Running Head: GUIDED READING VS. WHOLE GROUP READING

Using Whole Group Reading as an Introduction to Guided Reading

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Abstract

When there is a switch from guided reading to whole group reading in intermediate grades, differentiated instruction can be lost and student needs not met. Teachers need to make the decision as to whether a lesson should be done whole group to address a need for most students or in a guided reading group to meet specific needs of students. This study, in a suburban elementary school, focused on intermediate teachers and the reading instruction used in their classroom. Data suggests a strength of guided reading is individualized instruction provided to meet the needs of all students. Whole group reading is used based on a focus skill used for an appropriate grade level text as the district requires in all elementary grades. The author suggests whole group reading be used as an introduction to a differentiated guided reading lesson.

Introduction

Teachers in intermediate grades tend to move towards whole group reading and away from guided reading in the classroom. The purpose for this study was to find out why teachers switch from guided reading to whole group reading in intermediate grades. The researcher used experience in providing classroom instruction to grades three through five in seeing this problem through intermediate grades. However, once this study began, there was a strong use of guided reading being used in intermediate classrooms and a weak focus on whole group reading in the classroom. The trend that was previously during the researchers experience was not seen after research was completed.

During guided reading, students are working at their instructional level with an instructor in a small group. Students are receiving more instructional attention in guided reading groups. During whole group reading, students who work at different instructional levels are working together with students from other levels as well and are losing close instructional time with their instructor. Lessons are not created based on all students' individual needs.

The issues of whole group reading and guided reading in the classroom are addressed through examples of reading instruction observed by the researcher in intermediate classrooms. Examples of teachers providing whole group and guided reading instruction are provided with clear and concise details describing the teacher's instructional approach. Interviews conducted with teachers whose classrooms were

observed were also used to gain more insight into reading instruction conducted in their classroom.

Theoretical Framework

Literacy is "the mastery of our fluent control over a secondary Discourse" (Gee, 1989). Gee's (1989) concept of Discourse refers to the role of socialization and the relationship between the individual and society (Masahiko, 1991). A secondary Discourse is the mastery of a non-dominant discourse (Gee, 1989). People are born into a primary discourse, a dominant discourse, with an "identity kit" on how to act, attitudes, and culture, but in order to be different from others, people need to belong to more than one social group (Gee, 1989). An "identity kit" is what people form when they are in different discourses in order to fit in with others in the discourse (Williams, 2005). A primary discourse is what an individual learns from his family and community (Williams, 2005). A secondary discourse is what an individual acquires through his life (Williams, 2005). A person who is literate is someone who can communicate through written and oral language within more than one social group. Williams (2005) recognizes a student who has mastered discourse in the classroom as a student who can step back from a text and connect it to other texts. It is an individual who can connect one discourse to another discourse as part of a social network (Gee, 1989; Lankshear, 2003).

Gee's (1989) definition of literacy comes from the perspective of a socioculturalists theory (Lankshear, 2003). A socioculturalist views literacy as a matter of social practices based on historic events (Lankshear, 2003; Knobel, 2003). Social

practices are connected to the social identities of individuals (Lankshear, 2003; Gee, 1989).

Literacy is a "multifaceted set of social practices with a material technology" (Freebody, 1990). In order to master literacy, individuals need to adopt the roles of a code breaker, text participant, text user, and text analyst (Freebody, Luke, 1990). A code breaker finds the relationship between spoken sounds and written symbols. A text participant develops resources to engage the meaning systems of the discourse. The role of a text user is to learn through social experience, participating in the here and now. Finally, as a text analyst, the individual looks through a text through different perspectives in order to make meaning of a text (Freebody, Luke, 1990). The four dimensions of literacy, code breaker, text participant, text user, and text analyst, need to be held accountable in order to become a strong reader. No single part of the model can stand alone. A balanced approach needs to be put in place to emphasize the different forms of literacy instruction (Freebody, Luke, 1990).

One way to get students engaged in reading processes is to encourage students to participate in discussion and discourse (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's theoretical framework revolved around the zone of proximal development (Wertsch, 1979). The zone of proximal development is "the distance between the actual development level as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Wertsch, 1979; Vygotsky, 1978). There are three levels within the zone of proximal development. The first level is where the child fails to understand what an adult is trying to get across (Wertsch, 1979). In the second level, the child can respond to questions and commands, but can not interpret what the adult is actually trying to

communicate (Wertsch, 1979). The third level of the zone of proximal development is where the child is able to follow non-explicit directives and is able to take responsibility for their own language process (Wertsch, 1979). The final level, which is outside of the zone of proximal development, is where the child goes from a social plane to an individual plane (Wertsch, 1979). The child is able to work as an individual and not rely on others when completing tasks. Classroom discussion should be used with students to increase student achievement while engaging with other students (Vygotsky, 1978). The students are actually modeling to each other how to respond to a piece of literature either within a small group or large group.

In order for a child to become a successful reader, the child needs guidance in how to use appropriate strategies (Harvey and Goudvis, 2007). Guided reading is used by teachers to teach appropriate learning strategies through differentiated instruction (Beach, 1996). Guided reading is a time for teachers to model for students how and when to use strategies while reading (Beach, 1996; Guastello, 2005; Whitehead, 1994). Differentiating instruction and the way students are exposed to the strategies help students become more capable of using the strategies on their own. The goal of guided reading is to guide students through the use of modeling to learn how to use strategies as they independently read (Fountas and Pinnell, 2001). Guided reading groups are effective when students are grouped based on their strengths and needs (Flood, Lapp, Flood, Nagel, 1992). In order for student success and successful interaction, the teacher needs to choose the most appropriate basis for grouping, an effective format, and the most appropriate materials for the students based on the strengths and weaknesses of each group (Flood, 1992).

In the switch from guided reading to whole group reading in intermediate grades, teachers go from providing differentiated instruction to students through small guided reading groups to providing instruction to all students in the same way, regardless of strengths and needs (Fuchs, 1999).Whole group reading is when the teacher delivers the same reading instruction to all students (Fuchs, 1999). There are times when a class as a whole needs direct instruction for a particular skill related to reading. Whole group instruction could provide students with that opportunity (Flood, 1992).

A reader is someone who involves their conscious processing and interaction on text with their own prior knowledge (Beach, 1996). Meaning is constructed through the time of reading interaction (Beach, 1996). A talented reader does not necessarily mean the reader is gifted and a gifted reader does not always mean the reader is a talented reader (Reis, 2004). A talented reader is a reader who is "reading approximately two or more years above grade level as measured by a standardized reading test, or children who may not have achieved two or more years above grade level on a standardized reading test, but who have been identified as intellectually gifted with potential for high reading performance" (Reis, 2004). A talented reader reads differently for different purposes, develops a deeper understanding of particular topics through reading, automatically integrates prior knowledge and experience in reading, and demonstrates advance understanding of language (Reis, 2004). Talented readers, like other diverse learners, need to be provided with differentiated instruction, diverse grouping, and different schedules (Reis, 2004). The reading instruction for all readers should be similar to the general reading instruction provided to students (Reis, 2004).

Review of Literature

Whole Group Instruction

Whole group instruction fails to meet the needs of all students. Teachers deliver uniform lessons that fail to address the needs of many students (Fuchs, Fuchs, Kazdan, & Allen, 1999). Direct instruction is needed in order for teachers to model, introduce, and repeat new strategies for students (Kincade, 1996). Direct instruction is provided during small groups. A challenge for most teachers is to uncover each student's difficulties in order to create and teach appropriate strategies (Kincade, 1996). Whole group instruction is viewed as a "more efficient means for teachers, even though students failed to achieve" (Frey, 2006). Whole group instruction, including whole group reading is used as a way to do the same thing with each student rather than differentiate instruction. Whole group is being used because the lack of teacher knowledge creates a resistance to differentiated instruction (Frey, 2006).

Guided Reading Instruction

One of the biggest challenges for teachers is to teach students appropriate strategies based on student difficulties (Beach, 1996). Teachers often wonder how to meet the needs of all students in the class because all students work at different instructional levels (Flood, 1992). Guided reading involves a teacher working with a small group of children who have similar reading behaviors where they are reading at their instructional level with teacher support (Tyner, 2004). Guided reading groups are formed by students' achievement levels and learning needs (Whitehead, 1994). Students need direct instruction through modeling and repeated practice of new strategies in order to become

successful independent readers (Beach, 1996; Fountas, Pinnell, 2001). Guided reading is needed because poor readers lack appropriate strategies to correct their comprehension problem (Beach, 1996). Guided reading shows students how to use appropriate strategies as they read and how to use them during guided and then independent reading (Fountas, Pinnell, 2001; Guastello, Lenz, 2005; Whitehead, 1994). Lacking basic reading strategies has poor readers also unable to grasp that reading is a meaning generating activity (Beach, 1996). According to Beach (1996), interaction with prior knowledge allows students to know meaning is constructed (Guastello, Lenz, 2005). If a student does not understand what they are reading, it will be difficult for them to take any meaning away from the text. Modeling to students how to use prior knowledge is a strategy students should use during guided reading.

Kidstations

Since guided reading is done in small groups with the instructor, it is important to give students that are not working with the teacher meaningful work. This can be done through kidstations. Kidstations reinforce skills taught during guided reading and allows students to apply the strategies they have been using (Guastello, Lenz, 2005). Students are being held accountable for what they are learning. Students working in all kidstations have benefited from working with their small groups through the contributions they have made in their group (Guastello, Lenz, 2005).

Other Types of Reading Instruction

Individualized Instruction in Reading

Individualized instruction makes contributions to improved reading outcomes for students who are at risk for academic failure (Frey, 2006). One to one instruction significantly benefits students who are at risk by being able to preview content that will be introduced to students during the lesson at a later time (Frey, 2006). One to one instruction compliments what teachers are doing in the classroom, it is appropriate for a wide range of students, and is part of a comprehensive education (Frey, 2006).

Silent Guided Reading

Modified guided silent reading allows teacher to explicitly model complex reading strategies that all readers are required to know by interacting with the students during silent reading time (Whitehead, 1994). Students need to be held responsible for what they are reading (Whitehead, 1994; Bryan, Fawson, Reutzel, 2003). During sustained silent reading, teachers need to model through discussion and teacher explanation not by modeling the behaviors through reading themselves (Bryan, Fawson, Reutzel, 2003). Silent reading should be time for students to engage and increase motivation in reading, what round-robin, oral, and book reports do not do, although it has not been specifically researched (Bryan, Fawson, Reutzel, 2003). Research shows that "social interaction and feedback around a text encouraged engaged reading practice" (Bryan, Fawson, Reutzel, 2003). Students need to be taught how to engage in reading through social interaction and small group direct instruction to meet their needs and increase engagement and motivation in reading. During silent reading, students are reading on their own and not

sharing what they read with others. Students should be given time to share what they are reading as part of literacy instruction to engage students in literature. Strategies learned during modified guided silent reading should then be implemented during sustained silent reading.

Literature Circles

According to Harvey Daniels (1994), "Literature circles are small temporary discussion groups that have chosen to read the same story…. While reading each group-determined portion of the text, each member prepares to take specific responsibilities in the upcoming discussion, and everyone comes to the group with the notes needed, to help perform that job." Literature circles are small reading groups' students guide on their own after modeling from the instructor. One of the strengths of literature circles is it gives students opportunities to interpret their readings in cooperative groups (Long, Gove, 2003). Like guided reading, literature circles are small cooperative groups where students are able to work together. However, during guided reading, students are working on the same leveled text unlike literature circles where students are given choices on what they want to read. Engagement strategies are used in literature circles by first having students read or be read to, then discuss, question the text, and experience the text with others in their group, all steps that are used in guided reading instruction (Long, Gove, 2003).

Methodology

This research was completed in the Southport School District in Rochester, NY at Armstrong Public School. There are 500 students enrolled in the kindergarten through

fifth grade in this one elementary school. There are a total of 21 teachers at Armstrong Public School. There are two kindergarten teachers, four first grade teachers, four second teachers, four third grade teachers, four fourth grade teachers, and three fifth grade teachers. This study, in a diverse suburban elementary school, focused on intermediate teachers and the reading instruction used in their classroom. The grades used in this study were intermediate grades third, fourth, and fifth.

This study began in May 2008 and was completed in June 2008. Classroom observations took place during the teacher's normal reading instruction time. Questionnaires were passed out prior to the school day to all third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers. Interviews were conducted during teacher planning time.

The researcher drew on critical theory throughout this study. Through the eyes of a critical theorist, the researcher saw many perspectives of reading instruction being used (Sipes, Constable, 1996). Communication is used to decide what type of instruction works best and data collected was interpreted in order to communicate to others the best type of instruction (Sipes, Constable, 1996).

The researcher looked at qualitative data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and field notes taken through announced classroom observations. Questionnaires were distributed to all 11 intermediate teachers: four third grade, four fourth grade, and three fifth grade. Of the 11 questionnaires, 7 were received back from: one third grade teacher, four fourth grade teachers, and two fifth grade teachers. The teachers are as followed: Rebecca, third grade. Caitlin, Ava, Jenna, and Anthony, fourth grade. Michael and Stephanie, fifth grade. The questionnaire consisted of open ended questions related to whole group and guided reading instruction in the classroom. Based

on questionnaire response and teacher availability, one teacher was chosen from each

grade to be observed during their reading instruction time. Teachers who were observed

were Rebecca, third grade, Jenna, fourth grade, and Michael, fifth grade. Announced

visits were used with all teachers due to teaching conflicts between the researcher and

participants. All teachers were observed two times. During all observations, field notes

were taken during reading instruction time. The field notes focused on teacher

instruction, not the students. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with the three

teachers observed to further understand their reading approach regarding whole group

and guided reading in their classroom and any other approach that may have taken place

during observations.

Findings

Based on questionnaire responses, announced classroom observations, and teacher

interviews, the researcher found three findings after analyzing all of the qualitative data.

Differentiated Instruction through Guided Reading

Data suggests one strength of guided reading is the individualized differentiated

instruction that is provided to meet the needs of all students. Caitlin, Ava, and Jenna are

fourth grade teachers. Caitlin finds that with smaller groups, she can meet the individual

needs of students. Ava uses guided reading groups that are at the students' instructional

level which allows her to meet the needs with individualized instruction. Students are

taught at their own level using small groups where book talks are used to have all

students interact with the books and each other. Jenna also felt individualized instruction was a strength of guided reading being done in her classroom.

Data from Jenna's classroom instruction observation shows how guided reading is used to meet the individualized needs of all students. Jenna uses guided reading groups in her class as a time for students to read and respond to questions with her guidance. Jenna differentiated instruction with this group based on the Social Studies topic being covered. Jenna reinforced the need to back up responses with details and support. One of the weaknesses of the guided reading group was comprehension, so Jenna made it known to the students they should focus on who, where, why, and how do you know responses to questions. For example, one question dealt with a new vocabulary word. After the student came across a new vocabulary word, the student made a guess at its meaning. Jenna asked, "How do you know that is the meaning of the word?" Jenna pushed the student for reasons as to how and why that was the meaning of the vocabulary word. When the students started answering response questions, Jenna wanted proof and evidence from the reading in order to back up their response. After the students would respond, Jenna would ask, "Why?", "How do you know?", "Where in the reading did you find that to back up what you said?" Again, the students and Jenna interacted with the text and created a discussion based on response questions at their own instructional level.

Stephanie and Michael are fifth grade teachers. Stephanie uses a guided reading approach to meet individual needs and to read with students at their instructional level. Small groups allow her to address all reading levels. Of the 23 students in Stephanie's class, seven have IEP's and five students are ESOL students. It is important to use guided reading groups because of the wide range of needs of all of her students. Stephanie uses

guided reading as an extension of what is read as a whole group, what is being learned in other content areas such as science or social students, and the individual needs of all students.

Michael also uses a guided reading approach to differentiate instruction based on student needs. Based on classroom observation of Michael, individualized differentiated instruction is met through guided reading groups. The students are split into three guided reading groups based on running records completed twice a year and the needs of all students. Michael met with the Clementine group first. This group is usually split into two groups of four because it is such a large group. However, since the students just finished the book, Michael met with them all together. Michael also stated this was the lowest of the three guided reading groups. In order to build on the overall comprehension of the book, Michael had all students write what they thought were the top three funniest parts of the entire book. Then all of the students passed the papers around the group and stared other student's funniest parts if they were also on their list. The students shared, discussed, and re-told the funniest parts of the book. Michael also brought up events the students did not, and had the students elaborate on them. This form of reader response had Michael listen to students re-tell parts of a guided reading chapter book that had the students focus on different events, in this case, the funniest parts.

For the second guided reading group, Michael used small group instruction to listen to all students read. Michael had each student read part of the chapter aloud, so he could listen and check for fluency. Michael also worked on comprehension with this group, but in a different manner. Michael used guided reading time to help explain to students different aspects of the book, Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson, due to the

fact it was a historical fiction book based on baseball great Jackie Robinson, which some students did not have background knowledge on. A baseball concept Michael elaborated on was "What does it mean to clinch the pennant?" Michael went on to explain how one team in the American League and one team in the National League clinch pennants, "banners", for having the best record in their league. Michael gave examples of teams clinching the pennant in order for students to grasp the pennant concept and relate it to teams today. Michael also used this guided reading time to explain to students what a rivalry and no hitter is. This time was used to explain new terms to the students they otherwise would be unfamiliar with if baseball is not part of their background knowledge.

Rebecca, a third grade teacher, uses guided reading groups in order to hit all students reading levels based on skill and reading ability. Rebecca has three guided reading groups in her class. In the group observed, there were three students. This group focused on inferring, "Something thought in your head while reading". First, Rebecca used the whisper reading approach so she could listen to all students read aloud. The small group of three allowed Rebecca to check for fluency. Rebecca modeled for the students how to infer while reading. The students were reading a chapter from a National Geographic guided reading book having to do with the moon. As Rebecca was reading, she paused and inferred the name of the elementary school she teaches in is Neil Armstrong Elementary School, named after the famous astronaut who was the first man on the moon. After giving her example, Rebecca had the students infer while they were reading and write what they thought in their graphic organizer. There were two columns. One was for the students to write the part of the reading they inferred about and the second was to write what they inferred while reading. Rebecca told the students their

ticket out of the group was to infer something they just read and to write it down. This was an informal way of assessing the students on inferring after working in a guided reading group.

Using Whole Group Reading Based on a Focus Skill

Findings show whole group reading is used based on a focus skill used for an appropriate text introduced to a whole group. Anthony, another fourth grade teacher, uses whole group reading in his class as the main focus of an established reading routine. Guided reading becomes a weakness for Anthony's students because a routine was not put in place early in the school year and the students do not enjoy working together in small groups. All the students are in one way or another being reached by Anthony's whole group instruction, but individual needs are not being met. Caitlin uses whole group reading instruction two to three times a week when she feels small groups would not be engaged in the lesson, that way the students are receiving instruction from Caitlin as well as support from their classmates.

Jenna uses whole group reading as a time to deliver mini lessons related to reading instruction. Whole group reading is used depending on the skill and if the whole group will benefit from the mini lesson. Jenna uses mini lessons provided through the districts anthology reader and pulls out lessons based on student needs and the guided reading text being used. Jenna used a whole group mini lesson on vocabulary. Jenna used a chart with three columns: word, meaning, how you know. This mini lesson had students sharing their own meaning of a vocabulary word and why they thought that was the meaning of the vocabulary word. For example, the meaning of the vocabulary word could

be known from experience, it is a hear and see rhyming word, or it is a different spelling, same word when you hear it, but has a different definition are different reasons the students could have for how they made meaning of the vocabulary word. In order for Jenna to make sure all the students understood this new vocabulary lesson and strategy, she asked many "Why?" and "HOW do you know?" questions to clarify the meaning and interpretation the students are trying to get across to one another about the new vocabulary word. This vocabulary strategy was used for the students' appropriate guided reading text as a way to make meaning from new and unknown vocabulary.

Another strategy Jenna used in a mini lesson was how to read an informational text. Jenna compared an informational text to a story and what each offered to the reader. "A story has characters, setting, plot, problem, and a sequence of events where an informational text teaches you something using definitions and facts." The students knew how to comprehend and respond to a normal story line, but Jenna noticed when it came to informational text, the students had difficulty comprehending all the facts and details in the text. A mini lesson Jenna did with regards to comprehending informational text was using sticks to check for understanding at the end of each paragraph. On the stick was a sticker that said, "Check for understanding" as a reminder to the students for what they were supposed to be doing while reading. Jenna modeled for the students by reading to the end of the first paragraph in the text, holding her comprehension stick up, and summarizing to the students what the paragraph was about without looking back in the text. Instead of the students reading and checking for understanding independently, Jenna had them partner read and practice using the comprehension stick strategy together. "I want you to take turns reading out loud with your partner. If it is not your turn to read,

you need to listen to your partner read. At the end of each paragraph your partner will stop reading. You will hold up your comprehension stick and summarize the information read to you without looking back in the book." After the mini lesson and instructions were told to all students, Jenna had them get to work with their assigned reading partners. Jenna went around monitoring the students and made sure they were asking their partner for help and clarification when needed. This mini lesson done in a whole group benefited and gave all students practice on reading an informational text and using a new comprehension strategy.

Stephanie uses a whole group reading approach once a week, usually using a fifth grade story level that is read together due to the range of reading levels in her class. The skills and themes Stephanie introduces in a whole group are then extended through guided reading groups. Michael also uses a similar approach to whole group reading that Stephanie uses.

Michael uses whole group reading if it is a fifth grade text he feels most students will struggle with if read independently or with a partner due to the concepts being discussed in the text. Michael started a poetry lesson by reading poetry from Science Verse that related back to science topics the students studied throughout the fifth grade. Michael also related poetry concepts such as rhyming, alliteration, syllables, and shape poems to books the fifth grade students were writing for kindergartners. As a whole group, the students were reading and stopping frequently to discuss a poem on Paul Revere's ride. Michael made the decision to do this as a whole group because it required "higher level thinking skills" that challenged each student. Michael and the students read line by line. Michael then led students through questions line by line in order to get them

to analyze the line and more importantly the poem to better comprehend what they were reading. Michael also went over new vocabulary with the students. He had the students discover the meaning of the word through context clues, questioning, and discussion as a class. Michael also took the time to go over personification. He related what was read in the Paul Revere poem to movies because "the students watch movies more than they read". This allowed all students to relate to the concept because of students exposure to television and movies. Doing the poetry lesson together allowed students to work together on making meaning from a topic that required "higher level thinking skills".

Rebecca uses whole group reading when the third grade anthology book by Scott Foresman is used. Rebecca introduced the story that was being read about a boy's trip to outer space. Rebecca asked all of the students to close their eyes and imagine what it would be like to go into outer space. "How would you feel? What would you hear? What do you think you would see? What would be the purpose for your trip?" All of these questions Rebecca asked the students got the students thinking about what it would be like to go into outer space. After asking students these questions and giving the students time to think about ways to respond, Rebecca chose students to describe what going into outer space would be like. After background knowledge was put in place, the class as a whole listened to the story on tape. During this time, all students were to follow along in their anthology book as the tape was playing. During this reading, it was important the students looked at the illustrations because the text related directly to them. The illustrations helped the students with comprehension and making a connection with the words the students were listening to.

The focus skill for this story was recalling information. At the end of the story, Rebecca went back through the entire story and asked students to recall information such as "What happened to the space shuttle after it took off?" "What did the main character see when he looked out the window?" "What did he do to prepare for his trip to outer space?" All of these questions were scripted in the anthology book on each page next to where the answers could be found. After all questions were asked, Rebecca had all students rip out a page from their workbook. The workbook page had to do with recalling information from a small section in the story. Rebecca chose a student to read aloud the directions from the page. "I need a volunteer to read the directions at the top of the page." Then she chose one of the five hands that went up. After the directions were read by the student, Rebecca read the short excerpt that came directly from the story. Rebecca went through each of the five questions related to recalling information. She gave students time to look back at the excerpt to find the answer to the question that was posed to them. When a student would answer the question, Rebecca expected the student to tell the rest of the class where they found their answer and why it answered the question. Students were able to participate in recalling information by contributing information to other student responses.

District Mandate

A common reading approach for all teachers was whole group reading, guided reading, and independent reading as part of a balanced literacy approach. The reason for this was because the school district is moving towards using balanced literacy and guided reading in all elementary grades in order to better meet the needs and have success for all

students. The district uses Fountas and Pinnell for their way of leveling guided reading books. Teachers in the intermediate grades use Fountas and Pinnell leveled books in their guided reading groups. Teachers use running records and informal data to decide what guided reading group the students would fit in to best address their needs.

Caitlin chose to use whole group reading and guided reading in her class because it is what was chosen by the district. Anthony took a balanced literacy approach because of the current literacy trend he has seen based on his college courses since he is a new teacher. Jenna uses guided groups with mini lessons as whole groups. These fourth grade teachers are using instruction based on what the school district is requiring of them.

Once the students get to fifth grade, there is more independence, but teacher guidance is still needed to steer and guide them in the right direction. Stephanie uses guided reading, whole group reading, and independent reading with the use of response journals in her classroom. Michael uses guided reading, partner reading, read alouds, and the "Daily Five" in his classroom as well as Stephanie does in her classroom. Michael said the "Daily Five" tasks are the student reading to themselves, reading with someone else, word work, writing, and listening to reading.

Michael used partner reading when students were reading from their anthology book. The students had been partner reading all year, so before he let the students go off on their own, he reminded the students during partner reading they were to read elbow to elbow and knee to knee. Before the students were going to partner reading, he told them to compare and contrast Japan to America as they read. Then he assigned students partners and took a step back and watched and listened to partners read together. On the board, Michael wrote "After reading, compare and contrast Japan to America back at

your seats". If students did not finish their compare and contrast assignment, it was then homework. This is a way for Michael to assess students through partner reading in order to see what they are gaining from the reading while reading with partners rather than in a small group or whole group with the teacher. Partner reading is another way of incorporating a balanced literacy style in the classroom and Michael has done just that.

Rebecca uses balanced literacy, guided reading, whole group instruction, and small group instruction based on skills in her third grade classroom. She chose to use this type of reading instruction based on student achievement and reading abilities. Rebecca uses Fountas and Pinnell guided reading in her class to help student achievement. The books she chooses for each group are based on their guided reading level as well as any other topic being covered in a different subject area, so she can relate it back to other topics of interest. Rebecca uses guided reading in her classroom four days a week for 50 minutes. She does not meet with every guided reading group each day. Rebecca gives groups time to work at stations on other aspects of literacy that are not reached in guided reading groups.

Implications

Intermediate teachers should consider adopting a literacy approach of incorporating whole group mini lessons to introduce literacy strategies to all students with guided reading as an extension to meet the needs of all students. To expand on this, a balanced literacy approach should be used by all intermediate teachers. Balanced literacy allows students to read and write at their own level without feeling frustrated, and varies instructional methods.

The intermediate teachers should also work together on creating an ongoing literacy approach they feel will benefit all students. Each grade level should first meet together and each teacher should share what he/she does in his/her own class with regards to reading instruction. After grade level discussions are completed, all intermediate teachers should work together on creating a reading approach that will benefit all students' diverse learning needs. Each intermediate classroom should use guided reading as the core of reading instruction. Each classroom should also have a time for independent reading. This allows students to practice reading strategies they have learned through whole group mini lessons and guided reading.

Professional developments should also be offered by the district to teachers. Professional developments on guided reading should be offered to teachers, especially new teachers who are setting up their first classroom. The professional development should help teachers create a classroom set up that would be best fit for the use of guided reading groups. They should also model for teachers what a guided reading group should look like and what goes on in a guided reading group including skills a teacher in the appropriate grade could be working on with students, how to use data from running records to create lessons for students, or even model what a teacher should be doing in a guided reading group. Extending on what teachers already know will help teachers create successful guided reading instruction in their intermediate classrooms. It is important teachers understand the strengths of guided reading being that it provides differentiated instruction to students who have a wide range of abilities.

Teachers should also know when it is the right time to use whole group reading in their classroom. This should be done based on each grade level. Teachers in each grade

level should come together and discuss what texts they feel should be done whole group. However, each classroom has students with different needs, so teachers should work together on sharing and creating strategies the teachers could introduce in a whole group reading in their own classroom that has other needs to be addressed. If a classroom as a whole has much strength, then teachers should come up with ideas on how to challenge the students without pushing them into their frustration level. What is done in a whole group by teachers should then be extended through guided reading groups in the classroom.

Conclusion

This study shows how three intermediate classroom teachers use guided reading as part of their reading instruction as well as how they incorporate whole group reading. The teachers whose classrooms were observed used whole group reading in two ways. They either used it as a way to introduce a topic that would be further investigated in guided reading or through mini lessons on a grade level text all students would benefit learning in a whole group in order to further their understanding. Whole group reading should be used as an introduction to differentiated guided reading.

What should be brought out from this study is using guided reading in intermediate grades is still beneficial to the students learning and teacher instruction. Teachers are able to create lessons based on student needs rather than having students participate in the same lesson that does not differentiate instruction. Guided reading allows teachers to work closely with a small group of students who are reading at the same guided reading level. Teachers should make time for guided reading as an

opportunity to work on introducing, modeling, guiding, and then monitoring the students'

use of new literacy strategies.

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Appendices

Teacher Questionnaire

Name _____
          *Pseudonyms will be used

Grade _____

What kind of reading instruction is done in your classroom?

Why did you choose the reading approach that is being used in your intermediate classroom?

What are the strengths of your reading instruction?

What are the weaknesses of your reading instruction?

Do you use guided reading in your classroom?   If so, how often?

Do you use whole group reading in your classroom?   If so, how often?

How does your reading instruction benefit all students in your classroom?

Do you feel your reading instruction reaches your diverse learners?

Teacher Interview Questions

1. When do you use whole group reading? Why?

2. How do you choose what you will do whole group and what you will do in a guided group?

3. How do you decide what the needs are for each group?

4. How do you assess students in a whole group setting?

5. How do you assess students in a guided group setting?

6. Are there any ways you bring what is done in a guided group to a whole group?