1 as a treatment group. Williams et al. (2007) found that both of two treatment groups in a second grade class, when compared to the control group, did better at answering specific comprehension questions when using a KWL chart during reading. I found that the four first grade core basal reading programs promoted instruction in use of graphic organizers, even though there is a lack of research supporting the use of graphic organizers in the first grade to support comprehension.

Story Structure

Story structure instruction is a procedure used exclusively in promoting reading comprehension of narrative texts. It is a comprehension strategy by which the teacher presents the reader with knowledge and procedures for identifying the content of the story and the way it in which it is organized into plot structure (Mandler & Johnson, 1977). Stories usually have a beginning, middle, and end. The beginning tells who or what the story is about. The middle tells about the events that happen in the story. The end tells about how the story turns out (Buss et al.,

1985; Fitzgerald & Spiegel, 1983; Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Stein & Glenn, 1979). All four core basal reading programs presented the strategy of story structure in some manner that required the students to identify the beginning, middle, and end of a story. This is important for first grade students because knowing the important parts of a story can help students understand and remember the story, which, in turn, will guide comprehension. Morrow (1984a) indicated that even kindergarten students had the developmental capacity to understand story structure.

All four core programs presented story structure strategy as a main comprehension strategy with different skills presented such as plot, character, setting, theme, resolution, and problem. Mandler and Johnson (1977) found that first grade students could recall settings, beginnings, and outcomes; however, attempts at endings and reactions were weak. Most of the first grade students mentioned one or more of the main characters, the event that got the story going, and the outcomes. These students left out the reactions of the characters, what the characters did, and the final ending of the story. This study showed that first grade students were aware of the structure of stories and had schemata with which to organize stories. Similarly to Mandler and Johnson's study, Stein and Glenn (1979) developed six story rules (setting, initiating event, internal response, attempt, consequences, and reaction) to teach story structure. The results indicated that fifth grade students could recall more information on immediate recall of the story than first grade students, which might indicate that first grade students are aware of simple story elements such as character, setting, plot, theme, and problem. This is in direct alignment with each core basal reading program investigated in my study, because each program presented basic story elements such as character, setting, plot, theme, and problem/solution.

Two methods of instruction emerged from the present study's content analysis: teacher modeled think-alouds and direct instruction with assessment questions. Scott Foresman,

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, and Harcourt were very similar in the ways in which they presented the three comprehension instructional strategies, mainly through teacher think-alouds and questioning as the teacher guided the students through the reading of the main selection, and then as students applied the skill. These findings are similar to what Duke and Pearson (2002) stated about think-alouds. Think-alouds have been shown to improve students' comprehension both when students themselves engage in the practice during reading and also when teachers routinely think-aloud while reading to students (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Pressley (1998) asserted a similar notion; effective strategy instruction begins with teacher explanations using think-alouds, showing students how to apply a strategy. He stated that while using teacher modeled think-alouds, the students begin to practice the strategies in the context of reading. Pressley (1998), however, emphasized that practice should be monitored by the teacher, who provides additional modeled think-alouds as needed. Then, feedback and instruction should be reduced as students become more independent. This method of instruction is known as scaffolding instruction. The present study found that none of the four core basal reading programs scaffolded their instruction as described by Pressley.

Think-aloud. Scott Foresman, McMillan/McGraw-Hill, and Harcourt presented story structure as a main strategy using specific teacher modeled think-alouds and guiding questions as the main methods of presentation for analyzing and monitoring comprehension throughout each unit or theme. Think-alouds were similar for each unit or theme in the three core basal reading programs as they presented story structure, which became repetitive after many lessons of using story structure as a strategy, and emphasizing character, plot, theme, and setting. Early on, at the beginning of the 30 weeks of lesson plans, for example, the teacher modeled a think-aloud

explaining that knowing the important parts of a story, the characters, the setting, and what happens can help the students understand and remember the story.

During the end of the 30 weeks of lesson plans, the think-alouds were very similar to those found at the beginning of Unit 1 (Scott Foresman and Macmillan/McGraw-Hill) or Theme 1 (Harcourt) in that the teacher reviewed story structure strategy by reviewing the definitions of the skills character, setting, and plot. Then, the teacher modeled a think-aloud explaining that fiction stories have three parts: a beginning, a middle, and an end. The teacher think-aloud was important because it continued to reiterate the main skills involved in story structure and continued to reinforce the explanation of story structure in the same language used at the beginning of Unit 1. This type of repetitive teacher modeled think-aloud is similar to that found by Pressley (2002) who stated that effective strategy instruction begins with teacher explanations and modeled think-alouds, then is continued as the teacher monitors the students to determine whether they are using the strategy. If not, additional practice and modeling is necessary. The three core basal reading programs using modeled think-alouds as one of their main method of instruction, however, continued to use similar think-alouds instead of reducing the think-alouds as students became more independent readers.

Direct instruction. SRA used some teacher think-alouds; however, story structure lessons used more direct instruction, mainly using teacher questioning as a form of instruction. The teacher's manual in SRA typically directed the teachers to remind the students of a particular skill such as plot. The teacher then asked questions about the main selection that dealt with specific comprehension skills such as "What happened at the end of the story?" SRA assessed the students' knowledge about story structure by asking assessment type questions instead of

using modeled think-alouds or other methods of instruction. A study by Willingham (2006) investigated the usefulness of brief instruction in reading comprehension strategies and found that teaching strategies is a good idea; however, it is unlikely to help students before they are in the fourth grade. He suggested that comprehension strategy instruction in Grades K-3 needs to be explicit. He went on to state that the main effect of strategy instruction may be to push the reader toward a new understanding of reading. This study supports the method of SRA instruction: brief and explicit.

Summarizing

Summarizing instruction is a comprehension instructional strategy used in reading comprehension of narrative and expository text. The reader must determine the most central and important ideas in the text, generalize from examples, and ignore irrelevant details (Brown & Day, 1983). The central aim of most summarization instruction is to teach the reader how to identify the main idea or central ideas in a paragraph (National Reading Panel, 2000). Summarization training is effective because it can make students more aware of the way in which a text is structured and how ideas are related (National Reading Panel, 2000; Rinehart et al., 1986). Rinehart et al. (1986) concluded from their research that, in order to summarize, students must pay close attention to the text as they read.

All four core basal reading programs presented the comprehension strategy of summarizing in some manner that required the students to either summarize the selection or identify the main idea. This is important for students because knowing how to identify the central or main idea will guide comprehension; however, there is a question as to how early students are able to use this strategy effectively. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Afflerbach and Walker

(1992) conducted a content analysis of main idea instruction in three core basal reading programs and found that summarization strategy is considered a late developing skill. Their research found that summarization strategy can be presented in the primary grades when students are provided instruction on identifying main idea. No other research was found to support using summarization in any way as a comprehension strategy to improve comprehension in first grade students. Several studies using intermediate grade students as the treatment group were found (Ambruster et al., 1987; Bauman, 1983; Bean & Steenwyk, 1984; Brown & Day, 1983; Brown, Day, & Jones, 1983; Jenkins et al., 1987; Rinehart et al., 1986; Taylor, 1982), which indicates that publishers do take the initiative to include such instruction even though there is no research base to support it.

All four core basal reading programs presented summarizing as a main comprehension strategy with identifying main idea as the main skill. Scott Foresman, McMillan/McGraw-Hill, Harcourt, and SRA presented summarizing as a main strategy using specific teacher modeled think-alouds and guiding questions as the main methods to teach and monitor comprehension throughout each unit or theme.

Think-alouds. Think-alouds were similar for each unit or theme in the four core basal reading programs as they presented summarizing, which became repetitive at the end of the 30 weeks of lesson plans. Early on, for example, the think-alouds were based on summarizing used as a comprehension instructional strategy. The teacher modeled a think-aloud explaining that when readers want to understand or remember what they read, they think about the most important parts of the story.

At the end of the 30 weeks of lesson plans, the think-alouds were very similar to those think-alouds found at the beginning of Unit 1 (Scott Foresman and Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, and SRA) or Theme 1 (Harcourt) in that the teacher did a modeled think-aloud explaining that summarizing is being able to tell the most important parts of the story in a short way. The teacher think-aloud was important because it continued to reiterate the big picture involved in summarizing and continued to reinforce the explanation of summarizing in the same language used at the beginning of Unit 1. As discussed in the story structure section, however, research indicates that gradual release of responsibility from the teacher to the student also is an effective tool (Pressley, 2002). This type of repetitive teacher modeled think-aloud is similar to Pressley's (2002) research. The modeled think-alouds used in summarizing strategy instruction were similar to the modeled think-alouds in story structure strategy instruction.

Use of Graphic Organizers

The use of graphic organizers is a comprehension instructional strategy used in reading comprehension of narrative text and expository text. Graphic organizers are particularly appropriate for expository texts used in content areas such as science or social studies (Alvermann & Boothby, 1983), but they also have been applied to stories as story maps (Reutzel, 1984). Graphic organizers teach readers to use diagrams of concepts and their relationships (Alvermann & Boothby, 1983). Graphic organizers help students focus on text structure while reading, provide tools to examine and visually represent textual relationships, and assist in writing summaries (Reutzel, 1986). Cecil and Gipe (2003) noted that using graphic organizers is a way to help students represent the meaning of relationships in a text, as teachers instruct students to organize their ideas through the construction of graphs based on what they have read.

Graphic organizers help students select and organize information in the text, which leads to understanding and better recall of information (Darch et al., 1986). The use of graphic organizers has been identified as an effective comprehension instructional strategy (Alvermann & Boothby, 1983, 1986; Armbruster et al., 1987; Baumann, 1984; Berkowitz, 1986; Reutzel, 1984, 1985; Sinatra et al., 1984).

All four core basal reading programs presented the comprehension strategy of using graphic organizers as a before-, during-, or after-reading tool. This is an important strategy to use because it helps students organize their thoughts in a visual way to represent textual relationships. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Williams et al. (2007) found that using graphic organizers as a comprehension instructional strategy is appropriate for the primary grades to help students select, organize, and recall information in social studies content. No other research was found to support using the use of graphic organizers in any way as a strategy to improve comprehension in first grade students. Several studies indicated that graphic organizers can help students, particularly middle-grade students, learn from reading informational text, specifically before, during, and after reading the text (Alvermann & Boothby, 1983, 1986; Armbruster et al., 1987; Baumann, 1984; Berkowitz, 1986; Darch et al., 1986; Simmons et al., 1988). I found that the four first grade core basal reading programs promoted instruction in use of graphic organizers, even though there is a lack of research supporting the use of graphic organizers in first grade to support comprehension.

Implications for Educators

The present study examined the design and organization of four first grade core basal programs. The study also analyzed the frequency of three comprehension instructional strategies

(story structure, summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers) and of how they were presented within each of the four core basal reading programs. The results of this study have implications for several educational stakeholders, specifically those that teach children to read, those who serve on a reading textbook committee, and school administrators who make decisions about the reading curriculum.

Core reading programs that prepare children to read must be developed and implemented with a focus on a comprehensive balanced approach to reading instruction. In other words, core reading programs need to include word work, which includes phonemic awareness, phonics, and high-frequency words; quality literature; easily decodable text for fluency; instruction in reading comprehension skills and strategies; use of multiple assessments; development of oral and written language; and meaningful writing experiences (Cecil & Gipe, 2009). Similarly, The Alliance for Excellent Education reported in *Reading Today* (2005) that students need a more balanced approach to reading and suggested that the reading curriculum contain the following: direct, explicit instruction; a diversity of text; much writing; instruction in technology; ongoing assessment; and a large block of reading time. It should be noted that core basal reading textbooks were found in this study to be organized and well developed. However, core basal reading programs should be used as a resource for teachers and not as a road map for reading instruction. These scripted, well-organized textbooks may benefit some teachers, but may impede the creativity and independence of those teachers who understand the dynamics of the reading process.

In order to meet this need, teachers, reading textbook committee members, and administrators should not just look at the attractive covers on the front of the textbooks and beautifully illustrated pictures within the text. They should look deep within the contents of the

entire program to make certain that specific areas of instruction such as a diverse genre of literature and a variety of instructional strategies for reading areas such as word work, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and meaningful writing are present. Furthermore, the main selection of the week (main story that the students' read) should contain enough substance within the text to have a discussion about the structure of a story (narrative genre) or identify the central idea of a topic (expository genre).

The National Reading Panel (2000) identified and reported on five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Reading is so much more than presenting these five components as isolated skills. While searching for a core reading basal program, it is essential that all of the educational stakeholders involved with the reading curriculum should be cognoscente of how these specific reading components are taught in concert with each other and not in isolation.

Finally, elementary reading textbooks are a big business. Publishers spend a substantial amount of money to produce reading programs while school districts in the United States spend millions of dollars to purchase the "right" textbook for their schools, one that will impact student achievement. Without knowing the dynamics of reading, choosing a core basal reading program may be fruitless to specific school districts in our country. Whichever core reading program stakeholders select, it should be organized and designed to produce effective and strategic readers.

Recommendations for Future Research

The present study identified and analyzed four first grade core basal reading programs deemed with merit from the Alabama State Department of Education. The analysis was

conducted in the areas of design, organization, and presentation and frequency of specific comprehension strategies (story structure, summarizing, and use of graphic organizers). Through the data obtained from a content analysis, the present study identified key implications for many educational stakeholders. Due to the substantial amount of money that core reading publishers make each year and the supply and demand from school districts around the United States, several areas for future research can be identified.

Although educators have indicated the need for a well-balanced core reading program including the design and organization of the program, there is little research providing this information. Research involving the design and organization of various core basal reading programs would be beneficial to teachers, reading textbook committee members, and administrators. There is a need for studying how core basal reading programs are designed and organized and how the lessons are presented, specifically focusing on comprehension instructional strategies. How are the themes around each basal organized? How are the five components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) presented and at what frequency? How are the other five comprehension instructional strategies recommended by the National Reading Panel (2000) presented and at what frequency? The research surrounding the design and organization of core basal reading programs is limited. Additionally, there is little empirical data on comprehension instructional strategies in the early primary grades (Stahl, 2004).

Summary

Chapter 5 provided an overall presentation of the findings and recommendations in four sections. First, this chapter began with an overview of the present study. Second, the section

presented the present study's conclusions and supported the conclusions with a summary of major findings from the analysis reported in chapter 4. Finally, the last two sections discussed the implications and recommendations for further research.

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APPENDIX A

NATIONAL READING PANEL'S EIGHT COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

1. Comprehension monitoring – in which the reader learns how to be aware of conscious of his or her understanding during reading and learns procedures to deal with problems in understanding as they arise.
2. Cooperative learning – in which readers work together to learn strategies in the context of reading.
3. Use of graphic organizers – that allow the reader to represent graphically (write or draw) the meanings and relationships of the ideas that underlie the words in the text.
4. Story structure – from which the reader learns to ask and answer who, what, where, when and why questions about the plot and in some cases maps out the time line, characters, and events in the stories.
5. Question answering – in which the reader answers questions posed by the teacher and is given feedback on the correctness.
6. Question generation – in which the reader asks himself or herself what, when, where, why, and what will happen, how and who questions.
7. Summarization – in which the reader attempts to identify and write the main or most important ideas that integrate or unite the other ideas or meanings of the text into a coherent whole.
8. Multiple-strategy teaching – in which the reader uses several of the procedures in interaction with the teacher over the text. Multiple-strategy teaching is effective when the procedures are used flexibly and appropriately by the reader or the teacher in naturalistic contexts.

The National Reading Panel Report (2000), p. 4-6

APPENDIX B

CODING SPREADSHEETS FOR PILOT STUDY

Pilot Study: Unit 1 - Scott Foresman - Investigator 2	Comprehension Monitoring	Cooperative Learning	Use of Graphic Organizers	Story Structure	Question Answering	Question Generation	Summarization	Multiple - strategy Teaching	Narrative	Expository
Week 1										
Week 2										
Week 3										
Week 4										
Week 5										
Week 6										
Total										

APPENDIX C

CODING SPREADSHEETS

	Story Structure	Summarizing	Use of Graphic Organizers
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			
Week 9			
Week 10			
Week 11			
Week 12			
Week 13			
Week 14			
Week 15			
Week 16			
Week 17			
Week 18			
Week 19			
Week 20			
Week 21			
Week 22			
Week 23			
Week 24			
Week 25			
Week 26			
Week 27			
Week 28			
Week 29			
Week 30			
Week 31			
Week 32			
Week 33			
Week 34			
Week 35			
Week 36			
Total			

APPENDIX D

ROUTINES

1. **Introducing Sounds and Spellings**

- Point to the back of the ***Sound/Spelling Card***, and ask students what they already know.
- Turn the card to show the picture.
- Point to the picture and name it.
- Point to the spelling(s), and name the spelling(s).
- Read the alliterative story.
- Reread the story and have students make the sound.
- Review the name of the card, the sound, and the spelling(s).
- Write the spelling(s) on the board. At the same time have students write the spelling(s) in the air or on the white boards and say the sound as they write it.
- Have several students come to the board and write the spelling(s). Have other students write the spelling(s) several times on white boards, in the air, and so on, saying the sound as they write each spelling. Proofread students' work.
- Have students listen for target sounds in different positions in words.
- Review the card. Point to the spelling, and have students give the sound. Point to the picture, and have students give the name of the card.
- Remind students that they can remember the sound of the spelling on the card by thinking of the sound in the story.

2. **Sound-by-Sound Blending***

- Write the spelling for the first sound.
- Have students say the sound.
- Write the spelling for the second sound.
- Have students say the sound.
- If the second sound is a vowel, blend through the vowel by making a blending motion with your hand.
- Write the spelling of the next sound.
- Have students say the sound.
- If it is the last sound in the word, make the blending motion as students blend and read the word. If it is not the last sound, continue writing the spellings.
- Have students reread the word naturally as they would say it.
- Complete a line, and have students reread the words in the line.
- Have students use selected words in sentences and extend the sentences.
- Review the blended words using the Developing Oral Language activities.

**When first doing Sound-by-Sound Blending, ask for the sound as you point to each spelling. Once students are comfortable with the routine, drop the verbal cues, point to the spellings, and have students give the sounds.*

3. **Whole-Word Blending***

- ❖ Write the whole word or display the transparency (if available), covering up the lines that do not pertain to the lesson.
- ❖ Point to each spelling, and have students give the sound for each.
- ❖ Make the blending motion from left to right, and have students blend the sounds and say the word.
- ❖ Have students reread the word naturally as they would say it.
- ❖ Complete the line, and have students reread the words on the line.
- ❖ Have students use selected words in sentences and extend the sentences.
- ❖ Review the works using the Developing Oral Language activities.

**When first doing Whole-Word Blending, point to each spelling and ask for the sound. Once students ar comfortable with the routine, drop the verbal cues, point to the spellings, and have students give the sounds.*

4. **Blending Sentences**

- ❖ Sound-by-Sound
  - Blend each word using the sound-by-sound blending routine.
  - Write high-frequency sight words in their entirety, and underline the words.
  - Once all the words have been blended or read, have students reread the sentence naturally, saying it with expression and intonation.
- ❖ Whole-Word Blending*
  - Write each word, and blend it using the whole-word blending routine.
  - Write high-frequency sight works in their entirety and underline the words.
  - Once all the words have been blended or read, have students reread the sentence naturally, saying it with expression and intonation.

**As students become more automatic in blending, write the entire sentence and have students read the word, stopping to blend only those words that cannot be read quickly and automatically.*

5. **Sounds-in-Sequence Dictation**

- ❖ Say the word, use the word in a sentence, and then repeat the word.
- ❖ Have students say the word.
- ❖ Have students say the first sound.
- ❖ Have students check the ***Sound/Spelling Cards*** and say the spelling. (Early in the process, physically point to and touch the appropriate card and spelling.)

- If there are multiple spellings for the sound, have students ask “Which spelling for this sound?”*
- Have students write the spelling.
- Complete the spelling of the word with the remaining sounds and spellings.
- When you have completed one line, have students proofread the line.
    - Write the words for the line on the board (or have a student write the words).
    - Have students proofread their line by circling any incorrect words and making them better by rewriting them above or next to the misspelled words.

Early on you will need to encourage students to ask “Which spelling?” Dictation is an instructional activity – not a test. As the year progresses, students should be able to use their knowledge of the cues on the* **Sound/Spelling Cards *to identify the correct spelling. For example on the Long A card, students should be able to articulate that the spelling for /ā/ at the end of a word, such as say, is _ay.*

6. **Whole-Word Dictation**

- Say the word, use the word in a sentence, and then repeat the word.
- Have the students say the word.
- Tell students to think about each sound they hear in the word.
- Have students write the word. Remind them to check the ***Sound/Spelling Cards***.
- Proofread after each line.
    - Write the word on the board or have a student write it.
    - Have students check their spelling with the correctly spelled word on the board.
    - If the word is incorrect, have students circle it and make it better by writing the word above or next to the original word.

7. **Sentence Dictation**

- Say the sentence.
- Dictate one word at a time following the Sounds-in-Sequence or Whole-Word Dictation, depending upon your students.
- Remind students to use capitals at the beginning of each sentence and to use end punctuation.
- Write (or have a student write) the sentence on the board.
- Have students proofread.
    - Check for spelling.
    - Check for capitalization and end punctuation.

8. **Word Building***

- Have students place the ***Alphabet Letter Cards*** in a row at the top of their desk.
- Say the work, use the word in a sentence, and then repeat the word.
- Have students say the word.
- Have students say the first sound.
- Have students check the ***Sound/Spelling Cards*** and say the spelling. (Early in the process, physically point to and touch the appropriate card and spelling.)
- Have students pull down the appropriate ***Alphabet Letter Card***.
- Continue until the word is spelled.
- Have students proofread their spelling.
    - Write the word on the board.**
    - Have the students check their word.
    - If it is not spelled correctly, they should correct the spelling.
- Repeat the routine with the remaining words.

**As the year progresses and your students are ready, the Word Building can be done using the Whole-Word Dictation routine.*
***When you write the word for proofreading, you may want to write each word under the previous one. After completing the Word Building activity, talk about how words changed and built on each other.*

9. **Reading a Decodable**

- Teach non-decodable, high-frequency sight words.
- Have the students read the title, browse, and then discuss what they think the story is about.
- Read the ***Decodable***.
- Have students read a page silently, and then read the page aloud.
- Have students blend decodable words and refer to the ***Sound/Spelling Cards*** as necessary.
- Repeat this procedure for each page.
- Have students respond to the story. Have them
    - discuss hard words.
    - retell the story.
    - respond to questions by pointing to the answers.
    - reread the ***Decodable*** (partner reading, choral reading, turn-taking, and so on) to build fluency.

10. **Closed Syllables**

Introduction

- Write a CVC word on the board, such as *cat*.
- Remind students that every syllable must have a vowel sound and a vowel spelling.
- Have students identify the vowel spelling in the target word. Write a “v” under the vowel spelling.

cat
v

- Tell students that when a single vowel spelling is followed by a consonant spelling, the vowel sound is usually short.

Multisyllabic Words

- Write a multisyllabic word with a VCCV pattern on the board, such as picnic.
- Remind the students that every syllable must have a vowel sound and a vowel spelling.
- Have the students identify the vowel spellings in the target word. Write a "v" under each vowel spelling.

picnic
v v

- Have students identify the consonant spellings between the vowels. Write a "c" under the consonant spellings.

picnic
vccv

- Tell students that when they see a vowel-consonant-consonant-vowel spelling pattern, they should usually divide the word between the two consonant spellings. Put a slash between the consonant spellings.

pic/nic
vc/cv

- Cover the second syllable. Tell students that when they see a vowel spelling followed by a consonant spelling, the vowel is usually short. We call this a *closed syllable*.
- Have students blend the first syllable using the whole-word blending strategy. Then uncover the second syllable, and blend it.
- Blend the syllables together to read the word.
- Review: If a word has two consonant spellings in the middle, divide between them. The vowel is usually short.
- Note that these are syllable generalizations. They do not work in all cases. Remind students that after they read the word, they should ask themselves, "Does it sound right or does it make sense?" If not, students should try the long vowel sound.

11. **Open Syllables**

Introduction

- Write a word with a CV pattern on the board. For example *he*.
- Remind the students that every syllable must have a vowel sound and a vowel spelling.
- Have the students identify the vowel spellings in the target word. Write a "v" under the vowel spelling.

he
v

- Tell the students that when a single vowel spelling is not followed by a consonant, the vowel sound is usually long.

Multisyllabic Words

- Write a multisyllabic word with VCV pattern on the board. For example, *beyond*.
- Remind the students that every syllable must have a vowel sound and vowel spelling.
- Have the students identify the vowel spellings in the target word. Write a "v" under each vowel spelling.

beyond
v v

- Have the students identify the consonant spelling between the vowels. Write a "c" under the consonant spelling.

beyond
vcv

- Tell the students that when they see a vowel-consonant-vowel spelling pattern, they should usually divide the word before the consonant spelling. Put a slash before the consonant spellings.

be/yond
v/cv

- Cover the second syllable. Tell the students that when they see a vowel spelling that is not followed by a consonant spelling, the vowel is usually long. We call this an *open syllable*.
- Have the students blend the first syllable using the whole word blending strategy. Then uncover the second syllable and blend it.
- Blend the syllables together to read the word.
- Note that these are syllable generalizations. They do not work in all cases. Remind the students that after they read the word to ask themselves, "Does it sound right or does it make sense?" If not, the students should try the short vowel sound.

12. **Reading the Selection**

Before Reading

- Build background by activating prior knowledge and sharing relevant information.
- Browse the selection and set purposes (Clues, Problems, and Wonderings).
- Develop understanding of key selection vocabulary.

During Reading

- Model strategies (early in the year); prompt use of strategies (after strategies are taught); have students use strategies independently.
- Have students stop periodically and check to see whether the text makes sense. Use Comprehension Strategies like Clarifying and Summarizing to support comprehension.
- Reread the text applying Comprehension Skills and Reading with A Writer's Eye.

After Reading, Have Students

- Discuss the selection using "handing-off".*
- Make connections to other selections in the unit as well as to selections in other units.
- Discuss what new information they have learned.
- Respond to the selection through writing.

**Handing-Off*

- *Students are seated so they can see each other.*
- *Take a seat and be part of the group.*
- *Students have their* **Student Readers** *and are encouraged to refer back to any selection to make a point.*
- *Students take responsibility for the discussion.*
- *Students choose to hand-off the discussion to others in the class.*
- *Getting Started*
    - *Model handing-off by offering comments on the selection, the style of the writer, or the connection to the unit theme.*
    - *Use discussion starters such as "I didn't know that . . ." or "This selection made me think of . . ." or "I think this connects to the theme because . . ." or "Your idea made me think of . . ."*
    - *Participate in the discussion by raising your hand.*
    - *Seed new ideas as you participate in the discussion. For example, "As I was reading this selection, I was reminded of . . ." "What did that part remind you of?" or "This part of the selection gave me a whole new idea about the unit. It . . ."*
    - *Wait for students to respond to each other; don't feel the need to jump in if there are a few moments of silence. Think time is good.*
- *Use handing-off periodically to check understanding of the text and concepts, at the end of a section of the text or at the end of the reading for the day.*
- *Build the idea of handing-off into all classroom discussions.*

13. **Selection Vocabulary**

Before Reading

- Have students read the Vocabulary Warm-Up in their ***Student Reader***.

- Have students explain any highlighted selection vocabulary words that they know or figured out from context clues, word structure, or apposition. Have students explain how they figured out the meaning of the word.
- Display the selection vocabulary transparency. Then have the students read the words and definitions. Give the students sentences and have them fill in the appropriate vocabulary word from the list.
- "The fish _____ through the water." (glides)
- Discuss the concept vocabulary word and its connection to the theme.

During Reading

- Point out the selection vocabulary words during the first read, checking for meaning.
- Encourage students to ask for the meaning of unfamiliar words. Clarify the words for the students.
- Introduce expanding vocabulary during the second read of the selection by providing students with definitions and examples.

After Reading

- Review vocabulary by having students give examples that explain the meaning of the word.

14. **Modeling Writing Strategies**

- Describe the strategy.
- Tell why the strategy is important.
- Tell students when they should use the strategy.
- Model how to use the strategy when writing by saying aloud your thoughts and by describing each thing you do.
- Make sure students understand why the strategy is important, when to apply it, and how to use it.
- Provide students with assistance in applying the strategy until they can do it on their own.
- Remind students to use the strategy when they write.

15. **Graphic Organizers and Revising, Editing/Proofreading, and Publishing Checklists**

- Explain the purpose of the graphic organizer or the revising, editing/proofreading, and publishing checklists.
- Describe how students are to use the graphic organizer or the revising, editing/proofreading, and publishing checklists.
- Model aloud how to carry out the basic activities on the graphic organizer or the revising, editing/proofreading, and publishing checklists.
- Make sure students understand each part of the graphic organizer or the revising, editing/proofreading, and publishing checklists.

16. **Presenting Writing**

Before Presenting

- Have the author decide what will be shared.
- Have the author practice what will be shared.

During Presenting

- Have the author tell what is to be shared and why.
- Have the author read his or her writing or idea aloud.
- Remind students in the audience to listen carefully.

After Presenting

- Have students tell what they like about the piece of writing or idea.
- Have students off helpful suggestions.
- Take notes of students' comments to share with the author.

17. **Clues, Problems, and Wonderings**

- Have students browse the selection before reading.
- Ask students to identify and share clues, problems, and wonderings as they find them.
- Possible sources for clues include: content, author or illustrator, genre, illustrations, charts, graphs, and so on.
- Possible problems include: words with unknown meanings, long or difficult sentences, confusing illustrations, charts, graphs, unfamiliar content, unusual format, unfamiliar style of writing, and so on.
- Possible wonderings include: content of pictures, unusual author techniques (such as flashback), connection to the theme, connection to other books written by the same author, and so on. Wonderings help determine the purposes for reading.
- Have students continue to add to their clues, problems, and wonderings while reading.
- Then have students review and discuss clues, problems, and wonderings after reading.

18. **Know, Want to Know, Learned**

- Have students browse the selection.
- Before reading the selection, ask students to identify and share what they know and what they want to know.
- Possible things students might know include background information about the topic or the selection.
- Possible things students might want to know include questions about the topic, the content itself, words with unknown meanings, confusing photographs or charts, and so on. What students want to know helps determine the purposes for reading.

- Have students read the selection and tell them to continue to add to their KWL charts while reading.
- After reading, have students review what they know and what they wanted to know. Then ask students to discuss what they learned as they read the selection.
- Possible things that students might learn include content-specific information, connections to the theme, connections to other books written by the same author, and so on. Students might learn what they wanted to know, or they might learn something unrelated to what they wanted to know.