

Reader Case Study

EDUC 301

Sahara Kipfer

December 11, 2009

### Reader Case Study- Phase 1

Throughout the first phase, the researcher familiarized herself with one particular student, a twelve year old female who is in the fourth grade. This student comes from a blended family, in which the mother has been remarried three times up to this point. Another family characteristic that is essential to this study is that the child's mother and step-father do not speak English. In fact, Spanish is the primary language that is spoken in the home. Therefore, the researcher is working with a student whose native language is not English, although she speaks it fluently. Another vital feature that concerns the researcher is that family moves from town to town each year because that is the lifestyle of migrant workers. In fact, the twelve year old girl has reached the age where she is required to help pick alongside her family in the fields. However, the reader's parents have always made sure that their four children received some form of education, no matter where they ended up.

The student that the researcher is working with says that she likes coming to school. On the other hand, she did not have a favorite subject to speak of, although the researcher is convinced that she enjoys writing aspect of Language Arts the best. For instance, when it comes to note taking, the student tries to be as thorough as possible, but this might be due to the fact that she does not want to miss anything that might possibly be on an upcoming test. In fact, one thing that this girl did show great enthusiasm for was her love for the outdoors. Riding her bicycle is her favorite activity to do outside, but if she cannot be outside, then she prefers to watch various cartoons on the television.

While discussing the reader with her teacher, the main focus of the reader case study was revealed: vocabulary instruction. Due to her test scores on the NWEA, ISTEP,

and STAR, the teacher decided that the reader needed further help to develop her limitations within the realm of word meanings. The problem that concerns the teacher is that if the student understands the words in a story, then she has no problem with comprehension; on the other hand, if she struggles with some of the words, then her ability to comprehend is greatly diminished. Take for instance her score, at the beginning of the fourth grade, on the reading portion of the NWEA, which was 187 and the average is 201. As for the ISTEP, her English/Language Arts score was 387 and the typical student scores in the 410s. A third tool that her teacher looks at is the STAR, in which the entire school is required to utilize this assessment piece; although, not every school system makes use of this type of assessment. Nevertheless, the STAR's end result indicated that the student was reading at a 3.4 grade level and this test was conducted only a few weeks into the school year! By looking at these scores, it is obvious that this reader needs some one-on-one attention and that is what the researcher is going to provide.

To understand the student's need for vocabulary instruction, the researcher administered the CORE Vocabulary Screening on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009. This assessment measures how well a student knows the meaning of grade-level words as they read silently. The task involves the student reading a word in a box and then choosing which of the three answer choices means about the same as the word in the box. The reason the researcher chose this assessment was because vocabulary knowledge is critical to understanding grade-appropriate text, and as indicated by the reader's teacher, this student needs help in this area. Therefore, the researcher decided upon this screening tool, and the end result was that the reader scored 18 out of 30, meaning she answered 12 of

the word meanings incorrectly. At the end of the reader case study, this same assessment will be given, in which it will be referred to as the outcome base; however, a different form of the assessment will be used.

Other tools will be utilized throughout the reader case study as well. For example, the progress monitoring tool that the researcher will administer is known as the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI). Basically this is similar to a running record, but it is tailored to meet the needs of upper elementary students, such as this reader. The IRI will help the researcher assess not only the reader's word recognition but also reading strategies that related to comprehension. The story that the student will be reading is entitled *Johnny Appleseed* and it will be given at the end of the third lesson. This will allow for the researcher to have data from the beginning, middle, and end of the reader case study, in which they can more easily plot the student's reading progression.

## Assessment Database

Name	Grade	How to use it	When to use it	Information provided	Reference information
Elementary Spelling Inventory	4-5	The teacher dictates the test like a normal spelling test, using 25 words. They are then graded upon several criteria such as using the correct digraph, vowels, consonants, suffixes, etc.	Three times a year: in Sept, Jan and May.	Assesses the word knowledge students have to bring into reading and spelling	<a href="http://teams.lacoe.edu/reading/assessments/spelling.html">http://teams.lacoe.edu/reading/assessments/spelling.html</a>
Isolating Final Sounds	K-3	The teacher dictates a group of words (three or four words per round) and the student tells which two words have the same ending sound.	At different points throughout the year, no set time frame though.	Phonemic awareness	<a href="http://teams.lacoe.edu/reading/assessments/final.html">http://teams.lacoe.edu/reading/assessments/final.html</a>
Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)	K-6	This is a 10 minute computerized test.	About 3 to 4 times a year.	<u>Phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension</u>	<a href="https://dibels.uoregon.edu/dibelsinfo.php">https://dibels.uoregon.edu/dibelsinfo.php</a>
Peabody Picture Vocabulary	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade on up	Student is shown pictures and	At the beginning of each new	Provides age and grade level equivalents.	<a href="http://www.pearsonassessments.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/en-">http://www.pearsonassessments.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/en-</a>

Test-Third Edition (PPVT-III)		asked to point to the picture that correctly corresponds with the vocabulary word being used.	semester, so that could be 2 times a year, depending on the school.		us/Productdetail.htm? Pid=PAa12010&Mode=summary
DRA- Developmental Reading Assessment	K-3	The teacher uses leveled books and various recording data worksheets to determine what reading level the student is current at.	At the beginning and the end of the school year is when this should be administered.	Reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.	<a href="http://www.pearsonschool.com/index.cfm?locator=PSZ4Z4&amp;PMDbProgramId=23661&amp;PMDbSiteId=2781&amp;PMDbSolutionId=6724&amp;PMDbSubSolutionId=6731&amp;PMDbCategoryId=3289">http://www.pearsonschool.com/index.cfm?locator=PSZ4Z4&amp;PMDbProgramId=23661&amp;PMDbSiteId=2781&amp;PMDbSolutionId=6724&amp;PMDbSubSolutionId=6731&amp;PMDbCategoryId=3289</a>

### Reader Case Study- Phase 2

As mentioned in phase I, the researcher administered the CORE Vocabulary Screening to the reader. It was due to was to the teacher's recommendation that the researcher decided to focus on the student's need for additional vocabulary assistance; therefore, the researcher chose to measure this individual's ability to connect to grade level synonyms. What the researcher found was that the reader struggled with matching two like words. Even though the researcher had instructed the reader to silently read the words to herself, she did not do so. Instead, she read them aloud, in which the researcher listened intently. The reader was able to pronounce many of the words correctly within the screening, but the ones she stumbled over were the words she scored incorrectly. In fact, the reader was not able to make an accurate connection between 12 of the 30 words.

As a result, the student's performance level placed them in the category known as strategic. Students falling between 50-74% are placed within this range and the reader that was assessed happened to obtain a 60%. This means that they are having some difficulty in understanding grade-level material due to insufficient vocabulary knowledge. Consequently, the researcher is going to work one-on-one with this reader to try and increase their vocabulary skills. This will be done through a series of six lessons, which the researcher will conduct during the normally scheduled Accelerated Reader (AR) time.

The plan of action that the researcher intends to carry out will revolve around one particular book: *Little House in the Big Woods*. However, the researcher is going to be implementing various strategies that proficient readers should be using, such as context clues. There are six types of context clues, according to *Literacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A*

*Balanced Approach.* Those six categories are: definition, example-illustration, contrast, logic, root words and affixes, and grammar. In order to ensure that the reader understands what contexts clues are and how they are to be used, the researcher is only going to focus on three of the types: definition, example-illustration, and logic. The researcher is going to spend about two lessons per strategy, that way the reader does not feel pressured or crunched for time. The idea is for the reader to gain a better understanding of word meanings and this can only be achieved if the researcher sets a gradual pace to the lessons.

### Lesson Plan Ideas:

\*side note- In phase 3 I refer to some deviations I made within the lesson plans. However, I did not personally make those changes in phase 2, mainly because I liked how they were already set up, and I hope to be able to use some of these ideas as they are.

- Lesson #1:
  - The researcher is going to begin the lesson by telling the reader that since she enjoys the outdoors, she should be able to find a connection within the book *Little House in the Big Woods*. This book will be used throughout the six lessons; therefore it is necessary to introduce the book, which will be done through a book talk.
  - The researcher will then explain that there are some words within the book that might be difficult to understand, but with help from the researcher the reader will gain a better understanding of the words. At this time, the reader will then be asked the question: “If you come across a word you do not know, what are some things you can do to help you understand the meaning of that word?”
  - If the reader has difficulty in answering the question, the researcher will provide a few examples to answer the question above. Next, they will narrow the focus to just one specific area- definitions.
  - An explanation of how this context clue, definitions, can be used will need to be provided, in addition to it being modeled. Also, the researcher will conduct a think aloud at this point, in which the first five pages of the book will be read. The words that the researcher will capitalize on include “fierce” and “venison.” While the researcher models this strategy, they will place a sticky note above the words they are having difficulty with, that way they can return to these words at the end of the chapter and make

sure they understand them. Most likely these words will appear in later chapters, so it is best to understand their meaning now. It should also be stressed that this strategy of defining does not always work, but it is one of many helpful strategies, that is why the reader is learning about it.

- The researcher will have the reader read the rest of chapter one, in which they are to follow the researcher's example. What they do not finish will become additional work that is to be completed by the next time the researcher visits. While the student is independently reading, they will need to write the definition they think describes the word they struggled with at first. These words and their definitions will be revisited in the next lesson. The student should not expect this strategy to work 100%; therefore, they might need to use the dictionary to define the word. If this occurs, they must write "dictionary" beside their definition, so the researcher will know if they were able to use the strategy that had previously been taught.
- Lesson #2:
  - The researcher will ask the reader what she remembers from the first lesson. They will then be prompted to show the researcher what words they marked with their sticky notes, which will be reviewed by both individuals. The reader will need to explain their reasoning for their definition and then the researcher will either confirm or deny their response. If they are incorrect, the researcher will need to explain what the correct answer should be.
  - The researcher will take the idea of defining one step further. The researcher will think aloud during this lesson, in which they will incorporate the substitution strategy. When an unfamiliar word is encountered, the researcher will be sure to reread the sentence or paragraph, depending, in which they will replace the word with the definition or synonym. This will be done for the first five pages within chapter two.
  - The reader will continue with this strategy for the remainder of the chapter. Whatever pages within chapter two are not completed during the time frame of the lesson, the reader will have to complete outside of the lesson. In order to ensure that they use this strategy, they will need to write out their newly formed sentences on a separate sheet of paper, which will be reviewed in the next lesson. They are to be reminded that a dictionary may need to be utilized during this time.
- Lesson #3
  - The researcher will begin the lesson with a review of the words from chapter two, with emphasis on the words that the reader completed on their own.
  - Next the researcher will introduce a new strategy- example-illustration. This new tactic will of course be modeled within the first six pages of chapter three. While the researcher is modeling this technique, they will write down any words they come across that fall within this category. Each word will be written on their own index card. On the other side a

picture will be drawn, that way the student will have another way of remembering the meanings.

- The student is to follow the teacher's example and read the rest of chapter three, however, this chapter is rather short, and so the lesson will be extended into chapter four this time. The pages that are not completed during this lesson will become additional work that is to be finished before the next meeting. To help motivate the reader, the researcher will tell the student that a game will be played at the beginning of the next lesson, but in order to do the activity, they must complete at least five index cards.
- The researcher will then administer an IRI (Informal Reading Inventory), but with a different story, a short story concerning Johnny Appleseed. This will allow for the researcher to see if the student stumbles over any words, particular any words they do not fully understand. When the reader is done with the story, the researcher will ask if there were any words they did not understand. If so, they will question the strategies the reader took to find the meaning.
- Lesson #4
  - The researcher will begin this lesson with the activity that was briefly mentioned in the previous lesson. The reader will be asked to lay out their cards on the table, but they are to be picture side up. It will be the researcher's job to try and identify the words based upon their pictures. Once this activity has been completed, the researcher will have the reader do the same, but with cards the researcher compiled from the same chapter(s).
  - Next the researcher will have the student draw a Venn diagram on a piece of paper. The reader will then be questioned as to whether they know what this diagram entails. If the reader provides a response such as similarities and differences, then the researcher will move on to the next step. This subsequent step involves the reader writing definition on one side and example-illustration on the other. They are to begin reading chapter five with the remaining time, in which they are to classify any unknown words they come across. If a word does not fit within one of the categories, then they are to write it outside of the two circles. Readers will be instructed to complete this assignment before the next meeting time. At the beginning of the next lesson, the words they chose from within chapter five will be analyzed.
- Lesson #5
  - To begin this lesson, the researcher will start with a review of the Venn diagram the reader was to have completed. The reader will have to explain, as well as defend their categorizations. This will allow for the researcher to see how the reader is applying the strategies. The researcher will then focus on the words that were not included in the diagram. The researcher intentionally and explicitly did not tell the students to clarify these terms; however, the reader should know by now that the researcher expects them to understand all the terms within the book.

- This lesson will mark the third and final strategy to be taught: logic. This will be a difficult strategy to present, but it is one that students need to be aware of. Too often, students discover an unfamiliar word and quickly dismiss it, thinking that is unimportant or irrelevant to the story. In order to model this strategy, the researcher will utilize the idea of an open-mind portrait. Each time that an unfamiliar word is encountered, on the first five pages of chapter six, the researcher will draw a thought a bubble within the person's head. This is to symbolism that they are actively thinking about that word. Within the bubble, the word is to be written and then a symbol to represent the word is to be draw/written next to it. These are only to be used for words that a reader grasps from rereading the sentence or paragraph.
- Once the demonstration is complete, the reader will have an opportunity to repeat the activity, but with the rest of the chapter. The pages that do not get finished become homework, which will be evaluated in lesson six. The reader will also need to be aware of the following in order to correctly complete their own open-mind: if another strategy was used, then the word can still be written down, just outside of the person's mind.
- Lesson #6
  - The teacher will begin the lesson with the final assessment piece, the outcome base, which is exactly like the screening test, except that a different form is being used. The reason for administering it in the beginning is so that the reader can receive feedback.
  - The researcher will then have the student explain their open-mind portrait. (If they had not finished in the previous lesson.) Included in these clarifications should be the reasons as to why they were easily able to figure out the meaning behind the word.
  - Next the researcher will begin reading the first three pages of chapter seven, in which they will model all of the strategies that are encountered within these pages. The researcher will have a copy of the web that will be handed out to the reader and this is where the researcher will place their responses they come into contact with.
  - After the last page has been read, the reader will then take over for the remainder of the chapter. They will then have the opportunity to fill out their own web as they are reading. The idea is to see how well they implement all three strategies within one reading period. It is possible to use all three strategies, but it will be up to the reader to deem it necessary or not.
  - Once the web has been completed, the researcher will encourage the reader to continue with the last few chapters of the book. The web may take the entire time to complete, but if not the student is to keep on reading. If and when the time is up, the researcher will praise the student for their hard work and ask that they continue using these strategies, among many others that they will learn along the way.

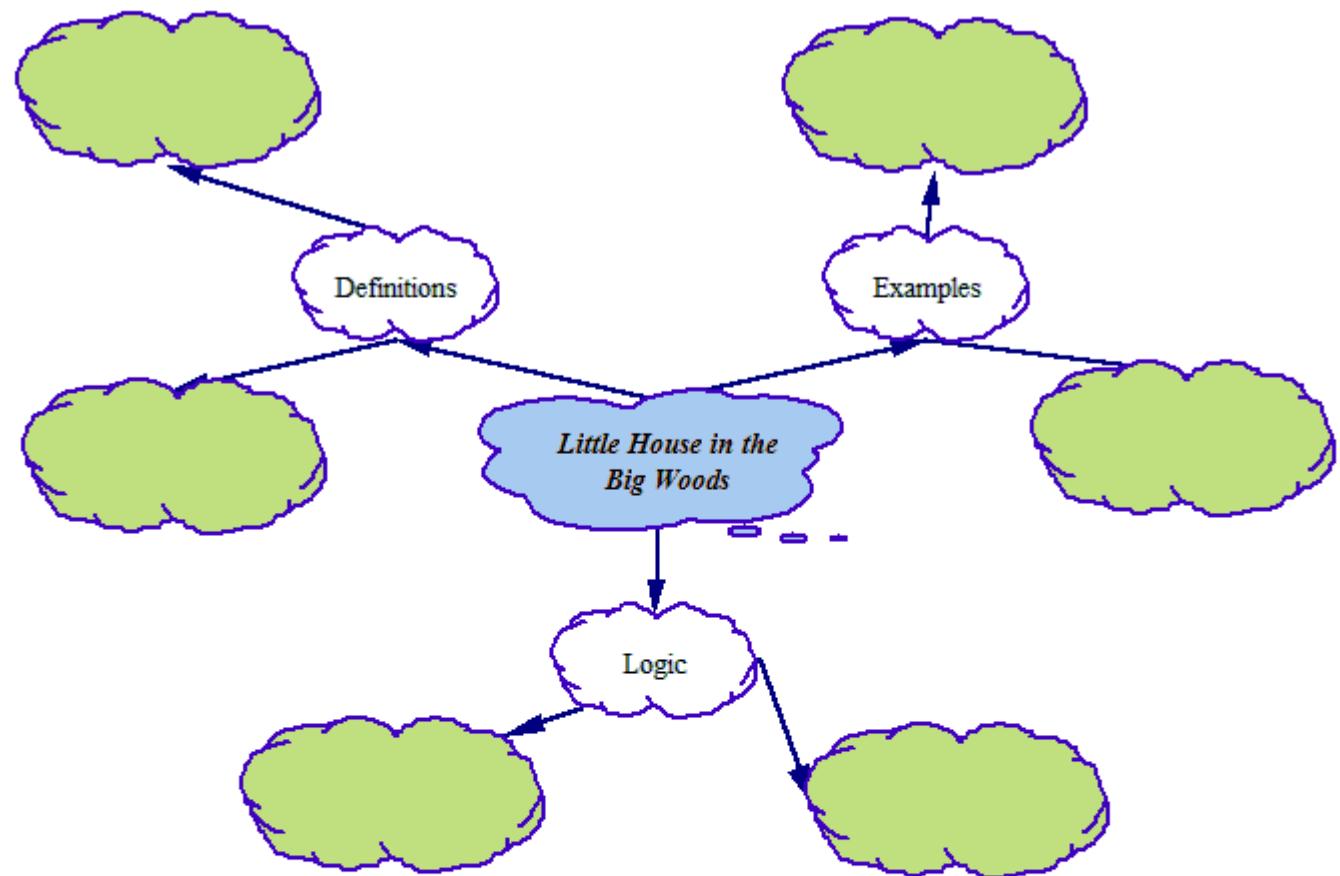
**Information Page:**

- Title of book: *Little House in the Big Woods*
- Author's name: Laura Ingalls Wilder
- Copyright date: 1932
- Summary: The story begins in later half of the 1870s, in which the family lives in a log cabin on the edge of the Big Woods of Wisconsin. At the time, Laura is only four years old, although you will be able to see her grow up throughout this book and other eight that follow. This book is only the beginning in a long line of series that explains the difficulties of pioneer life. One of those struggles is providing food for the family. Pa must set traps in order to catch food and Ma stays busy making cheese and butter. These are not the only chores they must attend to, but it provides a glimpse into their lives. Even though they encounter many grapples within the story, one thing remains near and dear and that is the idea that the family remains safely together.
- Creation of web: The graphic organizer that was created is to be used in lesson 6. It is to provide the researcher with evidence that the reader understood the differences between the three contexts clues that were introduced. When the student receives this graphic organizer they are to fill it out according to chapter 7 of *Little House in the Big Woods*. Since the reader will have their own interpretation as to what words they do not fully understand, the researcher does not see any need to provide an answer key.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: You are to complete this web as you read chapter 7 of *Little House in the Big Woods*. When you come to a word you do not understand, remember to use one of the word meaning strategies you learned within the other lessons. If one strategy does not work, then try another. Once you have found a strategy that works, write that word in one of the connecting circles. Each circle is to be filled out by the end of the lesson.



Dear Parent/Guardian,

As you know, I have been working with your child on determining the areas that she needs help with in reading. After assessing her vocabulary abilities, I have found that this is an area she needs to develop. In order to provide assistance, I have decided that the focus for our tutoring sessions will center upon context clues. I am only going to utilize three different contexts clues: definition, example-illustration, and logic. Currently your child is able to phonetically decode words, but when it comes to identifying their meaning she frequently guesses. My hope is to reverse this guessing strategy and provide her with the tools to properly decode unfamiliar words.

Within these tutoring lessons, I will be utilizing the teaching tactics of thinking aloud and modeling with the three different strategies mentioned above and then your daughter will need to practice them after our tutoring sessions have ended for that day. This means that additional work will be sent home periodically in which she may be asked to finish reading a chapter in the book *Little House in the Big Woods* and then having to identify the words she struggled with while reading. Furthermore, extra materials such as a dictionary may need to be utilized at times, so do not be surprised if you see your child flipping through the pages of this enormous, yet magnificent book. Lastly, I would like to thank you for allowing me to work with your child. I hope to see an improvement in her reading abilities throughout our sessions. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 260-273-9890 or you can send an email to [sokipfer@spartans.manchester.edu](mailto:sokipfer@spartans.manchester.edu).

Sincerely,

Miss Sahara Kipfer

### Reader Case Study- Phase 3

Upon the completion of each lesson, the researcher wrote a brief reflection.

Within these reflections, the researcher discussed the instructional strategies that were utilized. The researcher also made note of the success rate within each strategy. For example, if there was something that went particularly well or did not seem to work, then the researcher made note of that. All in all, there were six total reflections, which can be found below.

#### **Lesson #1:**

After teaching the lesson, the researcher felt as though the instructional topic, vocabulary, was the right choice. There were many reasons the researcher felt this way. One rationale is that the reader constantly paused and contemplated the meaning of several words, such as “trundle bed,” “roamed,” and “brindle.” The exact definition of trundle bed was not provided, but the reader attempted to use context clues, in which the reader was able to figure out that it was some type of bed. Therefore, a dictionary had to be utilized. This was an excellent case in point for proving the statement of “this strategy (looking for the definition within the text) will not work 100% of the time.”

However, the student was able to utilize context clues related to the concept of defining. For instance, the reader had paused at the word “hollow,” as though she were utterly confused. The researcher then prompted her to reread the sentence and instantaneously she figured out that the word referred to a tree being empty on the inside.

One other thing that the researcher would like to point out is that she deviated from her lesson plan slightly. It had been her intention to utilize sticky notes to mark the

words the reader was struggling with, but this idea was quickly thrown out. The moment the researcher took out sticky notes, the reader's face dropped, in which she expressed her dislike toward them. Nevertheless, the researcher thought up an idea on the spot.

Along with the materials that were prepared for this study were note cards; therefore, the researcher used the same tactic but in a different style. Additionally, it should be stated, if it had not already been inferred, but the reader will be keeping a collection of vocabulary word cards through the following sessions. This will allow for an easy access to studying, even to areas that are outside the domain of the school environment.

### **Lesson #2:**

The second lesson started off on a strong and positive note. As soon as both the reader and researcher sat down, the reader pulled out her vocabulary cards and showed the researcher two new words, smoldered and haste, that had been written down and were correctly defined. This student was so proud of her efforts that she wanted these cards to be added to the spelling test this week. However, the reader had a little difficulty remembering some of the words from the first lesson. There were five terms from the first lesson that were wrote down on note cards, but the researcher highly doubts that the reader spent much time reviewing. Instead, it is thought that the reader was more excited about creating the additional cards by herself. Nevertheless, the researcher praised her for her hard work and suggested that she study the vocabulary before our next meeting. To provide an incentive to learn these words, the researcher told her that they would be reoccurring words, so it would be better to learn them now.

A think aloud was also conducted during this lesson, in which the reader was able to see how the “substitution” strategy could be applied within chapter 2 of the book. The aforementioned strategy can also be called a synonym, a concept that this 4<sup>th</sup> grade reader has learned about before. In fact, the student was able to tell the researcher what a synonym was, in addition to naming a few examples. “Small and tiny” and “big and tall” were the two synonyms that the reader created on their own. When it came to applying it in the book, the reader was able to work through the word “banked” with the researcher, in which the word “piled” became our new “substitution. However, the reader experienced some difficulty in trying this strategy on their own with the word “grated,” in which she thought an applicable synonym was “excellence.” This was an acceptable error, considering “great” and “grate” sound exactly alike, but yet they hold completely different meanings.

Given a redo of this lesson, the researcher would add one more piece of support. For instance, when talking about synonyms, the researcher would provide an explanation sheet, along with some guided practice. After all, practice makes perfect, so the researcher thinks that it would not harm the student to add more work.

### **Lesson #3**

The reader did not come prepared with any notes or written work, such as synonyms or definitions. The researcher questioned the reader about this and all she could say was “I knew all the words in the book. You told me only to do that work for words I don’t know.” The researcher was slightly disappointed at first but decided to play along with the reader’s story. Therefore, the researcher posed various vocabulary words

to the reader, in which they were to provide a definition or a synonym. Initially the researcher thought this was all preposterous; however, the reader shocked the researcher and she knew all the correct answers! The reader then told me “I told you I studied; I knew you were coming today.” This event made the researcher extremely happy, for the “grate” and “great” was not as big a concern as the researcher had thought it would be. The researcher had anticipated at least one more lesson on synonyms, but the student obviously had the information down pat.

As a result, the researcher decided to implement a new context clue, example-illustration. The researcher began by providing the reader with an explicit definition of what this context clue means, as well as an example, even though it sounds like it is a self-explanatory context clue. Nevertheless, the sample sentence that was given looked like: “Toads, frogs, and some birds are predators that hunt and eat spiders.” The researcher also found some examples with the book *Little House in the Big Woods*, in which the reader made note cards for some of the words, such as “scurrying” and “whittled.” The researcher was very proud of her reader in that moment because she did not even ask the student to take notes. Instead, the reader conveyed a sense of responsibility, as well as readiness to learn. Even though the reader was beginning to take notes without the researcher’s prompt, the researcher still interpreted and gave the reader a new task. Instead of writing the definition out, the reader is to draw a picture of what the definition stands for.

At the end of the lesson the researcher administered an IRI (Informal Reading Inventory) over the reading selection *Johnny Appleseed*. The selection had a total of 308 words, but the researcher narrowed the focus down to the first paragraph, which consisted

of 113 words. Two of the three errors dealt with proper nouns, such as John's last name, Chapman, and the state of Massachusetts. The other error was also a simple mistake, in that the reader said "settling" when she should have said "settler." All in all, her error ratio is 1:38, meaning that for each error she makes, she reads about 38 words correctly. Other scores to mention are the accuracy rate, 97%, and self-correction rate, 1:3. Overall, the researcher would like to say that the reader is most likely reading appropriate leveled books, although some of the texts she does find rather easy. Sometimes it can just be plain hard to find a balance in books, even at an adult level!

#### **Lesson #4**

Instead of the traditional reviewing of words, the researcher and the reader did something that was a little bit different, yet it was engaging. What made this review more interesting was that the reader laid all her note cards down, so that they pictures (these were only note cards from the previous lesson) were facing upward and essentially a game of match was played. However, only the researcher was allowed to guess what the cards were representing, but at the same time, the reader assessed my knowledge and tried to provide scaffolding when it was necessary. Ultimately, the researcher had guessed all the cards that were strewn about.

The researcher deviated from lesson plan #4, in that the reader was suppose to draw a Venn diagram that would compare and contrast various example-illustrations. This activity was changed at the very last minute, in that the researcher had the diagram printed off and ready to hand to the reader, but the researcher was flexible and went a different way with the lesson. The researcher had pegged out all the possible vocabulary

words that could cause confusion. Therefore, the researcher was prepared, just in more ways than she knew at the time. The change that occurred was the throwing out of the Venn diagram and the implementation of “Predicting Word Meanings.” The researcher knows that sometimes the reader likes to guess what is going to happen next in the text, so she thought that the reader would appreciate an activity that incorporating this idea. Consequently, the reader predicted the meanings of “fashionable,” “trough,” “delaine,” and “basque.” After predicting their word meanings, the researcher and the reader both read the chapter together, taking turns whenever the other became tired. While reading the book though, both individuals discussed their opinion on whether they thought the text conveyed the meaning through the context of example-illustration. In fact, one thing that the researcher could have done was have the reader write a sentence in that context manner, if the text did not portray it that way in the first place).

### **Lesson #5**

Once again, the researcher deviated from the lesson plan, but only to make minor adjustments. It was in the beginning, with the reviewing of the words that was affected. Since there is only one more lesson after this one, the researcher wanted to be sure and see if there were any words or skills that needed to be reiterated before the final skill, logic, was introduced. Therefore, a worksheet of 6 words from within the book was created, in which the sentences related directly to the book as well, so as to make better sense content wise. The words that were chosen were not new, but ones that had been stressed in previous lessons; however, the reader scored a 3/6 on the worksheet. As a

result, the researcher reviewed the entire worksheet with the student, so that she could understand all the sentences, in case she ended up guessing on some of the blanks.

Next, the context clue of logic was introduced, in which the researcher provided the definition and an example. To be exact, the reader was told that logic is when “readers think about the rest of the sentences to understand the unknown word.” This can also incorporate the strategy of rereading. The example sentence that the researcher used with the reader was that of “an exoskeleton acts like a suit of armor to protect the spider.” Additionally, the researcher thought aloud and even modeled the strategy, like all the other strategies up to this point, for the first few pages of chapter 6.

While the reader attempted to read the text, she kept the lesson’s activity in mind. In the end, the reader created an open-mind portrait (which the researcher had explained and thought aloud on its significance) because they allowed for another person, such as the researcher, to see how they were thinking. One of the bubbles that the reader drew contained the word “bargain” and then a picture of Pa trying to trade some of his goods. Unfortunately the researcher did not receive this project back from the reader’s teachers. There had been a substitute teacher that afternoon and the researcher had laid the artwork on the teacher’s desk and it disappeared, never to be found again. At least the researcher still has that memory to fall back on, although it is disappointing to see one of her best pieces gone missing.

## **Lesson #6**

The researcher began the lesson by administering the outcome base assessment. The whole reason for beginning the lesson this way was because this assessment needed

to be done and secondly, the researcher wanted to explain the results with the reader. Ultimately, the student improved immensely. At the beginning of the lessons, she scored 18/30 and this time around she earned a 25/30. When the reader heard the news, she exclaimed “I did better!” The researcher, in turn, congratulated the reader on her hard work and then told her that there was still one more lesson, so the thinking caps better be put back on.

Today’s lesson was a culmination of the three context clues strategies, in which the researcher modeled them interchangeably throughout the first few pages of chapter 7. After several pages had been modeled and the reader’s questions answered, a web (graphic organizer) was handed to the reader, in which they filled it out by utilizing their background knowledge on the three context clues. Some of the word correspondences, at least in my opinion, could have been placed in more than just one area, so that is another reason why critical thinking must occur the activity.

### Reader Case Study- Phase 4

Narrative about the reader:

After having spent some time with the reader, the researcher can confidently say that some improvements were noticed. Not only was the reader applying context clues in their one-on-one session, but she was utilizing them during regular instructional time. For instance, during a social studies lesson the teacher had the students break up into groups of four to read the section for that day. When it was the reader's turn to read she stumbled over a few words; however, she began to repeat one sentence over and another student interpreted and told her she had already read that. In response, the reader told this other student that sometimes rereading is necessary, in order to learn what is being communicated within the text. Unfortunately this other student seemed to not "buy into it," but at least the reader had tried to convey the truth.

Another way that the researcher has seen improvement in the reader is by looking at their test scores. For instance, the CORE Vocabulary Screening test given at the end of September revealed that the reader was in the performance level known as strategic. However, at the end our sessions, which occurred two months after the screening test was administered, the CORE Vocabulary Screening showed that the reader was performing at the benchmark level. One thing to keep in mind is that these two assessments were not identical; they were the same in structure, but not in actual questions. Overall, the researcher can say that this reader achieved a 20% increase in their vocabulary knowledge in less than a two month time span.

A third assessment tool that was utilized was the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI). Within this assessment, the story of *Johnny Appleseed* was retold, in which only

113 of the words were used in the count. From those words, the reader's error rate was estimated to be 1:38, meaning that for each error the reader makes, she reads approximately 38 words correctly. In my opinion, that is an improvement from the very beginning of the school years. The researcher does not have another IRI to base these thoughts upon, although the researcher can recall her reading rate from months ago. The researcher does not think the reader, at the beginning of the school year, could achieve a 97% accuracy rate on this same piece of reading material; however, that is score the student earned this time around. Additionally, the self-correction rate was 1:3, meaning that the reader corrects about 1 out of every 3 errors. Overall, if the researcher had to design a second round in the case study, then she would most definitely choose more appropriate texts, that way the reader's reading level could continually improve.

Lastly, the curriculum design allowed for the reader to create various projects, such as the open-mind portrait, the predicting of word meanings, creating various types of note cards, etc. Through each of those aforementioned projects, the researcher was able to see the reader develop into a stronger, more independent individual. For example, towards the beginning of the school year this reader would constantly raise their hand to express confusion or an opinion (which could diminish instructional time and mean less confusing information). However, the researcher has noticed how less often she asks questions that pertain to vocabulary. Perhaps this can be attributed to her newly learned context clues.

Reflection about your growth:

The researcher has certainly learned a lot from tutoring a 4<sup>th</sup> grader in the realm of vocabulary instruction. At first the researcher thought that she would be the only one teaching, but this reader turned the tables and helped shed some light on whole process of tutoring. For instance, the researcher must be extremely prepared, even to the point of having a back-up plan. This should always be the case when teaching a class, but this researcher, sad to say, used to think that it would be okay not to have a back-up plan, especially if it were just for one student. However, after having worked with this reader and other tutees in the past, I have come to realize that every student matters, even if they are the trouble maker of the classroom. Therefore, any researcher would be doing a great disservice to the student, the school, and even the community, if they walked in blindly and thought they could handle teaching.

This researcher has also come to realize just how truly unique each student is. This concept has been always stressed within the education department of Manchester College, in which this researcher has embraced it and experienced it in so many ways. For instance, this researcher never dreamed she would have tutored a student over the context clues. When these were first taught, this researcher merely chuckled because of their low success rate. However, there always has to be at least two sides to a story, meaning that someone obviously supports the use of these context clues, and if it works for one individual, why can't it work for many more?

After viewing the assessment pieces for this reader case study, the researcher would like to say that the use of contexts clues played an important role in the improvement of the reader's sense of vocabulary. Going back to the planning phase of

this project has allowed for the researcher to appreciate the large assortment of assessments that are available. On the other hand, the individual who is selecting the assessment tool(s) certainly has their work cut out for them. It is not always easy selecting or creating an assessment, yet it has to be done. There has to be a way to prove that students are learning the material; if a teacher so chooses to not use rubrics, checklists, etc, then their classroom is most likely chaotic and jumbled. Therefore, teachers, who are masked as researchers too, must always be on the watch because reading instructions are constantly changing within today's fast paced society.

Name Sahara K	Date 12.11.09		Submitted on time <b>YES</b> <b>NO</b>	
<b>criteria</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Distinguished</b>
ANGEL - course	1	2 -15	3 - 17	4 - 20
C1. Plans informative, developmentally appropriate lessons and/or units PHASE II	Paper presented but omits lesson plans or Lessons are not appropriate for intervention	Most lessons appropriate for intervention and developmentally appropriate	Each lesson appropriate for intervention and developmentally appropriate	Each lesson enhances previous lessons; appropriate for intervention; developmentally appropriate; resources appropriate and included
A2. Assesses learning through standardized and/or teacher-constructed tests to drive future instruction PHASE I	Paper presented but omits tests used to determine reading instruction for P-12 student Assessment not related to intervention	Assessment is incomplete; Description is unclear  Attempts intervention  Less than 3 different forms of assessment; includes student work samples	Assessed learning to determine decoding and/or comprehension skills ; Description is generalized and vague; utilized  3 different forms of assessment; includes student work samples	Assessed learning before, during and following intervention; Description clearly explains assessment; more than 3 different forms of assessment; copies of student work samples included
A3. Assesses learning through appropriate alternative measures to drive future instruction PHASE I, III	Paper presented but omits alternative assessment used to determine reading instruction P-12 student and/or no student work samples	Assessment administered may not be appropriate for P-12 student and/or intervention; Description is unclear; included student work samples	Description is generalized and vague; included student work samples	Selected appropriate alternative measure for monitoring progress of P-12 student; Description clearly explained assessment and basis for selection of each assessment; included student work samples
A4. Uses a variety of appropriate, authentic assessment tools, and methods PHASE I, III	Paper presented but omits assessment tools and methods used with P-12 student; assessment data base not included	Limited assessment tools used; description is unclear or confusing as to purpose of tools or methods; included student work samples	Assessments include one IRI and description is generalized and vague; included student work samples	Assessments include multiple informal reading inventories; Description clearly explained performance-based assessments giving examples; included student work samples; Assessment data base included

R3. Values life-long learning, personal/ Professional development, and/or service orientation  PHASE IV	Paper presented but omits setting new goals for professional growth	Does not utilize the information provided from the reader case study	Uses information from the reader case study, but does not connect that information to individual goals	Effectively used the information from the reader case study to set new professional development goals
R5. Models appropriate written communication skills  PHASE I, II, IV	Severe & pervasive errors result in sentence incoherence; writing in first person	Consistent errors detract from meaning; Weak sentence structure	Sentences convey meaning; Inconsistent errors that detract from meaning	Well-organized sentence structure; Minimal errors do not interfere with meaning; writing in third person
R6. Motivates P-12 students to want to learn individually, collaboratively, and cooperatively  PHASE II, III	Paper presented but omits evidence exhibiting ability to motivate P-12 student during intervention	Vague description of activities used in intervention ; may relate to intervention; limited P-12 student involvement during intervention	Described activities used during intervention; some activities relate to intervention; Active student involvement in some lessons during intervention	Detailed description of activities; Activities relate to intervention; Active P-12 student involvement in ALL lessons during intervention; manipulative teaching tools included
E1. Differentiates learning opportunities that respond to individual learning styles and learning challenges  PHASE II, III	Paper presented but omits documents exhibiting ability to differentiate learning opportunities for P-12 student using a graphic organizer	Kidspiration graphic organizer is not supportive of intervention for P-12 student; included student work samples; organizer vague or confusing; may allow for some understanding	Kidspiration graphic organizer supportive of intervention for P-12 student; included student work samples; presented clearly; allowed for basic level of understanding	Kidspiration graphic organizer supportive of intervention for P-12 student; included student work samples; presented clearly and creatively; allowed for high level of understanding
E4. Keeps records to monitor, document, and report P-12 student progress  PHASE II, III	Paper presented but omits documents used to show monitoring of P-12 student's progress and/or final results	Presented results of assessments including initial assessment, progress monitoring and final assessment	Presented organized results of assessments including initial screening, progress monitoring and final assessments	Utilized a system of record keeping creating a student profile; records show monitoring of progress; documented initial screening and final assessment results

E7. Engages in research and reflection on best practices in teaching strategies  PHASE III, IV	Paper presented but omits setting new goals for professional growth	Does not adequately reflect on his or her own abilities, strengths/limitations, or experiences as a teacher candidate	Reflected on his/her own abilities, strength//limitations, experiences, but does not apply that information to the reader case study	Reflected on his/her own abilities, strengths/limitations, and/or experiences as a teacher candidate by including concrete examples of what was learned and what might be change
Reflective voice  PHASE III, IV	Paper presented but written as a list of events and not reflective	Student writing lacks independent and original thought, or expression of a personal tone; written in first person	Student writes in a personal tone that is somewhat reflective of independent and original thought.	Student writes in a personal tone that is reflective of independent and original thought; written in third person
Organization  PHASE I, II, III, IV	Content is unorganized and missing a component	Materials are organized; signed time sheet	Materials are organized using a logical sequence; signed time sheet	Materials are organized using subheadings designating phases of study; <u>signed</u> <u>-time sheet</u> <u>-parent letters</u> <u>-evaluation from cooperating teacher</u>
				Points earned 240 /240

Comments