SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES AND BELIEFS OF
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS IN
AN URBAN SECONDARY HIGH SCHOOL

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty of The University of Akron

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Judith White

May, 2011
SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES AND BELIEFS OF
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS IN
AN URBAN SECONDARY HIGH SCHOOL

Judith White

Dissertation

Approved:   Accepted:

Advisor      Department Chair
Dr. Harold Foster  Dr. Bridgie Ford

Committee Member  Dean of the College
Dr. M. Kay Alderman  Dr. Mark D. Shermis

Committee Member  Dean of the Graduate School
Dr. Catharine Knight  Dr. George R. Newkome

Committee Member
Dr. Susan Colville-Hall

Committee Member
Dr. Huey-li Li

ii
ABSTRACT

Self-regulated learning (SRL) refers to students taking responsibility for what and how they learn in the classroom, and how it affects their thoughts and actions in their academic requirements. This action research case study sought to investigate the use of self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies and beliefs of secondary high school juniors enrolled in the International Baccalaureate English A1 curriculum at an urban secondary school. The focus of this study was students’ behavior and beliefs through LASSI testing, phenomenological interviews, student journaling, classroom observations, and artifacts in an authentic classroom setting in the final semester of their junior year.

The self-regulated learning strategies of Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) were the foundation for this study in an attempt to align the SRL strategies and student beliefs with the International Baccalaureate student profile. Data were gathered through LASSI testing, triadic interviews, student journaling, external observations, and artifacts (an assigned research paper), and the results triangulated with the International Baccalaureate student profile and mission of “learning to learn.”

Emerging themes became apparent and were explored as the interview process continued at 3-week intervals. The emerging self-efficacy beliefs and strategy use elicited future questions as the results were analyzed and new interview questions were
LASSI testing results were compared with students’ interviews and journaling, as well as their reflection letters concerning their research projects.

The SRL strategy of collective efficacy, or social assistance from peers, is considered to be the key factor in achieving academic success by all the subjects. The successful students employed forethought and goal-setting, strategic planning, and found particular intrinsic value in their academic tasks. They valued student engagement, social assistance, and self control processes. Their volition, or will to succeed, overcame earlier stress and anxiety, as strong collective efficacy meshed with their individual academic goals.

This study demonstrated the importance of determining and examining student beliefs concerning their use of SRL strategies and perceived self-efficacy in academic settings: accurate and continuous feedback is essential for student success. Self-efficacy and student autonomy are necessary in a student-centered classroom, and the demonstration and incorporation of SRL strategies could aid in promoting “learning to learn” at all levels of any English Language Arts curriculum.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all the individuals who supported me throughout this dissertation process—

To my husband who has encouraged me and comforted me.

To my dissertation advisor, teacher, mentor and very good friend, Dr. Harold Foster, whose passion for teaching continues to inspire me, and who never stopped believing I could complete this study.

To my methodologist, instructor and enthusiastic supporter, Dr. Kay Alderman, who managed to make the long distance between us seem very short, as she mentored and aided me.

To my committee:

Dr. Catharine Knight, whose expertise and excellent class led me to my dissertation topic;

Dr. Susan Colville-Hall, whose support aided me when the task seemed insurmountable;

Dr. Huey-li Li, whose knowledge and objective perspective helped me immensely with editing and revision.
To my students:

You are my inspiration, and a reflection of how important student engagement and interaction is in education; without your involvement, technology, and continuing interest and support this dissertation would not have been possible.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES ........................................................................................................... xiii
LIST OF FIGURES ......................................................................................................... xiv

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................1

Background of the International Baccalaureate Program ........................................ 2

International Baccalaureate Students ..................................................................... 7

International Baccalaureate Assessment ............................................................... 9

The Urban Secondary School International Baccalaureate Program ..................10

Value of the International Baccalaureate Program .............................................11

IB Curriculum Goals ............................................................................................ 13

Statement of the Problem ....................................................................................... 14

Statement of Purpose ............................................................................................ 15

Setting ..................................................................................................................... 17

Guiding Research Questions .................................................................................. 17

Sub-Question 1 ....................................................................................................... 17

Sub-Question 2 ....................................................................................................... 17

Sub-Question 3 ....................................................................................................... 18
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situating the Teacher as Researcher</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Studies Inventory (LASSI)</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Regulation and Phenomenology</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants and Site Selection</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Selection</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenological and SRL Interviews</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Interview Questions: Focal points of SRL</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observational Log</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifacts and Assessments</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. DATA DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASSI Results/SRL Strategies</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRL Sub-processes and International Baccalaureate Students</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Behaviors Relating to Self-efficacy</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 1</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 2</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation 3 .................................................................86
Observation 4 .................................................................87
Persistence in Performing the Task ..................................89
Students’ Current Self-Efficacy Beliefs.............................91
Student Anxiety ..............................................................94
Successful Use of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies........97
Beth ..................................................................................99
Ann ...................................................................................99
Ed .....................................................................................100
Cal .....................................................................................101
Fay .....................................................................................101
Dan .....................................................................................102
SRL Strategies Summary ................................................103

V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS .............................107
Conclusions .......................................................................108
Sub-Question 1 ..................................................................109
Sub-Question 2 ..................................................................110
Sub-Question 3 ..................................................................111
Main Question ..................................................................112
Forethought, Performance/volition, Self-Reflection ..........113
Forethought ......................................................................113
Performance/volition .......................................................115
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of International Baccalaureate Students</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Phase Structure and Subprocesses of Self-Regulation (Zimmerman, 2006)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SRL Strategy Categories</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Phase Structure and Subprocesses of Self-Regulation (Zimmerman, 2006)</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Matrix of IB Learner Profile &amp; Cyclic Phases of Subprocesses</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>IBO curriculum</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A three-layered model of self-regulated learning after Boekaerts</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

I am a white female English teacher with 40 years of experience in the secondary classroom. I have earned two graduate degrees and National Board Certification in the English Language Arts field. Currently I instruct an English Literature Honors and International Baccalaureate Language A1 in an urban secondary high school with a population of 1,250 students. The school has a diverse population with approximately 46% minorities and is also a magnet arts schools for the visual and performing arts. Currently, this institution is one of only three urban schools in this state offering the International Baccalaureate program. I also instruct related English Language Arts classes at a local university. I am the chair of the English Department and an assessor at the College Board Advanced Placement grading each year. My experience in the aforementioned areas has led me to question how English Language Arts (hereafter known as ELA) methodology and practices might be critiqued, or even improved, when compared with the International Baccalaureate (hereafter known as IB) curriculum and its success at an urban secondary institution, focusing on strategic learning strategies of enrolled students in the program.
Background of the International Baccalaureate Program

The International Baccalaureate program is believed to be an alternative and viable option for students who are intellectually gifted or highly motivated, as indicated by their grade point average of 3.25 in their freshman and sophomore years. An interview with the students and their parents, a contract signed by parents and students, and continuing assessment by the IB supervisor as the student encompasses the milestones of the program constitute the IB framework. This university college preparatory curriculum was originally conceived by a group of international educators from Wales, New York, Teheran, Copenhagen, Paris, Frankfort, and Montevideo, who believed the emphasis on education as merely delivering information, and thus fragmenting knowledge, was lacking in an aesthetic and creative experience for the students. With support from the Twentieth Century Fund and the Ford Foundation the International Baccalaureate Program began in 1965. This program is designed to meet the highest standards of secondary students throughout the world. Over 60,000 candidates from 2,668 schools in 137 countries have been admitted to 1,900 colleges and universities throughout the world since its inception (IBO, 2009). The curriculum differs from other advanced secondary programs inasmuch as the schools must be approved and belong to the International Baccalaureate Organization (hereafter known as IBO) in order for students to participate in the program, and all instructors must receive specialized training in IBO theory and practice. The program was originally created to establish a rigorous curriculum for students attending international schools abroad, thus aligning their secondary education with diverse universities. The IB diploma enables a student to attend a European or American university without having been educated in that particular
country. It was introduced to the United States and Canada in the 1970s and was initially connected with such elite schools as Exeter and Andover; but by 1977, five community colleges and public high schools were authorized to offer the IB course of study, and by the late 1980s, five international schools in the United States and over 130 Canadian and United States high schools began to offer the program (Peterson, 1987). IB was designed as a global curriculum allowing a somewhat limited choice of subject areas for the participant; in other words, the focus is on depth, rather than the breadth of a typical secondary literature or history survey course. It was not originally set up as a “testing” program for college credit, but many colleges now offer credit for successful IB candidates, much like the Advanced Placement (hereafter known as AP) program since the students who have graduated from the IB program are often able to “test-out” of many freshman and sophomore required courses, and colleges such as Stanford, Ohio State, Columbia, and Harvard now recognize the value of the rigorous college-level curriculum required by the International Baccalaureate Organization. It has now grown into what has been termed the “Cadillac of the College Prep programs” (Gehring, 2001).

Students select courses from six disciplines revolving around a core course entitled Theory of Knowledge. The students are encouraged to see the connections of the disciplines which include Language A1 (English), Language B (Spanish or French), Individuals and Societies (history), Theory of Knowledge (philosophy), Mathematics, Experimental Sciences, and the Arts or electives such as Physics. The students must then pass core subjects with a “4,” and then attempt to score a final score of 40 points to receive the IB diploma. Oral taping assessments, two World Literature essays (1,200 words each), 150 hours of volunteer work, and a Theory of Knowledge extended essay of
1,400 words are the major requirements (IBO, 2008). This method thus includes standardization and accountability in the IB process of assessment (Gazda-Grace, 2002).

High school graduation does not hinge on this passage, since much like the AP tests, the students and teachers do not receive the results until July following the students’ high school graduation in June, thus students who do not meet the rigorous assessment requirements are not humiliated by “failing” to obtain the HL diploma, and often still receive college credits.

The IB program thus differs from the Advanced Placement program in terms of IB exercising more control over its curriculum; for example, an external evaluation of the entire curriculum is completed every 5 years by IBO, and the program may be terminated if the IBO academic standards are not upheld. All IB teachers must receive IB-approved professional development training in their fields, and then later submit annual student samples of work throughout the junior and senior year (IBO, 2008). The IB exit exams are based on what the student has learned in a two-year course of study, while the AP is based on how well the student compares to others taking the same test. In other words, the IB tests are criterion-referenced, while the AP tests are normative. Both exams are difficult, but it is the IB that uses what could be called a world class standard (Gazda-Grace, 2002). The assessment process is criterion based, rather than performance of others taking the same examination, as in Advanced Placement, and the examinations are thus measured against pre-specified criteria, resulting in a statistical range of scores that have remained stable, thus valued by colleges and universities. By utilizing external assessors (randomly chosen by IBO), the IB teacher is constantly challenged to reflect upon classroom instruction and practices. Teachers are able to access international online
curriculum centers which provide program documentation, examples of student work, and become members of the international IB community (IBO, 2008). This capability leads to a program of globalization opportunities for both IB teachers and students (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. IBO curriculum. From IBO, 2009.

The aims of the IB program are to facilitate geographical and cultural mobility, international understanding, and the appreciation and preservations of one’s own culture and language. In this manner the end result would be an individual who could work independently, be open-minded, utilize resources, and be able work on teams (Hayden & Wong, 1997). It is clear that the aims and objectives of the IB program are lofty and praiseworthy, but at the same time European-based which translates to some weaknesses found in the Americanized version of the IB curriculum. Dombrowski (1995) noted that perhaps one’s culture might be ignored in this extended intensive study of others, and that
it is still Eurocentric and Western, rather than Asian (Linden, 1994). Quist (2006) reported that the Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania district voted to discontinue the IB program because of its violation of local control, endorsement of the radical Earth Charter, promotion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and radical environmentalism. This was an outcome of some of the school board’s and parents’ belief that fundamental principles of national sovereignty and inalienable rights were not being addressed in the IB curriculum. It is difficult to measure how much influence one’s own environment has in one’s view of other cultures, but it is a subject for another work. It is clear that no curriculum will satisfy all involved parties, but it would seem that the positive attributes of “learning to learn” with multiple perspectives would seem to outweigh any negative aspects of cultures. Hinrichs (2002) contended that the curriculum does not make students “international,” but rather it is what happens when they work and interact with other individuals in the program and broaden their cultural knowledge. It is the belief at this particular secondary school that the breadth, depth, coherence, and internationalism justify the program. Through the use of observations, interviews, and journaling, the students’ views in these particular areas will be explored and analyzed to see if they are in accordance with the perceptions of the teachers and the administration.

Tim Hogoort, the IBO President in 1994, stated that the future challenge in the 21st century will be to move from being an international school program to one that serves all schools from a global perspective. The obstacles are the cost of the program which can range from $8,000 to $50,000 (depending on the school enrollment) to the fact that the American school year is currently significantly shorter than the European
requirement (1994). This is difficult in terms of sufficient instructional time, while still having to coordinate mandated standardized test and exit exams. Students in the IB program are not exempt from standardized tests, final exams, or other district mandates, but they do not pay for their tests as the AP students and parents must do. Student perspectives involving these factors will be discussed in later chapters.

**International Baccalaureate Students**

Students who are planning to enter the IB program take Honors courses in their chosen subjects during their freshman and sophomore years. After they have successfully completed the Honors program with a GPA of 3.25, they are interviewed by the IB supervisor, a parent conference is held, and a contract signed stating they will maintain their GPA. Individual conferences are held with the parents and/or the students during the next 2 years in order to ensure that teachers, parents, and particularly the students will be successful in all areas of the curriculum. In addition to this close supervision, the teachers of the IB students meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of concern regarding these individuals, and the IB supervisor closely follows the academic progress of each participant. This particular urban secondary school offers open enrollment; thus the IB classes are usually a diverse group composed of one-third from within the school district, one third from outside the surrounding secondary schools within the district, and one-third from suburban schools in the outlying area. The gender and ethnicity vary from year to year, but currently the cohort is 70% female, 27% male, and 3% Asian and African-American. This study involved three male Caucasians and three female Caucasians, who chose to volunteer as subjects.
Students enroll in six subject areas during their junior and senior years: Language A1 (English and World Literature), a second language such as Spanish or French, history, or a related social science, experimental science (physics, chemistry), mathematics, and finally a selection from the visual arts, dance, or theater. They are also required to write a 4,000 word extended essay on a subject of their choice for a 2-year course entitled Theory of Knowledge, and perform community service hours. Internal and external assessment occurs in every course, with final exams in May of their senior year. This program is designed to develop citizens of the world and reinforce students’ sense of identity and cultural recognition of and development of universal human values; stimulate curiosity and inquiry; equip students with skills to learn and acquire knowledge; provide international content while responding to local interests; encourage diversity and flexibility in pedagogical approaches; and provide appropriate forms of assessment and international benchmarking. Students in the program are expected to be inquirers, thinkers, and communicators, risk-takers, knowledgeable, open-minded, principled, well-balanced, caring, and reflective (Urban City School [pseud.] Task Force Study, 2005). It is the researcher’s belief that the aforementioned IB student profile should not be limited to students enrolled in this particular program, but as a model for all pupils at the secondary level. If students were not limited by standardized materials (teaching for the test), or sometimes taught by untrained or disengaged instructors, they clearly would be more inclined to engage and collaborate in a program that offered them a challenge and an opportunity to broaden their perspectives. This goal seems to be only a possibility until instructors are validly assessed by objective external sources, and curriculums
become more student-oriented, thereby focusing on real world concerns, such as their future in a global society (see Appendix A).

**International Baccalaureate Assessment**

The assessments in the Language A1 are two World Literature papers which are externally assessed by international professors and teachers who are randomly chosen by IBO, and an internally assessed individual oral analysis of a work previously studied in class. This external assessment usually ensures that it will be unbiased and fair for each candidate. The final assessment is much like the AP test in which a two-part exam consisting of an analysis of a poem or prose piece, and one week later an essay prompt which addresses an assigned novel in the Language A1 class. This exam is also assessed by a randomly chosen international professor. Critiques and suggestions for future instruction are given to the IB teachers in the fall of the year. The assessors remain anonymous, but are trained by IBO, and each set of tests and essays are sent to different individuals in a variety of countries. In other curricular areas practical work (experimental sciences), art and math portfolios are assessment pieces. In some institutions there are two programs: Higher Level (HL) which requires students to enroll in all the IB requisite courses, and the Standard Level (SL) in which a student may choose to enroll in just one or more IB courses, without the structured requirements of the HL courses leading to the IB Diploma. The HL students receive their IB diplomas in July, as noted earlier, following their secondary school graduation, thus the two diplomas are not linked. The subjects of this study are all enrolled in the HL program since the SL program is not offered. The SL students would not receive an IB diploma, just as
Advanced Placement students would not receive a particular award for their enrollment in advanced courses. Students may be awarded college credit for their participation and/or success in the program, but there is no guarantee since it is dependent on the acceptance of the credit at their particular college or university. A student survey conducted by the International Baccalaureate Organization in 2003 and reported in U.S. News and World Report (2004) found that the diploma candidate acceptance at universities ranging from the University of Virginia to the University of California, Los Angeles, accepted nearly double the applicants who participated in the IB program in comparison to the total student population. The parents and students are made aware upon entry into the program that college credit cannot be guaranteed, and that the program is not simply focused upon gaining entrance into a high profile university, but rather on broadening the students’ perspective in democracy, improving critical thinking skills, engaging in ethical reasoning, studying cultural pluralism, and debating diverse beliefs and values to promote international understanding (Hinrichs, 2002).

**The Urban Secondary School International Baccalaureate Program**

The International Baccalaureate program began at my institution in 1996, and I was responsible for designing the Language A1 curriculum for the junior and senior students enrolled in the program, which averages 35 juniors and 32 seniors per year. From a proscribed booklist including world literature, literature translated from a foreign language, and poetry and essays that extend from the Anglo-Saxon period to modern, a program was designed involving four diverse areas including drama, prose novels, translated world literature works, and essays. This is an extensive curriculum that
focuses on the study of the humanities. The emphasis in the IB Language A1 curriculum involves critical and analytical thinking and writing skills. It is a program of exploration and creativity based upon the belief that students have enrolled with a desire to be thoughtfully engaged in a college-level literature and composition class that will challenge and motivate them to perform at academic levels well beyond that of most high school juniors and seniors. Students are required to participate orally and in written form in the classroom but must also submit two critical World Literature papers, as aforementioned, involving dramas or plays that have been studied, e.g., *Anna Karenina, Madame Bovary, Oedipus,* or *Cherry Orchard.* They must also present an oral presentation to the class over selected poetry or essays in their junior year. In their senior year they will be individually given a 40-line random selection from a previously studied work to study for 20 minutes, and then present a 10-12 minute oral analysis, which is then assessed by the instructor (who is present) and finally externally assessed by a random professor or teacher chosen by IBO. This could be an analysis from poetry by Keats, Eliot, or Browning; a soliloquy from Shakespeare; or a prose passage from Jane Austen. Each presentation is assessed internally and then IBO randomly selects 6-8 tapes that are mailed to the external assessors; all of these are then moderated by randomly chosen trained professors and IBO statisticians for final scores. Each student is expected to be able to explore, synthesize, theorize, and thus “learn how to learn.”

**Value of the International Baccalaureate Program**

The IB program is considered the most rigorous one that a student may enroll in at any secondary institution, as noted by the fact that many universities are now including
the IB as “the most rigorous course” on their applications. College texts and materials are the foundation of each IB course. IBO has received recognition from the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for its curriculum development. The IB exam is designed to match international schools with multilingual, multinational student populations. The IBO also stipulates that each student is actively involved in some type of creative, aesthetic, or social service activity (IBO, 2009). These factors help to establish the rigor and the challenge of the IB program. This curriculum and the fact that this secondary school is now one of only nine IB high schools in the state of Ohio, places IB teachers in a unique position in regard to not only having external evaluation of their students from international professors and instructors, but also by being judged in terms of the students’ success. Statistically, this particular IB program is annually compared to IB schools throughout the world; it is considered by those schools involved a valid assessment of students, teachers, and the overall quality of the program, since feedback and objective critiquing is in evidence. This type of assessment of not only a particular program and teachers, but also of students would seem to benefit other ELA instructors and secondary institutions in terms of future collaboration and formulation of standards and benchmarks that are constructive, rather than simply using normative assessments such as the standardized testing currently in use across the country. A problem in many secondary classrooms is one of consistency: how does the academic progress of a student improve if a variety of instructors are inconsistent in their standards and their requirements? It seems that little time and effort is spent on mapping (vertical planning) or assessing the quality of instruction and student engagement at the secondary level. Too few resources, too large class loads, and the general stress of
“getting through the text,” or passing the proficiency exams, often inhibits even the most determined instructor from attempting more student collaboration and engagement.

**IB Curriculum Goals**

A primary goal is to produce critical and analytical thinkers and writers who will be able to relate globally to works of literature and other cultures with an increased awareness – learning to learn. As aforementioned the goal of the IB program is not to mass-produce college-ready students with a high GPA, but rather enlightened individuals who are eager and capable of being effective members of a global society. The traditional teacher-centered methods frequently result in students being ill-equipped for university classes or future careers. Too often students wonder why they are doing what they are doing in the classroom, and often no answers seem to be forthcoming. Scholars and researchers note the need for defining classroom pedagogy, since teachers often seem to be focusing not on a student-centered classroom, but on traditional methods of “skill and drill,” grammar exercises, New Critical interpretations of texts, and assigning five-paragraph essays, product as opposed to process (Applebee, 1993; Appleman, 2000; Kohn, 2000). Student engagement is an absolute necessity, and this connects to a student-centered classroom with the students having an autonomous role, rather than being passive observers or unwilling participants: this is the focus of the IB program and my goal in this particular classroom. Students should have choices to gain autonomy and increased efficacy in the field of prose and poetry; thus helping students to become more motivated and engaged in a particular subject or lesson. Students need to be a part of the academic plan; in this curriculum they have the opportunity to choose from a variety of novels, various critical approaches such as feminist or psychoanalytic, and even the type
of essay they want to submit – a dialogue, a letter to the author, a poem rewritten as a
drama, and even the time frames and rubrics for assignments; all of these options are
available in the IB, as well as the English Literature Honors class. When students from
the English Literature class state that they are being taught just like the IB, it may seem
like a complaint, but it is usually stated with pride and confidence that this student is
more than capable of being part of the “elite” IB membership, rather than being a passive
observer in a “teacher-centered” classroom. By examining these perspectives it is clear
that although a variety of critical approaches may be utilized, the instructional objectives
should be the same for all ELA instructors’ goals for students: to motivate and engage
them as they experience success in their academic experiences.

**Statement of the Problem**

Self-regulation learning strategies involve an understanding of subject matter,
learning efficiency and perceived self-efficacy (Zimmerman, 2000). Students who
practice these strategies will have a better rate of success in performing additional tasks
involving behavioral, environmental, and covert self-regulation. This would include self-
observation; adjusting one’s performance or method of learning, adjusting to
environmental conditions and surroundings and imagery for relaxing and remembering;
in other words, effectively and accurately self-monitoring one’s self-beliefs.(Zimmerman,
2006). This definition of SRL directly relates to the profile of the successful IB student,
which focuses on the need to be thinkers, communicators, knowledgeable and open-
minded, but very few studies have focused on the International Baccalaureate students
and their reflective views of their experiences in this highly structured academic program.
Most works have dealt with a particular academic program within the curriculum, or the success or failure of a particular IB school, often comparing it to the AP programs whose aims and objectives differ from said IB curriculum. What is the awareness of the metacognitive strategies of the self-regulated IB student, and how do these students view their educational experiences in light of their academic, intellectual and social needs? Do they perceive the challenges, and if so, are they using SRL strategies and techniques in their academic pursuits? Is their view of success the distal goal of the IB diploma, or the proximal goal of “learning to learn,” the reason for enrolling and continuing in this rigorous curriculum? This research effort attempts to identify the subjects who engage in metacognitive strategies, whether consciously or subconsciously, or perhaps not at all. This research effort involved the aforementioned areas in an attempt to define the IB students as research subjects from both the researcher’s and the students’ perspective.

**Statement of Purpose**

Despite the overwhelming success of the IB program in receiving annual diploma awards, there is a perception that this curriculum model with attendant practices is only appropriate for an elite student population, and thus limited in direction and scope for all other levels of ELA. Student perception of self-efficacy and ability, as well as engagement, is seemingly promoted through the theories and practices in the IB curriculum, and is finally externally assessed by international professionals in the field, as well as the “home instructor.” What strategies are these students utilizing in becoming successful in attaining the IB diploma? Self-regulation strategies (Bandura, 1997; Pajares & Miller, 1994; Zimmerman, 1995) are involved in self-efficacy and personal motivation
in organizing and implementing actions to attain skills for particular tasks. What does the IB teacher-constructed, student-centered curriculum offer in terms of SRL strategies that could be effective as a conceptual framework in other secondary schools? Consequently, one purpose of this study was to analyze the design and implementation of the IB/ELA program as an advanced academic option in an urban secondary school, focusing on the students’ perspective from an experiential (phenomenological) approach, and their personal views in regard to their experiences in the program through interviews, journaling and observations. I believe that the self-regulated learner, one who sets goals, chooses strategies, and self-reflects is in evidence in each successful IB candidate, but little research has been published focusing on this aspect of the program. What is the awareness level of these particular students in regard to what they do, how they do it, and why they do it? There is limited research on the implementation of the IB/ELA programs in the area of pedagogy and recommended instruction. It is believed that action research provides information to help inform decision making, and thus perhaps encourage other similar best practices promoting self-regulation learning in ELA classrooms. It is believed that a discovery of a successful IB student profile can be compiled and analyzed by triangulating phenomenological interviews, LASSI testing, observations, student artifacts and journaling. The goal is to discover “what is going on in the minds of those who are learning” (Dewey, 1938, p 39); determining their personal views and strategies.
Setting

Data for this study were collected from six IB student participants who were self-selected at the beginning of their junior and senior year in Language A1. All the participants were students in the current IB class. Two other secondary English teachers were trained in conducting interviews, observations, and assessing written work. All of these students were enrolled in the Higher Level IB Diploma program, since it is located as “a school within a school.” While it was clear that the SRL strategies and techniques of six students cannot be extrapolated on the experiences of all IB students, it was the hope of this researcher that the views and experiences of these particular individuals would provide insight into best practices and potential program modifications that might benefit all ELA students.

Guiding Research Questions

Students' specific SRL strategies and perspectives in their use of self-efficacy and motivation have resulted in the following questions:

Sub-Question 1

How does perceived self-efficacy affect students’ ability to develop and self-regulate their use of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) strategies in the International Baccalaureate (IB) classroom?

Sub-Question 2

What are the self-efficacy beliefs of the IB students?
Sub-Question 3

What specific strategies do they use in meeting the IB requirements?

Main Question

What are the SRL strategies and beliefs of the IB students?

Significance of the Study

This study aspires to professionally contribute to the field of education in three ways. First, it presents an in-depth perspective of the IB program from both the IBO, the instructor’s, and the participants’ self-knowledge. Second, the study identifies strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and instruction of an IB program in an urban secondary school. The perspective of the self-regulated learning characteristics of the students learned in the interviews, as well as the observations of the students’ interaction with both the curriculum and instructor could be both enlightening and instructive in terms of future research; for example: how could the pedagogy, practices, and standards of the IB Language A1 curriculum be adapted or successfully modified in other ELA secondary programs? Knowledge of current ELA educational issues and best practices could be of value to future participants, teachers, and administers, as well as being applicable to other ELA curriculums and programs not associated with IB, and to the metacognitive practices of involved students. Third, the methodologies employed in implementing this study involving student self-regulation strategies and the student perception of their experiences (phenomenology) as applied to the program may possibly reflect a new perspective on the effectiveness of the program in related ELA areas, as well as being informative of the IB Language A1 curriculum in an urban setting. In other words, does
the current IB curriculum present opportunities for meeting the challenge of student engagement, curriculum requirements, and insight into students’ views of their experience in this advanced program?

**Specific Limitations**

1. External assessors (other instructors) were utilized to eliminate extraneous variables.

2. Only a limited population is available for study due to the small number of students enrolled in the IB program.

3. The results may not be generalizable since the researcher is conducting a study involving her students.

**Role of the Teacher-Researcher**

Researcher bias was minimized by the use of trained observers and assessors (other instructors) to add validity to the study. The assessors were trained in two phases: studying the interview guide and necessary conditions, and then conducting practice interviews and receiving corrective feedback concerning structure, objectivity and reliability (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

**Role of the IB English Instructor**

My role as the only IB English instructor during the students’ junior and senior year presents problems in terms of objectivity and a strong desire to see a self-constructed curriculum be successful. At the same time I am well aware that my pedagogy and methodology are not limited to my IB classes but are in evidence in my other college
preparatory and university classes, which could certainly influence my analysis and results of this particular study. It is clear that my experiences as a female teacher for over 40 years in an urban school limits my objectivity in terms of evaluating the program and delineating with accuracy how successful I am in helping all my students reach their full potential in both IB and college preparatory classes; therefore, external objective observers (teachers) were utilized in the study. Since the study involves just one IB English class at one particular school, it must be noted that the findings do not purport to generalize to other IB classes, schools, or districts, although it is hoped that some insight is gained through the perspective of both students and teachers in this particular program. The IB curriculum promotes an instructor who feels a sense of responsibility in presenting a role model of impartiality and fairness to all students, and this study attempted to fulfill that role as researcher.

My 10 years of experience with IB, as well as my 40 years of teaching ELA has led me to explore not only student views of their educational environment, but also to discover how their SRL strategies fit into their personal perspectives. My choice as an action researcher has led me to a phenomenological research design, coupled with case studies: qualitative research. Phenomenology deals with what lived experience means to particular individuals about an event, occasion, or phenomenon in their lives; it is the perceived reality of the experience (Creswell, 1998). In this study it is the reality of participating in the IB classroom that is being examined from the perspective of the IB student concerning the description, interpretation, evaluation, and thematic aspects of enrolled students, thus contributing to understanding student experiences gleaned from discussions, reflections, and observations of both students and instructors. By obtaining
multiple perspectives of students’ self-regulated learning strategies, instructors may benefit from the relevance of emergent themes in a particular population, thus focusing on self-regulated practices and contributing “best practices” for all students enrolled in any English/Language Arts program.

**Definition of IB Terms**

**Extended Essay:** This is an essay on a substantial independent subject, as required by the Theory of Knowledge class that all IB students must take. It is a mixture of research skills and an in-depth analysis. The student chooses both the subject matter and a teacher-mentor. It must be approximately 4,000 words and is submitted during the senior year to be assessed by an external assessor assigned by IBO.

**Final IB Examination Essay and Analysis:** The final two assessments take place in May of the senior year. Each student must choose to analyze either an unknown poetry or prose piece (much like the AP test) during a 2-hour period on the first day. The second assessment takes place one week later and consists of addressing a general question (usually four optional prompts are given) about novels studied during the course of the junior and senior year. This constitutes 50% of the final grade and is externally assessed.

**Full Diploma:** Successful completion of six examinations in five or six subject areas, taken in a 2-year cycle in the 11th and 12th grades. An extended essay required by the Theory of Knowledge class and 150 CAS (creativity, action, service) hours are also required.
**Higher Level (HL):** An IB course that can be taken only in the junior/senior year. These higher levels may be used for college credit at many colleges and universities. At least three HL exams must be passed successfully to obtain the IB diploma.

**IBO:** International Baccalaureate Organization

**Language A1:** The student’s first language: English, for example.

**Language B:** The student’s learned language: Spanish, for example.

**Oral Exams:** Students are examined in the final semester of their senior year on random materials which have been previously studied in Language A1. They are given 20 minutes to analyze 40 lines from 8 possible sources, and then produce a 12-15 minute oral analysis for the IB instructor. This constitutes 15% of their final grade – it is assessed both internally by the instructor and an outside assessor assigned by IBO.

**Oral Presentation:** Students select a topic from works studied in class and present an oral analysis to the entire class. This is internally assessed by the IB instructor and constitutes 15% of their grade.

**Theory of Knowledge (TOK):** All diploma candidates must take this course during their junior and senior year. This course connects the IB subject areas in terms of commonalities and differences in the field of knowledge. There is no formal examination, but a grade is submitted to IBO for each student.

**World Literature Essays:** Two essays covering materials studied must be submitted in the IB senior year. The first essay is a comparison and contrast essay of approximately 1,200 words, while the second may be a creative or original essay utilizing assigned prose and poetry topics and is also 1,200 words. These two essays may not be assessed by the class instructor but may be peer-edited by classmates. Both essays are
sent directly to randomly selected assessors by IBO and constitute 20% of the final grade in the Language A1 course (IBO, 2008).

**Related Self-Regulation Terms**

- **Attribution**: Perceived cause of an outcome: failure or success
- **Distal Goal**: Long term goal
- **Extrinsic Motivation**: Motivation from outside sources
- **Mastery Goal Orientation**: Possessed by those whose goals are focused on learning and mastering the skills presented to them (Dweck, 1986).
- **Metacognition**: Awareness of one’s knowledge and activities
- **Performance Goal**: Possessed by those whose goals are focused on the outcomes of learning for gaining favorable judgments of their competence (Dweck, 1986).
- **Phenomenology**: The study of how individuals construct the meaning or perception of a lived experience: the reality of that phenomenon (Creswell, 1998).
- **Proximal Goal**: Short term goal
- **Self-efficacy**: Belief in one’s capability to perform at a given level that will influence his or her life (Bandura, 1986, 1997).
- **Self-regulated Learning**: Thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and adapted to attain personal goals (Zimmerman, 2000).
- **Self-regulated Student**: One who activates, alters, and sustains specific learning practices in solitary and social setting (Zimmerman, 1986).
**Student-centered Classroom:** One in which students exhibit initiative and choice, while viewing a connection of their curriculum requirements to their values and goals (Alderman, 2008).

**Volition:** Use of strength of will, ability, and strategies to persist in a task

**Conclusion**

Chapter II reviews the literature in terms of the SRL student profile, the aims and objectives of the IB program, the current ELA curriculum as constructed by IBO and the classroom teacher, and the role of metacognition in the constructivist classroom. Chapter III provides the methodologies used in this study, as well as information on data analysis. Chapter IV reviews the findings with individual sections detailing the students. Chapter V analyzes the findings, evaluates the data, and concludes with the themes regarding the outcomes of the study
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter summarized the literature and defined terms in related areas of this dissertation. The background and rationale of action research was defined and its relationship to the SRL strategies of the IB student. The educational relevancy of the IB program was defined and discussed, as well as instructional strategies and requirements, curriculum and components of the program as offered at this institution. The phenomenological approach was defined focusing on the self-actualization; and self-concept of the IB students was addressed, as well as definitions of self-regulation, metacognition, and related areas as pertaining to this study, and the necessity for phenomenological interviews, interviewing, journaling, and observation. The foundation questions for this work were addressed at the close of this chapter.

Action Research

Action, or practitioner research, also known as practice-based, teacher research, teacher-as-researcher, is “undertaken by educational professionals in their own practice settings for the purpose of better understanding their work and how to improve it” (McMillan & Wergin, 2006, p. 164). For example, in traditional research a correlation between pupil achievement and class size might be drawn to show the relationship
between the two variables, while an action research study might assess the effects of class size and school achievement in order to formulate policies on both student numbers in the classroom and selected programs to offer in the area of extracurricular activities.

McMillan and Wergin (2006) stated that, “While the results of action–practitioner research may often have theoretical implications, the focus is on the tangible and the here-and-now” (p. 164). The criteria for evaluating this form of research must be accurate, legal, and ethical in reporting information about a particular audience.

In order to conduct a meaningful study concerning IB students and their use of self-regulatory strategies in their attempts to achieve the goal of an IB diploma, the action research method was chosen. A definition of terms relating to SRL as applicable to this study was necessary to connect the IB students and their perspectives with attained, or attainable, goals focusing on the regulation of cognitive, metacognitive, and motivational aspects as they continue in the Language A1 classroom, and how that experience reflects on their self-motivation for achievement within the framework of social cognitive psychology (Alderman, 2008; Bandura, 1989; McCombs, 2001; McCombs & Whistler, 1997; Pintrich & Garcia, 1991; Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 2006). The phenomenological approach (Eisner, 1998; Seidman, 1998) was used to complete the triangulation of observations, interviews, and attitudinal testing. This method involves students’ experiential views, teacher observations and assessment, as well as the SRL strategies in a social cognitive framework.

Major differences which were addressed in this dissertation involve a particular self-selected group of individuals who are IB students for a minimum of 2 years; therefore, the focus in this qualitative study was on the interpretative, not the statistical
significance of data analysis; this study was based on the triangulation of the interviews, observations, journals, and student writing assessments.

Action research, or practitioner research, is an investigation by teachers or practitioners into their own area in which they might want to define and or address a problem. It can be viewed as a method of inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, and critical, in which an area of social or educational practices are addressed, or how they are carried out (McCutcheon & Jung, 1990). In most cases the teacher is seeking to understand a select number of students and their actions in a classroom situation. The process must pose a question about possibly a problematic situation and then attempt through a series of observations, interviews, LASSI testing, to “improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of their practices and situations in which these practices are carried out” (Kemmis &McTaggart, 1982). This method of practitioner research is applicable to this IB program because of the available number of subjects; the availability of an IB secondary school, and the opportunity for interviewing and close assessment and observation, while maintaining an unbiased perspective as much as possible.

The purpose of this type of research was to possibly develop a greater understanding of students’ perspectives, as well as to provide more opportunity for more self-awareness on the part of the instructor, in terms of current theory and practice in the IB classroom. Are the SRL practices of the International Baccalaureate students the key to their success in the program, as well as to their perspectives on individual achievements and goals? Is this an International Baccalaureate program that is beneficial to the students in an urban secondary school setting from multiple perspectives?
The cohort in this dissertation was a particular self-selected (in terms of the limited number of students enrolled) group of individuals who are IB Language A1 students for a minimum of 2 years; the focus was on the practical, not the statistical significance of data analysis, and control was represented through triangulation of the interviews, observations, journals, and student writing assessments. Action research requires an emphasis on reflection in which the practitioner must take the time to step back and think about the impact of classroom practices, which involve a written daily observation journal or field notes by the researcher. David Hobson stated that one must “render the familiar strange” (2001, p. 8). It is essential to examine the students and the IB program from an unbiased objective perspective. Agryris and Schon (1974) stated that a major problem that must be faced by an action researcher is dealing with espoused theory (one’s beliefs about classroom practices), and “theory-in-action,” or what one actually does in practice. This problem was alleviated with the use of two veteran English teachers as external observers, who were utilized in this study. This is a concept that is crucial in adding validity to this study, and a method used by National Board Certification of Teachers which requires videotaping of one’s classroom and later writing a reflection in terms of what was observed in theory and practice. At this point in time the hope is that the IB classroom practices promote the beliefs and the mission of the IBO as supported by the diploma success rate, but with objective observers it may be discovered that future pedagogical theories and practices may be better served after close external observation and assessment of current ones. Validity was an important aspect of this type of research, and the necessary triangulation methods were addressed in Chapter
III. In this manner this action research project may be of value not only to the student, but also to the instructor and the current IB program.

Self-regulated studies and practices present a broad spectrum of definitions, perspectives, practices, and beliefs which necessarily must be processed and finally fit into an appropriate framework with specific questions, research approaches, and data to be collected and analyzed. Only by carefully scanning and collecting the literature is it possible to focus the topic and formulate the final research design. Action/practitioner research of this type is a field which truly cannot be definitive before data and analysis is collected, since the researcher may be led into a new direction.

The unique aspects of the IB program in an urban secondary school setting present an interesting qualitative case study. Many IB schools enroll only IB students; whereas this particular secondary school encompasses a magnet arts program, a traditional secondary curriculum, and the International Baccalaureate Diploma program. The incorporation of the three separate curriculums and the impact of this factor on the IB students were examined as part of the attitudinal surveys and the phenomenological interviews. After reviewing the existing literature and studies involving the program and the enrolled students, it was apparent that very few research projects have dealt with this particular topic, nor with the SRL practices of enrolled IB students. A goal of this project was to grow as a researcher and to present a realistic portrait of current students, their beliefs and practices relating to SRL not only this classroom, but in related areas of their academic lives. This study offered a unique opportunity to not only give students the opportunity to gain more self-awareness of their beliefs and metacognitive practices, but also an opportunity to present a perspective of the students and the IB curriculum that
could be beneficial to pedagogical practices in other ELA programs. This research examined the students from a phenomenological perspective, focusing on the self-perceived identities of SRL practices of the students: “Self-identities are seen as the ultimate goals that students use to self-regulate their learning” (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001, p. 292).

**International Baccalaureate**

The Mission Statement of the International Baccalaureate aims to develop individuals who are concerned with developing into individuals who are “lifelong learners” with the understanding that other people, with their differences, can also be right. They set guidelines for programs that encourage rigorous assessment, thus hoping to create more intercultural understanding (IBO, 2008). The IB program thus differs from other curricula in encouraging in-depth learning, as opposed to curricula with goals of high performance on standardized tests, or relying on survey courses whose aim is to “get-through” the required material in a given semester or year. The IB program promotes a global perspective by urging students to develop an appreciation of other cultures, various religions, global issues, and finally, a multiple perspective (IBO, 2009), all of which is reflected in the Language A1 English curriculum literature choices. The National Center on Education and the Economy (2006) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007) identified the essential skills for the 21st century: communication and problem-solving skills; self-discipline and organization; creativity and innovation; analytical reasoning; teamwork and leadership; and creativity and innovation and leadership. This reflects the IB student profile which lists the 10
attributes that the IB program attempts to develop in enrolled students: inquiry skills: knowledge, exploring concepts and issue and ideas; critical thinking, particularly in approaching complex problems; communication, in receiving and expressing ideas; risk taking, approaching unfamiliar situations, new roles, ideas and strategies; principles of moral integrity and honesty; caring, showing empathy and respect; open-mindedness, respecting values, views and traditions of others; balance, understanding the importance of physical and mental balance; and reflectiveness, giving consideration to personal development and learning (Beard & Hill, 2008).

A review of the current articles and texts reviewing the International Baccalaureate program focused on the concern for global understanding and diversity, yet some institutions and school boards still view it as a European-based tutorial program. This perspective sometimes leads to a problem with “fitting” it into an urban public school curriculum. It was not the intention of this study to solve this perceived problem, but instead to focus on the existing framework and requirements of the IB curriculum to using reference points to show the connection of the successful self-regulated IB student with a student-centered constructivist classroom.

A review of the current literature on gifted student in accelerated programs, the lack of student engagement and motivation, the results of standardized testing, and case studies of IB and College Preparatory students, all illustrated the need for additional research, since there was a pronounced gap in research connections of the aforementioned groups. Parke (1989) and Kohn (2000) noted the need for teachers to develop instructional plans that are appropriate and intriguing to students of varying abilities, and that involve them in challenging experiences. Daniel and Cox (1988) noted
that a program with “flexible pacing strategies” is needed in which students can participate based on their interests, needs, and abilities. This program should consist of curricular compacting and contracting, and credit by examination, thus allowing the student to be involved in independent studies, all contributing to a differentiated program that meets the needs not only of gifted students, but those of varying abilities. The challenge, they noted, is to identify the need, and then develop and gain access to a curricula and program that meets the needs, and finally to monitor student progress; all of which is reflected in the proscribed IB program in pacing, contracting, and examining, internal student options, and monitoring. This study presented some insight into a segment of the IB student population in order to develop a better awareness for all teachers of not just “gifted” students, but for students enrolled in other academic programs.

**Phenomenology**

Phenomenological analysis, according to McCombs (2001), involves an inductive approach which seeks to avoid prior assumptions about individuals, a program, or an experience. Phenomenological theories focus on self-actualization and self-concept of the students, thus the belief one has about one’s capacity to self-regulate learning is key to any study. It is the belief that the reality of any object or situation can only be perceived within the individual’s own experience (Creswell, 1998). Each perception contributes to the truth of the experience or the object, and these perceptions, acts, or memories accompanying the experience form the basis of understanding it, and thus the individuals view the experience as it was for them (Moustakas, 1994). Too many times
assumptions are made concerning students’ perceptions about an academic course or
curriculum without any knowledge of the students’ views or attitudes. It differs from
quantitative methods because it involves what is termed as an open-ended dialogue with a
researcher and a participant, and thus interviews, journals, and other forms of assessment
are essential aspects of the process. To insure validity, cooperative inquiry, and analysis,
triangulation was utilized through the use of objective faculty members insuring that
researcher triangulation was used in analyzing the data of students’ perceptions of their
experiences in the IB program. This phenomenological aspect has seldom been explored
in IB research, but more often just as an overview of the general purposes, or the
successes and failures of individuals involved in said programs. The IB students’
perspectives and perception of the concept or “phenomenon” in the program as connected
to the SRL strategies have not been analyzed to any extent. The researcher plays an
important role in the methodology because it is necessary to reflect upon any attitudes,
biases, or past experiences that could impact the validity; in other words, suspending
judgment and putting aside prior knowledge and experience, a process known as
“bracketing” (Moustaskas, 1994). The students’ “reality” of the process, or the meaning
of what the “lived experience” is for each individual is crucial. The students’ perspective
of the experience provides insight, rather than just the researcher’s view of that same
classroom experience. In-depth interviews help the students and the researcher to “make
meaning” of individual experiences in the program after reflecting on particular details of
educational aspects, which was evident in the three interviews taking place at a minimum
of 3 months apart (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). Gregory (2001) stated that
“teachers could better help their students and themselves if they learned to look at
teaching from the student’s point of view” (p. 77). This process helped the researcher in putting aside previous assumptions, such as the view that the IB program is the absolute best of all curriculum offerings, and instead examining how the curriculum or “best practices” might be improved, or even completely revamped for future IB students, as expressed from the students’ viewpoint and the role of the instructor. Applebee (1986, 2000) stated that we need to enter into conversations with our students, and in so doing, real dialogue, independent exploration, and more thoughtful commentary on the part of the student will be evident. This then presents an opportunity for a constructivist pedagogy that is less prescriptive. Too often the student perspective is ignored or dismissed in curriculum requirements, as well as in theory and practice, resulting in student apathy and disengagement. By triangulating the attitudinal surveys, conducting multiple interviews, assessing student journaling and observations, it now seems evident that positive gains are possible in achieving the goal of a classroom that is focusing on “learning to learn,” a primary goal of the IB program.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) termed this method as “stories of experience and narrative inquiry,” which are crucial in terms of students, teachers, and researchers representing storytellers and characters in their own stories, and relating to one another. They viewed this process as a collaborative document stemming from the researcher and the student, thus resulting in “mutually constructed story” (p. 12) supporting the belief that the IB structure offers students and teachers an opportunity for a much closer relationship in which the perspective changes from one of teacher-assessor to one of coach-collaborator. The IB structure at this school offers instructors the only opportunity to meet and discuss academic needs of individual students on a monthly basis; they
receive more focused attention and support than any other student group at this institution. Very few IB students flounder and fail since the support factor is built into the program; teachers, supervisor, parents, and administration are all part of the process of ensuring that each student succeeds, as opposed to other programs such as the Honors-AP offerings which seldom give teachers the opportunity for similar collaboration. The IB supervisor spends half of her contractual time dealing with student and parent interviews, as well as whatever particular needs and concerns each IB student might have. No other program in this urban secondary system reflects the level of this support; IB students thus seem to be less concerned about failing because that expectation is lacking, or at least in most cases. Attitudinal testing aid in formulating relevant interview questions and discovering student concerns involving failure and related factors. The IB program instructors work collaboratively to ensure student success, and through LASSI testing, phenomenological interviews, observations, and artifacts assessment, the value of the aforementioned support can now be viewed and assessed from the fresh perspective of the student participants.

**Self-Regulated Learners Defined**

Self-regulation from the social cognitive perspective is composed of personal, Behavioral, and environmental triadic processes (Bandura, 1986). This triad focuses on beliefs of cognitive, emotional, and environmental aspects that will have a direct impact on individuals seeking particular goals (Bandura, 1997; Weiner, 1990). This definition depends on “self-beliefs” and “affective reactions (Zimmerman, 1995), as well as perceived efficacy, which relates to one’s capability of implementing actions to attain a
degree of skill for a designated task (Zimmerman, 2000). How students feel about their
efforts, competence, and particular goals are involved in the social-cognitive approach to
one of the focal points of current educational curricula: motivation: attributions, efficacy,
self-image are all involved in student success. Pintrich (2000) delineated components of
self-regulated learning and noted that a general definition of SRL is that it is an “active,
constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to
monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and
constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment” (p. 453), which
is evident in other definitions in the field as stated by Butler and Winne (1995) and
Zimmerman, (2000). This also reflects the triadic process constructed by Zimmerman
(1989). In this typology he divided the area into Cognition, Motivation/affect, and
Behavior and Context, expressing the triad.

The IB student profile states that students are expected to show autonomy,
possess decision-making skills, set academic goals, be capable of monitoring and
adjusting their learning strategies, and finally able to evaluate their achievements (IBO,
2009), all of which constitute the ideal self-regulated learner. In this close-knit group
representing a “school-within-a-school,” a pattern for performance comparison must also
be addressed (Dweck, 2001). The IB students are expected to closely collaborate in
many project-based activities; therefore, constant grade comparison is often in evidence,
sometimes to the detriment of self-efficacy. In this context the students are creating their
own learning experiences and following their own particular interests and desires.

Winne (1995) defined SRL as an inherent aspect of cognition, altered by
experiences and a variety of influences. Alexander (1995) stated it is a socially shared
cognition, and [wonders] is there evidence in self-regulation performed in solitude . . . markedly different from that performed within a social environment?” (p. 181).

Zimmerman believed that “the key issue defining learning as self-regulated is not whether it is socially isolated, but rather whether the learner displays personal initiative, perseverance, and adaptive skill pursuing it” (Zimmerman, 2001, p. 1). SRL occurs when students are permitted to create their own learning experiences and follow their own interests, according to Sharp, Pocklinton, and Weindling (2002). Pintrich (2000) stated that self-regulated learners create strategies, goals, and meaning in their work; they monitor their own actions, use standards and goals to assess their learning and make changes as necessary, and finally use internal and external contexts and personal traits to improve their academic performance. Zimmerman (2000) stated that self-regulated learners engage in forethought, performance/volitional control, and finally self-reflection. According to Zimmerman (2000), students who exhibited an “integrated self-regulatory style” are likely to be more fully assimilated since they experience more choice and control over their actions. Alderman (2008) noted that self-regulation refers to “metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral participation . . . three phases acting in a cyclical fashion: forethought, volitional control, and self-reflection” (p. 168). All of these areas were explored in this case study, determining, as much as possible, to what degree the IB students are “self-regulated.” Students enrolled in this rigorous curriculum seemingly are ready to meet the challenges, exhibit qualities that match the SRL profile, and are knowledgeable and reflective about their classroom experiences and requirements.
**Motivation Theory**

The motivation of students enrolling in the challenging IB is often complex and sometimes difficult to define until months have passed or problems incurred, sometimes resulting in exiting the IB classes; students are not permitted to select just some of the courses, since this is what is designated as a “High Level” IB institution, rather than a standard one in which the students may choose particular subjects, such as in AP courses. Students may have enrolled because of peer pressure, parental desire, or a strong personal desire to excel in a challenging rigorous curriculum. As noted by Alderman (1999), students are often motivated by their willingness to develop to their potential, but it is also necessary for teachers and mentors to provide many possibilities for this goal to be met. The cognitive aspects concerning the students’ belief that they can meet the challenges of the program, and at the same time have a positive (and comfortable) role in the social environment complete with competitive peer pressure is an example of the “reciprocal relationship,” which is the interaction of cognition, environmental, and behavioral aspects (Bandura, 1997; Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992).

The idealized view of the IB student as one who is intelligent, confident, and a goal-setter is not always the case because of the aforementioned social, cultural, and environmental context, and the fact that until entering the IB program the students’ view of their capabilities may have been inflated, since their previous course work may have been less challenging. This, in turn, could lead to negative strategies which Garcia and Pintrich (1994) noted are defense mechanisms by setting low expectations with statements such as: “This course/class is too difficult,” failure to complete assigned tasks, or exhibiting physical problems such as anxiety attacks, thus avoiding a perceived lack of
ability by their parents, peers, or teachers. Student motivation is an absolute necessity in the IB classroom, and effort, confidence, and continued persistence are keys to the success in this program.

**Attribution Theory**

Alderman stated that students’ perceptions about their probability of success can be linked to their beliefs about ability, effort, task difficulty, strategy usage, and even luck, which is an integral part of attribution theory. Attribution theory involves an individual’s beliefs about causes of outcome, and thus influences their behavior and future expectations. For example, self-regulated individuals may attribute failure to unstable or correctable causes which can be changed through the use of increased effort and increased confidence, thus leading to a positive *self-reaction*, in opposition to a view of limited ability or competence (Weiner, 1979). On the other hand, students who attribute failure to lack of ability possess a self-defeating attitude. Strategy use in self-regulation is thus directly related to success in contributing to the mastery of a particular subject or skill. With the use of “strategic attributions” (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990), the students will be able to identify their errors and thus adapt their future performances. In the cyclical phase of self-regulation the effectiveness of reflection, evaluation, attribution, and adaptation are integral to the successful SRL student (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998). “Strategy attributions reinforce systematic variations in approach” (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998, p. 5), and thus students will become more adaptive as they begin to evaluate their performances. When students have a positive self-reaction to their mastery of a subject, it enhances their view of themselves as learners.
with greater self-efficacy (a belief in one’s capabilities), and a stronger desire to meet their goals (Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

In researching how students attribute these areas for their success or failure, it is clear that students must be able to connect their success or failure to the particular factors that preceded it (Alderman, 1999). Attributions are influenced by cues, either direct such as test results, or indirect, such as teacher assessment or communication. By pinpointing effort as opposed to ability, focusing on strategies and effort, and instilling student responsibility, students will discover coping strategies that focus on mastery, rather than performance (Alderman, 1999; Bempechat, 1998). Students in advanced secondary classes might be expected to distinguish between effort and ability; and when the perceived competence is greater, such as just by being accepted into the IB program, the students should be more likely to avoid attributing their obstacles or failures to lack of ability. This enables them to accept the fact that ability is unstable and changeable with the required effort (Alderman, 1999; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1996, 1997).

High risk preference and the need for a challenge are often viewed as a profile of the ideal IB candidate/student. By being “chosen” through interviews, GPA, and parental choice (contract), it is sometimes assumed that through mentoring, collaborating, and external support they will be successful, even when their perceived ability may not match their efforts. Attribution for success or failure plays a significant role in their future performance (Weiner, 1990), and when students attribute their failure to lack of effort or positive strategies and not innate ability, it is controllable (Borkowski, Weyhing, & Carr, 1988; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Labels such as “high ability,” or “low achieving” are often given to students who are not successful in the program, and if mentored these
students might have been able to make the distinctions between ability and competence and not become discouraged by the initial difficult or “learned helplessness” (Alderman, 1999).

Students who persist in the task and believe that they possess the academic capability should become mastery IB students, but the problem is overcoming the initial obstacles of task difficulty, and perhaps a perception of lack of ability in particular domains, or in choosing particular learning strategies. The competitive and collaborative nature of the close-knit IB classmates can often be a hindrance in attributing success or failure to effort and not ability. Students who are focusing on outcome goals are usually going to use normative criteria for their self-evaluation tools since competitive awards and social acceptance are so important in most schools (Zimmerman, 2001). The value of the task of achieving the diploma should thus become a student goal, rather than teacher or parent directed one, and should foster feelings of self-satisfaction in the mastery process. The highly regulated individual values the feelings of satisfaction and self-respect rather than any final rewards that may be material (Bandura, 1997). As the intensive 2-year course continues, it would seem the goal for successful IB candidates is taking responsibility for their successes or failures and attributing it to the amount of effort given to an assignment or task, rather than innate ability as their classroom experiences become positive and the students gain confidence. This belief is supported by the researcher when graduates return and applaud their IB classroom experiences in light of their current collegiate academic requirements, even when those particular students have not achieved the IB diploma.
Self-Efficacy Theory

Self-efficacy is a student’s belief that he or she is capable of performing effectively, and that positive learning strategies will produce a desired outcome (Schunk & Schwartz, 1993; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992) in areas involving effective time management, resisting peer pressure (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996), and the use of self-monitoring, evaluation, and specific goal setting (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). For example, the belief that an IB student (in this research) would be able to obtain the diploma by mastering the course work and assessment testing with an “A” grade, or even be permitted to continue in the program with the requirement of a GPA of 3.25, demonstrates self-efficacy. Dweck (1988) labeled this a mastery process; a mastery (Ames, 1992), or a task goal orientation (Nichols, 1984). Student self-efficacy is derived from “their performances, vicarious (observational) experiences, forms of persuasion, and physiological reactions” (Schunk & Ertmer, 2000, p. 633). Does the mere fact that the student has enrolled in the most rigorous secondary program support the “efficacy” beliefs of that particular individual or are other behavioral and environmental factors involved? The more capable individuals believe themselves to be, the higher the goals will be that they set, and that they will be committed to attaining in their final secondary years (Bandura 1991; Locke & Latham, 1990). Peer competition and observations, as noted earlier, can either raise or lower a student’s efficacy, and IB students seem capable of resisting peer pressure, as exemplified when they are termed “elitist” by other students in the school setting. How does parental support or pressure affect the efficacy beliefs of the student? Does the continuing peer collaboration elicit too much competition for grades and performance,
rather than mastery of the subject matter? Do students sometimes ignore possible mentorship or available tutoring for fear of appearing inadequate to their IB peer group? These issues are integral to the self-efficacy beliefs of a highly motivated elite group, but may play a role in their perceived capabilities. Anxiety thus may have an effect and may be seen as feelings of incompetence (Schunk & Ertmer, 2000).

Do students who have the opportunity to engage in open-ended activities, engage in self- and peer evaluation, and have choices in curriculum represent what constitutes the ideal IB Language A1 individual in a student-centered classroom? The evaluation, or assessment, is not just teacher-centered but shared by the students, the instructor, and the IB external assessors. The emphasis is not on failure, or inability, but rather on mastery and “making meaning” of assigned work and projects. Perry, VandeKamp, Mercer, and Nordby (2002) described the ideal SRL classroom as “They gave students choices, opportunities to control challenge, opportunities to evaluate their own and other’s learning, instrumental support, and feedback and evaluation that was non-threatening and mastery-oriented” (p. 9). This description matches the IBO optimum classroom guidelines (IBO, 2009). Higher goals will be set by individuals who believe themselves more capable, and they will be more committed to those particular goals (Bandura, 1991; Locke & Latham, 1990). When these goals are not met, the high achievers will simply increase their efforts, while others will withdraw (Bandura & Cervone, 1986). The “progressive mastery” of particular goals (Schunk & Schwartz, 1993; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1997) thus provided satisfaction, rather than it being delayed until the final outcome, such as a course grade or the IB diploma being attained.
Self-efficacy is an integral aspect of self-regulation. Students who are efficacious have specific goals and the sense that they will attain them. It is not, however, sufficient for students to have positive efficacy beliefs; they must receive instruction in particular learning strategies (SRL) to successfully complete the assigned task, and by self-regulating they will know when to apply particular strategies even when faced with difficult tasks or assignments (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Their performances should be self-monitoring involving reflection upon their progress, while continuing to use effective strategies. In so doing they self-reflect and decide whether they must adapt their self-regulatory strategies. Zimmerman (2000) stated it is a three phase recursive model composed of forethought, performance, and self-reflection, thus setting the stage for goal modification or deciding on new ones. In this manner the process is motivating the individual, and students are able to attribute their mastery of the subject as successful, rather than the final performance leading to the distal goal being the only measure.

Students who are successful develop feelings of competence, adopt learning or mastery goals, seek help as needed, and possess increased feelings of self worth. The LINKS model (Alderman, 1999) of goal setting, attribution retraining, and self-efficacy combined with learning and metacognitive strategies in a sequential pattern gives students the tools to attribute their success in any academic program to controllable factors, increasing their expectations of self. This model could be applicable to all IB students as they continue their academic program. The goal of this researcher was to make knowledge, strategies and skill practice an important aspect in the IB classroom by following the LINKS model.
The successful experience in the IB program should lead to increased self-efficacy as the students continue their studies. Junior students noted that IB seniors experience less anxiety and seemed more efficacious as they continued in the program, thus alleviating the juniors’ concerns upon facing the challenges and rigor, as noted in their interviews.

**Self-Regulatory Capabilities**

The focus of the self-regulated IB student in this study was based upon a model of SRL developed by Pintrich and Schrauben (1992), Pintrich and Garcia (1991), and Pintrich (1989). It was composed of observing and analyzing cognitive and metacognitive self-regulated learning strategies. The cognitive phase included rehearsal, elaboration, and organization, while the metacognitive strategies encompassed planning, monitoring, and regulating of cognition during the learning period: in other words, planning, monitoring, and finally evaluation. In this manner it involved students viewing themselves as “an actor in his environment, that is, a heightened sense of the ego as an active deliberate storer and retriever of information” (Flavell, 1979, pp. 906-907).

Successful students are expected to control their environment: time management, prioritizing their assignments, self-monitoring their grades, and even their attitudes. They must have an awareness of the negative factors in their environment: part-time work commitments; procrastinating by too much socializing; not seeking help from teachers, peers, or mentors, all involving forethought, volitional control and self-reflection which are crucial to success in the program.
Chapter Summary

Four main topics pertinent to the present study have been reviewed through the literature: action research, phenomenology, International Baccalaureate students, and a definition of self-regulated learners. By examining the IB students in phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 1998), through the lens of the successful self-regulated individual, and attempting to view them from their own perspectives, it may be possible to understand and analyze their motivations, their social cognitive processes, self-efficacy strategies, goal-setting, and views of their academic capabilities in the program.

Phenomenology gives insight into “making the familiar strange (Hobson, 2001), thus giving students a voice from an unbiased perspective. Action research may reveal why some students view performance and mastery in the same light, while others are content to pursue the process of obtaining the IB diploma as a measure of mastery. The IB program and the instructor attempt to be successful in focusing on the process, rather than the product (Foster, 2000), with students who are motivated and attribute their mastery success through the use of SRL strategies and choices rather than innate ability (Alderman, 2008). If such is the case, why do particular students exit the program or feel that the challenge and rigor are beyond their perceived ability and fail to make connections with their efforts (Alderman, 2008)? The factors involve self-efficacy as well as motivation and persistence.

Teacher support or influence, peer or social comparison, and peer collaboration connect with such factors as criterion-referenced assessment and collaborative activities fostering self-regulation (Pintrich, 2000). Successful IB students use SRL strategies when making decisions; the factors of “reciprocal relationships,” known as “reciprocal
interaction” (Bandura, 1986) operate in the IB classroom. The evidence of connections between emotions, motivations, and attitudes that are involved with the students’ development of skills, knowledge, and the capacity to take initiative, set goals, and even to pursue them in a self-directed fashion are integral to success in any academic pursuit (Zimmerman, 1989). Through the use of phenomenological interviews, observations, journals, and LASSI testing the aforementioned aspects of SRL were triangulated and analyzed.

Action research was chosen to determine the SRL strategies of IB students in their junior year at an urban secondary school. By choosing the rigorous IB program, students exhibited forethought and the willingness to be self-disciplined in terms of effort, planning, and the determination and patience to complete the extended college-level requirements, or so it would seem, but there was the question of why do some students exhibit the aforementioned characteristics? The IB student profile states that key characteristics are concentration, self-discipline, effort, planning, determination, and patience, all qualities that denote success (IBO, 2008), which also aligns with self-regulated students defined as “metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process” (Zimmerman, 1986).

The 14 categories of SRL strategies developed by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) were utilized to demonstrate the relationship between the students’ use of these strategies and their desired academic achievement, as well as factors influencing and attributing their choices involving mastery and performance (Alderman, 2008). Factors that influenced students’ choice of SRL strategies are self-efficacy, belief in the intrinsic value of the task, and self-efficacy and motivation (Zimmerman, 1986).
Phenomenological interviews, LASSI testing, observations by objective outsiders, and assessments of written work were triangulated in order to discover the attributes and characteristics of the successful IB student in the field of self-regulation learning strategies. Transferability, rather than general applicability, was the focus of this study since interpretations may only be made within this particular context of the IB program. By collecting details, data, and developing delineated descriptions of this IB context, other interpretations may be made. Researcher bias was avoided through the triangulation of attitudinal surveys, the phenomenological interviews by external assessors, student journaling, observations, and reflection and analysis of beliefs that may have been held by the researcher.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Instruction in self-regulation processes is an investment in student growth that holds the promise of short-, intermediate-, and long-term returns. Specifically, how do the benefits of self-regulatory training or practices connect to students’ academic growth? Students can be expected to grow in three major ways as they refine the capability to self-regulate their learning: (a) in their understanding of subject matter content, (b) in their learning efficiency, and (c) in their perceived self-efficacy for successfully accomplishing learning tasks (Zimmerman, 1996).

Very few studies have focused on the International Baccalaureate students and their reflective views on their experience in this highly structured academic program. Most studies have focused on a particular academic program within the curriculum, or the success or failure of the program in a particular district, often comparing it to the Advanced Placement program whose aims and objectives differ from those of the International Baccalaureate program as stated in the previous chapter. Students are seldom asked to reflect on their educational experiences at any level, other than perhaps a cursory end-of-year questionnaire that a confident teacher might present as part of a final exam, although there is no requirement to do so. Although this study is concerned and
interested in all secondary students in both English Literature Honors and IB, it is necessary to limit it to specifically addressing those currently enrolled in the International Baccalaureate program. An in-depth qualitative analysis of as few as six student participants (since the enrollment in the course is limited to less than 40) offers professional insight into best practices, and perhaps a new perspective concerning the methodology of ELA instructors in non-IB courses. The aim of this study was to research the educational environment of the IB students and discover if the program is meeting their expectations, contributing perhaps to their limitations and/or frustrations, and how their perceived self-regulated learning strategies connect with their personal academic profile.

**Research Credibility**

It is important that researchers must address the issue of trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility of their research. In qualitative research a variety of methods must be utilized to ensure this particular aspect, such as those identified by a range of researchers (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Gall et al., 2003; McMillan & Wergin, 2006). In this study the following methods were employed to insure those issues:

- **Triangulation:** The use of multiple sources and methods of analysis.
- **Democratic validity:** Involves the collaboration of all research subjects and their multiple perspectives and material interests.
- **Dialogic validity:** Dialoguing with peers in the formation of findings and interpretations of the data collection.
Situating the Primary Researcher: Consists of informing the reader of any assumptions or biases that the researcher may have as the action-practitioner in the study.

**Situating the Teacher as Researcher**

Qualitative, or action, research takes place in a natural setting, such as a school, thus enabling the researcher to develop details about the subjects (students) as well as being highly involved in the actual experiences of the designated participants. In this manner the research is “emergent,” rather than being “prefigured” (Creswell, 2003). The aim of the practitioner-researcher is to generate theories about learning and practice, not as an abstract field of study, but rather from a practical perspective (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The results are interpretative and filtered through the personal lens of the action researcher. Thus, the researcher must constantly reflect on his or her personal-self which is “inseparable from the researcher-self” (Creswell, 1982). It is acknowledged that it is thus impossible to deny the situation of self in this setting, and care must be taken to remain as objective as possible with the data collected and to eliminate bias in interpretation and analysis.

**Learning and Studies Inventory (LASSI)**

In an effort to examine the particular experiences of this target group, the following procedures were used: personal interviews, classroom observations, assessment of written works, and the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) prepared by Weinstein, Palmer, and Schulte (1987), and student journaling. The LASSI is a 10 scale 80-item assessment of students’ beliefs of their study strategies, relating to skill, will, and self-regulation components of strategic learning, developed over 30 years ago, and now
used in over 200 institutions, with both a high school and college version available.

There are 10 learning and studying scales, and students are usually given a pre- and a post-test to assess their progress (although the subjects were given this test just once due to insufficient time between March and June for reliable results), or in this study, to particularly deal with motivation, time management, concentration, goal-orientation, anxiety, test strategies, and finally cognitive areas involving information process and self-testing (McMahon & Luca, 2001). According to Murray (1998), Weinstein’s purpose in developing this instrument was to aid students in strategic learning strategies by concentrating on self-regulation in terms of what the student can do best in the simple framework of taking notes, listening effectively, and setting reasonable goals; all of which is believed to be the methodology of the IB student employing SRL strategies in this study. It is acknowledged that it is not a perfect instrument because of the influence of external factors (McMahon & Luca, 2001) but is best for assessing the internal processes that could influence the use of self-regulation that are external to the student. They believe it is ideal for assessing strategies, or traits, that are crucial for student success while focusing on covert and overt behaviors, thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs relating to successful learning. It provides standardized scores (percentile score equivalents) and national norms for 10 different scales. It is diagnostic and prescriptive. It gives students a diagnosis of their weaknesses and strengths. The specific LASSI scales relating to the SRL component are concentration, time management, self-testing, and study aids. These particular scales measure how students manage, or self-regulate, and control the learning process through using their time effectively, focusing their attention, and maintaining their concentration. This attitudinal test focuses on overt and
covert thoughts of the students in order to discover their awareness, beliefs, thoughts, and behaviors relating to skill, will, and self-regulation components of strategic learning at the junior and senior level in their IB program in an urban secondary high school. It is self-scored and is considered to be an achievement measure for students in a program focusing on learning strategies and study skills (see Appendix B). Examples of LASSI Scale items follow:

*Attitude Scale:* I feel confused and undecided as to what my educational goals should be. (The answers would then range from a 1-5 scale from “not at all like me,” to “very much like me” for each question).

*Motivation Scale:* When work is difficult, I either give up or study only the easy parts.

*Time Management Scale:* I only study when there is pressure for a test.

*Anxiety Scale:* Worrying about doing poorly interferes with my test concentration.

*Concentration Scale:* I find that during lectures I think of other things and cannot concentrate.

*Information Processing Scale:* I translate what I am studying into my own words.

*Selecting Main Ideas Scale:* Often when studying I seem to get lost in details.

*Study Aids Scale:* I use special helps, such as italics and headings that are in my text.

*Self-Testing Scale:* I stop periodically while reading and mentally go over reviewing what I have read.
Test Strategies Scale: I find I have misunderstood what is wanted and lose points. (LASSI Scales, 2007; see Appendix C).

The LASSI results were useful in structuring the phenomenological interview questions that followed the LASSI test, since the purpose of action research is to generate knowledge (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006), and seeing the emergence of new themes as the research continued. In addition, the LASSI was a valuable aid in modifying and/or redirecting the interviews and the observations. This IB program is situated in a performing arts magnet school that is also part of a large urban district with a diverse population, resulting in a small core of IB students sometimes being regarded as “elitist” by themselves and other students. This study was limited to six junior IB students who are currently enrolled in this program, which enrolls not only students in the immediate school district but also includes open enrollment students from outlying districts. The goal of the LASSI testing was to discover the students’ perspectives in terms of their self-regulation strategies in this challenging program (see Appendix D) and how, in combination with phenomenological interviews, these six particular individuals view their experiences in the IB program from what is hoped to be an unbiased manner. The role as an action researcher led to the choice of the phenomenological research design, coupled with the case study approach (qualitative study) in order to discover the SRL strategies of the IB students. To obtain multiple perspectives in order to make meaning of any experience (Moustakas, 1994), it is most beneficial to ask the students who are affected by the system, or what is known as the IB curriculum. The study began with data obtained about knowledge of the experience through the LASSI, Likert-type tool; in-depth interviews in which stories of their experiences were detailed and insights into their
academic/social lives revealed, and finally through objective classroom observations, assessed written assignments, and individual student journals, which were written as part of their class assignments.

In triangulating the LASSI and the phenomenological interviews, the self-concepts of the subjects and their beliefs about their capacity to self-regulate their learning strategies became apparent. The individuals’ perception of their own experiences helped to contribute to the truth, or perception of memories that formed their experiences from their perspective. This triangulation of personal perceptions gained through the written LASSI and the oral phenomenological interviews helped solidify the reality of the SRL process and the meaning of the aforementioned “lived experience” of each subject. The result was thus then a “mutually constructed story” involving their SRL strategies in the IB classroom (Connelly & Clandinin, (1990).

**Phenomenology**

Eliot Eisner (1998) believed that qualitative studies which focus upon examining individuals contribute to a better understanding outside the particular classroom or program, since it can provide greater insight to “analogous situations” (p. 103). This was not a statistical study based on random sample, but one that Eisner referred to as “naturalistic generalization” (p. 103), thus the purpose of the phenomenology approach was simply to discover what students believe they are experiencing and learning in a particular setting, perhaps leading to increased self-awareness when facing a similar setting in a university or curriculum, or chosen vocational field.
The focus of the LASSI test in this study was on the achievement measurement of participating students focusing on self-regulatory strategies and study skills, and it seems evident that many of the scale sections align with the successful SRL strategies employed by students enrolled in the IB Language A1 course. It is believed that action research contributes to informed decision-making on the part of the students and the instructor. As noted by McMillan and Wergin (2006), the results of action research may contain some theoretical aspects, but the focus is more concerned with the perception of the effectiveness of the program in dealing with the tangible aspects of it. Action research is sometimes able to reconstruct educational theory, and in so doing might be able to find terms that are “understandable” and thus develop more effective practices (Gall et al., 2003), and in this manner connect theory and practice. This study combined the two fields in joining the students’ and researcher’s perspectives in analyzing the self-regulated learning strategies. The research for this study combined the use of self-regulated strategies of International Baccalaureate students and phenomenology, thus presenting a dual perspective of the IB classroom subjects and practices in an action research framework.

The following section explains the philosophy behind self-regulation and phenomenology, and why these areas are the focus of this study, how they are connected, and the specific manner in which this research was conducted.

**Self-Regulation and Phenomenology**

Academic self-regulation refers to self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions intended to attain specific education goals, such as analyzing a reading assignment,
preparing to take a test, or writing a paper (Zimmerman et al., 2006). In Zimmerman’s 25 years of studying learning he noted that the attainment of education goals is much more complex than just focusing on teachers and schools, and that high achievers set specific learning goals using self-monitoring strategies, a self-monitoring process, and often adapt their particular efforts on the basis of desired learning outcomes. These same high achievers are often self-efficacious and take responsibility for their learning process in their academic process. Zimmerman and Schunk (1986) noted that learning is not what happens to students, but it must happen by the students; in other words, the student must be proactively engaged in the entire process.

A cyclical process in which students monitor the worth of their strategies, or techniques, is defined as a self-oriented feedback loop, in which a student might replace one learning strategy with another as noted by McCombs: “Researchers favoring phenomenological views depicted this feedback loop in covert perceptual terms such as self-esteem, self-concept, and self-actualization” (McCombs, 2001). An important factor in defining an SRL student is attempting to understand how and why students choose to use particular processes, strategies, or responses. It is not always evident, even to the students, why a particular strategy is effective, or they may doubt that a particular choice may work, or the outcome may not be felt to be worth the time and effort needed, thus little motivation is in evidence. Scruggs and Mastropieri (1988) and Zimmerman, (2001) stated that SRL strategies pinpoint the fact that gifted students were better able to transfer their strategies to new areas of the curriculum requirements, even though according to Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990), gifted students who used more self-regulatory strategies could benefit from more practice in particular areas of self-regulation, since
planning, goal setting, and even test reviewing were not self-described as their chosen SRL areas.

Students who do not view themselves as successful IB students, even when enrolled in the program, for example, may choose to plagiarize, or to use “shortcuts” such as internet sites that merely summarize a work that has been assigned. A major difficulty of the IB program set in a large secondary school is that the “school within a school” meaning that this particular group of students often had little contact or relationships with individuals who might be “jocks,” “Goths,” “band kids,” or a variety of other peer groups. Thus, it is possible that motivation or academic accomplishment in this program is hindered by the isolationism and the inherent elitism that is evident in a diverse urban secondary school, and the fact that these particular students may well envision themselves in a manner that might be antithetical to the program, as noted by Steinberg, Brown, and Dornbush (1996). The distal goal of the IB diploma may seem too distant when it is 2 years in the future, or they may simply believe it is an impossible task, all of which involves volition, or strategies to persist, and self-efficacy. On the other hand, most students enrolled in the IB program are assumed to possess a sense of envisionment as a successful IB participant in terms of obtaining the diploma, and thus are perceived as strong SRL individuals with few problems, at least by their instructors, peers, and most parents as they enter the program, since they were qualified by earning high grade point averages (GPA) in their freshman and sophomore years.

Zimmerman (2001) noted that there are four key issues in defining what it means to become self-regulated metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally:
1. What motivates students to self-regulate during academic learning? Through what processes or procedures do students become self-reactive or self-aware?

2. What are the key processes or responses that self-regulated students use to attain their academic goals?

3. How does the social and physical environment affect students’ self-regulated learning?

4. How do learners acquire the capacity to self-regulate when learning?

These areas were addressed in the LASSI testing, the interviews and observations, and in student observations and journaling.

The phenomenological approach was a focal point of this study in analyzing the IB experience for the study participants who are willing to describe the meaning of the “lived experience” (Creswell, 1998). This qualitative aspect focused on individuals’ perceptions of their own interactions and experiences (Creswell, 1998). The students’ perception of their IB experience was viewed as their own reality. It was essential to accept this premise and thus facilitate the comprehension of others enrolled in said program. Too often the IB diploma is only viewed in terms of outcomes and accomplishments, as opposed to the student perspective of the rigor and challenge that was involved in attaining the goal. Moustakas (1994) noted that perception results from looking at an object from all angles, thus general or universal meaning becomes evident. Creswell noted that the researcher must reflect upon his/her own attitudes and thus avoid bias, since all experiences of the teacher must be examined in order to suspend judgment and put aside prior belief or knowledge (Creswell, 1998). By implementing objective observations through the use of external assessors and rendering the “familiar strange”
(Hobson, 2001), the researcher must carefully reflect on the subjects, their perspectives, and their actions and reactions. It was clear that even in the early stages many perceptions and beliefs about the students and the program were found to be misguided or simply incorrect. At this point in time, 10 years after the program began, the student population (even in IB) is changing with too many students not seeing the necessity of time management; expressing little desire in performing diligent research work; a reluctance or unwillingness to use critical thinking to produce analytical writing; or even little concern in viewing their work as process, rather than as product in writing and research assignments. The 2008 results of students earning high level IB diploma in this secondary school dropped from an average of 86% from 2000-2007 to 45% in the current graduation class, but rose to 90% in 2010 (IBO 2010). These judgments were carefully examined as this project continued, since researcher bias must be avoided, and it must be noted that the aforementioned positives of the program would seem to possibly outweigh the negatives as noted (Kanfer & McCombs, 2000). McCombs and Whisler (1997) stated that it is important for researchers to think about “person- and-learner-centered models of education,” and address the holistic and particular needs that involve behavior such as learning, motivation, and self-regulation. The implication for this study was to remain open-minded, put aside assumptions and beliefs about current students, as well as the negatives or comparisons with past classes of IB at this institution. These areas became issues involving the interviews, observations, and the LASSI testing of the study participants.
Participants and Site Selection

This action research project involved secondary students in their junior year in an urban secondary school who voluntarily chose to be subjects in this study involving their learning strategies in this particular International Baccalaureate program. The “Ethical Standards of the American Educational Research Association” involving educational researchers, and The University of Akron Internal Review Board which approved this dissertation topic were followed, particularly since the researcher and the teacher are one and the same in this study.

Participants

Data for this study were collected from six participants. The criteria for participation required the participants to be enrolled in the junior IB program. The participants were self-selected after the entire junior IB class was given information sheets in the fall which were followed by parent and student signed consent forms; every effort was made to select a balanced group of subjects in terms of gender, ethnicity, and even grade point average, when possible, but because of the small sample available, the group consisted of one particular class involving the six participants. If more than six students would have volunteered, there would have been a lottery to determine the final six. This selection method was chosen because the 35 students enrolled in the entire program eliminated a larger participant pool. All the IB participants were enrolled in the existing Language A1 class, since there is only one English teacher in one Diploma IB program at this secondary high school. A parent-student meeting explaining the study
was announced, but parents saw no need to attend, and later meetings were offered as the research continued and concluded.

**Site Selection**

All of these participants were enrolled in the IB diploma program meaning they only enroll in IB courses, since the program is literally a “school within a school.” Four of these subjects have been students at this school since their freshman year, and thus their familiarity with the school setting is established, since these students are not entering a secondary school and immediately encountering the rigor and challenge of the IB program, nor are they separated into the small groups that will be in place when they become juniors and take only IB classes. The freshman and sophomore “Honors” courses are often referred to as “Pre-IB,” although IBO does not recognize this label, nor is it official, and the students may enroll in subjects that are not classified as Pre-IB, as underclassmen. However, two of the students were entering this secondary institution for the first time: one individual having been home-schooled, and the other attending a public school in an outlying district. Previously, it had been thought to be important that the participants were enrolled at this particular secondary school in order to gain insight and compare and contrast their perspectives in a meaningful manner, but as the study continued it was apparent that the contrasting educational backgrounds of the students made more in-depth analysis possible. Since the program is classified as Higher Level IB, as opposed to Standard Level, this means that these individuals must take proscribed higher level courses, rather than being enrolled in a mixed curriculum such as the AP student might take. The IB classes thus are exclusive to the IB students, and no other
students may enroll, or even audit, any of the classes. These individuals thus become a collaborative unit almost completely separated academically from the rest of the school. This factor was addressed in the interviews and observations; it strongly influenced their views and attitudes regarding their academic challenges and goals.

**Phenomenological and SRL Interviews**

In order to establish a valid IB student profile the phenomenological interview was used: lengthy, in-depth, and conducted at 3- to 4-week intervals in March, April, and May. Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) noted that a structured interview process which was designed to measure SRL strategies in and out of classroom context displayed “substantial correlation” with academic achievement, and it was discovered that by interviewing the students more reliability could be evident in their self-regulation reports by corroborating and triangulating multiple sources of data from the interviews, thus resulting in more accuracy. Once again it was clear that by triangulation of the attitudinal test, interviews, observations, and journaling, validity was evident. Seidman (1998) noted that the time lapse of the three interviews allowed the researcher to monitor the subjects’ internal consistency.

The first interview focused on early educational experiences; the second was more personal in dealing with the students’ current status in the IB program; the third involved reflection on the connections between educational experience and perception as noted from earlier interviews.
Sample Interview Questions: Focal Points of SRL

Prior to the interview process the following questions were constructed in reference to the subjects’ assignment of required drafts and completion of a final research paper, and therefore were incorporated with the other interview questions over the 3 month time period; but as the interview process continued, it was determined that the following questions should be integrated with questions that were not as subject-specific, but that related more to the students’ experiences in the IB program as a whole, rather than one particular assignment, thus incorporating the areas of self-evaluation, self-monitoring, strategic outcome monitoring, and goal setting.

Self-Evaluation and Monitoring:

1. Did you prepare for the research paper draft? If so, how? Explain.
2. Did you exchange or collaborate daily with peers in terms of assignments? If so, why and how did you do this? Explain.
3. Do you take notes? Do you share your notes with a group of peers, or just a particular individual? If so, please explain.
4. Do you have other means of preparing? If so, what do you do? Explain.

Planning and Goal Setting:

1. How did you plan for the external or internal assessment and oral presentation?
2. Was your grade or assessment higher or lower than you expected?
3. How did you feel if it was lower or higher than you expected?

Strategy Implementation and Monitoring:

1. Do you always know what your current grade is in class? Why, or why not?
2. Do you only look at the grade and ignore comments on a returned paper, or do you revise your next assignment accordingly?

3. How do you handle a situation that you believe to be unfair in terms of your grade?

Strategic Outcome Monitoring:

1. Are you satisfied with your grade? Will you change your review strategies for your next assignment?

2. What was the main reason you feel you did not do better on this research assignment, and how will you rectify your errors on the next one?

These following sample questions dealt with the SRL aspects of motivation, metacognition, self-efficacy, and volition, as well as incorporating specific questions on their research project.

The first interview focused on the participants’ educational history in order to place the subjects in context. In this way the design was to detail early educational experiences of the students to better understand the influences, behavior, and decisions made prior to entering the IB program. The questions focused on reconstructing the academic history by detailing students’ early impressions of their educational experiences:

1. Describe your elementary experiences and give an example.

2. Do you remember anything that you learned that was significant? Please explain.

3. What was your relationship like with your teachers in middle school?
The second interview focused on the details of the students’ current educational experiences in the IB program from their formal enrollment in their junior year to the present time. Questions about curriculum, instruction, and current status (GPA) were asked of the students:

Personal Interview Two: Description of Experiences:

1. What has been a highlight of your year? Please explain.
2. What courses do you consider challenging? Why?
3. How do you deal with classes or courses that are stressful or difficult?

The third interview focused on the students’ reflections, and the creation of meaning from the previous interviews and became more specific in the areas of self-evaluation and monitoring, goal-setting, and strategic-outcome monitoring. The questions attempted to draw the subjects’ perception and experiences from the previous two interviews.

Interview Three: Reflection:

1. What are your goals for this summer, and how do you expect to accomplish them?
2. What does it mean to “reflect” on your experience in the IB program?

The three sets of interviews were integrated as this study continued, and there was a minimum of six questions in each of the aforementioned interview sections which were determined as the action research continued and the participants chosen. By spacing the three interviews one month apart, validity was ensured since students cannot usually remember what was stated at the last interview, and thus there was more likely to be consistency, and according to O’Donnell (1991), this structure gave the participants more
time to reflect on topics and issues that had been discussed. Each protocol was developed prior to the interviews and reviewed to ensure that there was clarity and coherence in the questions.

Each interview was designed to build upon the last one, thus reconnecting the educational history with the current participant’s perception about the instruction, curriculum, and the IB program. The last interview focused on the students’ understanding of the IB experience and their current perspectives.

Seidman (1998) noted that this triadic interview form helps place the students into a context which works positively for both the researcher and the student. The number of interviews and the time sequence allowed monitoring for consistency; thereby establishing validity, since the interviews were designed to build on each other. The questions were reviewed numerous times by the researcher and the external interviewers prior to questioning the students, ensuring that the questions were well written and clearly worded.

The interviews were held in a private room by an external observer and recorded for accuracy. The resulting tapes were about 30-45 minutes in length. The participants were asked to give their permission to be recorded in order to utilize accuracy in transcription. Member checking was established and students were able to review their transcribed tapes for accuracy at a later date (see Appendix E).

**Observations**

Observations were conducted by two outside observers, veteran English instructors at the secondary school, according to student, teacher, and observers’
opportunities in terms of time. The participants were observed a minimum of five times by the external observers, and on a daily basis by the researcher. The presence of the external observers was not disruptive since the students were acquainted with each of the individuals at the beginning of the school year, and their function explained. A rubric was composed and reviewed, or restructured as necessary as the observers met with the researcher to review and revise the logs, and in constructing future rubrics focused specifically on the students involved in the study. Practice interviewing sessions were held prior to actual interviews, and the researcher and trained observers met regularly to ensure the focus of the action research remained on the SRL strategies of the subjects.

Foundation questions were categorized from Epstein’s (1989) developmental perspective involving students’ mastery goal orientations and motivation:

Authority: Setting realistic goals
Taking leadership roles
Participating in decision-making
Student choices
Student autonomy

Recognition: Formal and informal use of rewards: praise and incentives

Grouping: Peer interaction
Small group work: assuming responsibility for learning

Evaluation: Mastery of subject: learning to learn
Efficacy

Time: Time management skills which alleviate anxiety and stress
Effective use of strategies for mastery goals (SRL)
Observational Log

1. How does the class begin? Where are the students?
2. What are the students doing: taking notes, collaborating, disengaged?
3. What is the interaction with the instructor?
4. Are participants (involved in the study) actively participating?
5. Are questions being asked and answered by a small group or the whole class?
6. Is the group staying on task?
7. Is undesirable behavior in evidence?

The final rubric dealt with observable behavior in the following aspects of SRL: motivation, efficacy, volition, attribution, goal-setting, and attitude in the IB classroom setting. An overview of the class, instructor techniques, and collaborative nature of the class was also addressed. Students were encouraged to discuss the presence of these observers and to ask any questions that arose (see Appendix F).

Journals

All students were asked to keep a journal during the entire study to record their feelings and experiences in International Baccalaureate. This information was included in the coding and analysis section of the research. The journals reflected their thoughts and attitudes as the school year progressed. They were assured that their journaling was private and anonymous. This was originally optional since some of the participants may have felt it to be difficult, or untimely, to continually record their experiences and feelings, or may simply have found it to be intrusive, but all of them recorded their
thoughts and feelings without any reluctance. The attitude of the subjects and their desire to write in their journals is discussed in Chapter IV.

**Artifacts and Assessments**

Written IB assignments, research papers, critical essays, and creative work were collected and utilized in writing field notes and data analysis.

**Data Analysis**

This began on the first day of the study in March and continued throughout the process. Data were analyzed by the teacher-researcher during the study to see emerging themes and patterns using SRL strategies as a foundation, and these were organized separately for each student subject, thus employing specific strategies, changing interview techniques and questions, and constantly using member checking of the interviews to locate other factors that might have seemed incompatible with the focus of the research (see Table 1). This was organized and assembled by date and interview questions to identify change and growth through the three interview process. These results were then compared and triangulated with the classroom observations, researcher field notes, and artifacts. Phenomenological research methods were used to analyze significant statements, generation of meaningful segments, and overall descriptive “essence” (Moustakas, 1994). Key words and phrases were coded as the tapes were transcribed and analyzed, and then re-reviewed a second time to discover tone, and a general sense of the overall meaning. Researcher notes were written in the margins, color-coding began, and key words such as “anxiety,” were discovered as categories began emerging. Common words and phrases were categorized with themes, and then
were color coded. These themes were then further analyzed for common patterns, similarities, and differences to help ensure the reliability of the data. The transcriptions were then re-coded as new categories began to emerge. Abbreviations for each category were instituted, and these codes were alphabetized. To help organize the sources a matrix was designed around the identified themes to illustrate the frequency of response and different data sources. Member checking took place to allow the subjects to listen to their interview tapes to ensuring accuracy. Follow-up interviews were scheduled, but not deemed necessary since the external observers did not have variant perspectives or beliefs in terms of observations, interviews, or written assessments. Reflective analysis was utilized because intuition and personal judgment in terms of analysis of the data is most often employed in this type of research (Gall et al., 2003). Field notes, interview transcripts, and written data were all refined in written summaries, coding, clustering, and defining themes. All of this information was then divided into interpretational, structural, and reflective analysis. Miles and Huberman’s (1994) model of data analysis was used to find the concurrent flow of activity. Data composed of pages of field notes were transformed into an extended text as the research continued, as well as a journal kept by the researcher. In this manner qualitative data became evident and final conclusions were established.

The researcher then selected, focused, simplified, and transformed the data from observations, field notes, interview transcripts, or other written data. In this manner the researcher refined it by writing summaries, coding, creating clusters, and finding emerging themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
The next form was a “data display,” which according to Miles and Huberman (1994) is a gathering of information allowing conclusions to be drawn and action to be taken. This involved integrating the original data forms such as field notes and transcripts. As this collection continued, the researcher made decisions on the meaning of events, dialogues, observations, or other aspects whether observed or recorded, thus reducing the data. There was a continuing attempt to make meaning of these data as it continued to be analyzed. Themes emerged, and data display and the drawing of conclusions were intertwined.

Following the transcription, member checking took place with each student reading and verifying the transcripts. At that point the student verified, deleted, or clarified a portion of the transcript. Coding was then used in the analysis, and all code prefixes in the topics areas were identified. All research questions that were used were code prefixed and then later sub-divided according to topic. After codes were re-developed, the transcripts were re-read again, and statements and phrases were coded and re-coded. A separate notebook was kept in which descriptions or comments relating to the text of the transcript were noted. At this point the themes that were pinpointed in the interviews began to emerge.

The observations were then re-reviewed, and field notes were then typed and coded. The classroom field notes yielded information on specific abilities or needs, the quality of the curriculum instruction in terms of impact on involved participants, and other SRL issues. These emerging themes from the observational field notes complemented the interview themes.
The journals and classroom written work were collected and coded, and themes described and compared with the findings of the observations and interviews. Coding was once again developed with code-prefixes and sub-divided according to the research questions used. The codes were used to identify the participant’s statement made in the interviews, as well as their answers on the LASSI. After the transcripts were completed, they were re-read and carefully coded and re-coded. Separate notes were made in which comments or descriptions relating to the text of the transcript were written. The LASSI tests were included in the coding and data reduction. At this point triangulation began to pinpoint emerging themes. Case validity was established by eliminating biases that could result from relying exclusively on any particular stage of the data-collection (Gall et al., 1999); therefore, triangulation is considered to be one of best practices for accountability in this type of research. The data reductions thus stem from the coded interviews, field notes, observations, artifacts, and student journals. Following these procedures themes were evident and conclusions were drawn, and another external reviewer was helpful in validating data that seemed to conflict or needed clarification.
Table 1
Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of International Baccalaureate Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>SRL Process</th>
<th>Connection to Guiding Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| LASSIE: A Likert-type tool that is an attitudinal pre and post-test focusing | 1. To assess the internal processes that influences the use of self-regulation  | Students' use and knowledge of self-evaluation, monitoring, goal setting, implementation and strategic outcomes. | 1. How do IB students define their Strategic Learning Strategies (SRL)?  
2. How does the IB curriculum contribute and/or enrich the academic and intellectual needs of enrolled students?  
3. What are the challenges of students and instructors in the IB Language A1 program? |
|   on overt and covert thoughts of students’ beliefs in self-regulation components of strategic learning | 2. Discover student perspective of self-regulating strategies in the framework of their educational experience |                                                                             |                                                                                                         |
| Phenomenological Interviews:                                               | 1. Structured interviews designed to measure the strategies used in and out of the classroom to achieve academic achievement. | Subjects' perspective and knowledge of self-evaluation, volition, efficacy and motivation. | 1. How do IB students define their Strategic Learning Strategies (SRL)?  
2. How does the IB curriculum contribute and/or enrich the academic and intellectual needs of enrolled students?  
3. What are the challenges of students and instructors in the IB Language A1 program? |
|   Three taped interviews with individual subjects discussing their perspective of their educational experience. | 2. The subjects' views and current perceptions about their past and current academic experiences |                                                                             |                                                                                                         |
| Observations                                                              | 1. Monitor subjects' participation | To observe volition, efficacy, self-monitoring, and self-testing | 1. How do IB students define their Strategic Learning Strategies (SRL)?  
4. How does the IB curriculum contribute and/or enrich the academic and intellectual needs of enrolled students?  
4. What are the challenges of students and instructors in the IB Language A1 program? |
|   External observers will observe subjects and take field notes using rubrics. | 2. Monitor subjects' collaboration, engagement and interactions |                                                                             |                                                                                                         |
| Journals                                                                  | Subjects will keep a journal of their experiences and observations | Subjects will be encouraged to record their perspective and their perceptions of their environment and their reactions to their academic requirements and outcomes. | 1. How do IB students define their Strategic Learning Strategies (SRL)?  
2. How does the IB curriculum contribute and/or enrich the academic and intellectual needs of enrolled students?  
3. What are the challenges of students and instructors in the IB Language A1 program? |
| Artifacts:                                                                | Assigned writings, test, and other class work completed by the subjects | To triangulate attitudinal tests, interviews, observations and journals to measure subjects' self-regulated learning strategies. | 1. How do IB students define their Strategic Learning Strategies (SRL)?  
2. How does the IB curriculum contribute and/or enrich the academic and intellectual needs of enrolled students?  
3. What are the challenges of students and instructors in the IB Language A1 program? |
Summary

The goal was to discover and analyze student usage, attitude, and perception of their SRL strategies: what do they know; what do they think; and finally how do they use it? This research utilized qualitative case study methods and a phenomenological methodology in order to examine the SRL strategies, attitudes and beliefs of International Baccalaureate students in an urban public secondary school setting (see Table 1)
CHAPTER IV
DATA DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate junior secondary students’ SRL characteristics and learning strategies in the International Baccalaureate program in an urban secondary school, and to understand the factors that influence their self-efficacy and choice of SRL strategies.

Collected data were triangulated from (a) Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI); (b) three phenomenological interviews; (c) student journals; (d) external and internal observations, and (e) analyses of student artifacts such as required research papers.

As their instructor and researcher I spent time with my subjects from the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2010, observing their self-regulation characteristics and their self-regulated learning strategies. The setting of this observation and examination was a natural one allowing observation and understanding of the subjects’ behavior related to their self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies in pursuing their International Baccalaureate Language A1 curriculum, which will continue throughout their upcoming senior year in an urban secondary high school. External assessors (instructors) conducted the interviews, as well as writing detailed observations. Students journaled at specified intervals on suggested topics, and the mandatory research paper was utilized as an
example of an artifact. While studying each IB student, detailed field notes by the researcher were transcribed of the observations, external observers’ observations and students’ behavior during their class period; all subjects were in one junior IB English class which met daily from the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2010.

I transcribed the majority of my observations focusing on classroom participation and activity, as well as those of other instructors who were enlisted as external observers. The students took the LASSI Inventory test as the study began, and the results were triangulated with the three interviews which took place in March, April, and May. The LASSI testing and self-scoring, followed by an open discussion, was helpful in not only composing relevant interview questions, but in also giving students a “vocabulary” in describing their current educational experiences and past history. In turn, these results were analyzed and triangulated with student journaling, and their research paper artifacts and external observations.

**LASSI Results/SRL Strategies**

Beth’s LASSI strengths were in information processing and concentration which corresponded with her SRL strategies of organizing and transforming, reviewing and recording, and self-monitoring. Her weakest areas were in anxiety and study aids, corresponding with problems she described in environmental structuring and self-evaluation, acknowledged by her need for more reviewing.

Ann’s LASSI strength was her strong motivation; she was continually goal-setting and noting self-consequences. She was strong in her use of study aids in seeking social assistance, as noted by her positive relationship with her peers and teacher. Her
weakness was her extreme anxiety (“I will survive”) which at times hindered her concentration in keeping records and monitoring.

Cal scored in the high percentiles in nearly all of the LASSI categories. He utilized study aids, self-testing, selecting main ideas, all resulting in environmentally structuring, seeking social assistance, record reviewing, and rehearsing and memorizing. He was the least anxious of all the subjects in the anxiety area, perhaps reflecting his balanced use of SRL strategies.

Ed was highly motivated, varied his test strategies, managed his time, and thus was constantly goal setting, rehearsing and memorizing, record reviewing, and organizing and transforming. His anxiety lessened his concentration, or so he believed, as demonstrated by his low score in the area of information processing. He felt that his need for perfection slowed his ability to process materials as quickly as he should, and therefore resulted in spending needless hours on perfecting assignments.

Dan’s strengths were in concentration and selecting main ideas. This was evident in his oral capabilities and his ease in leading oral discussions and debates. He organized, transformed and self-monitored rapidly when the material interested him, while still scoring low in motivation and time management in written assignments. His weaknesses were in his SRL strategies of self-monitoring, goal setting, and environmental structuring.

Fay’s strength in LASSI testing was in study aids; she sought social assistance from her peers and attempted some rehearsing and memorizing, while not seeking assistance from her teachers or nonsocial sources. Her weakest areas were in time management, concentration, test strategies, and information processing. She lacked
environmental structuring, record keeping and reviewing. She did not score as low as might be expected in anxiety, but that was perhaps because of her knowledge that she was exiting the program (see Appendix A).

**SRL Sub-processes and International Baccalaureate Students**

Self-efficacy is an integral aspect of self-regulation, and students who are efficacious have specific goals and the sense that they are attainable, but it is necessary to employ self-regulated learning strategies to successfully complete an assigned task, and to know when to apply particular strategies when facing a challenging task or a curriculum such as the IB. By enrolling in the program the student is thought to be exhibiting a willingness to be self-disciplined in forethought, volition, and self-reflection, but perhaps this is not always the case. The IB student profile aligned with Zimmerman's (1986) definition of the self-regulated student as being metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active in his own learning process, just as the IB student is one who is expected to exhibit key characteristics such as concentration, self-discipline, effort, planning, determination, and patience. The aim of this study was to determine not only the SRL learning strategies employed by the subjects, but their perspectives and assessments of their role as self-regulated IB students at the junior level in a secondary school.

A better understanding of the subject’s behaviors and self-efficacy beliefs became apparent through the triadic interview process, and by using the phenomenological interview process it was possible to note maturation, or to verify particular perspectives of the students enrolled in this program because of the intervals in the interview schedule.
The individual case studies provided evidence of the subjects’ self-efficacy beliefs and each participant’s use of SRL strategies. Three major themes relating to self-efficacy emerged through the data coding process involving the three phase cycle of self-regulation: Forethought, Performance, and Self-Reflection, which were then sub-divided into the subjects’ use of the 14 Self-regulated Learning Strategies (Zimmerman & Pons, 1986). These emerging themes and SRL strategy use information are presented in Table 2 and are described and interpreted with excerpts from data sources within the case studies.

Table 2

Phase Structure and Subprocesses of Self-Regulation (Zimmerman, 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cyclical self-regulatory phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forethought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-motivation beliefs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic interest value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal orientation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this current study the inquiry and research process was guided by the following research questions which are, in retrospect:
Sub Question 1: How does perceived self-efficacy affect students’ ability to develop and self-regulate their use of SRL in the IB classroom as they persist in the task?

Sub Question 2: What are the self-efficacy beliefs of junior IB students?

Sub-Question 3: What specific SRL strategies do students use in meeting the curriculum requirements of the IB English class?

Main Question: What are the self-regulated learning strategies and beliefs of the International Baccalaureate students enrolled in a junior English class in an urban secondary high school?

Classroom Behaviors Relating to Self-efficacy

External observers made four observations from March through June, as well as the researcher providing daily observations during this time period examining the self-efficacy and SRL strategies of the six subjects. The researcher was present during each of the observations and wrote field notes that were combined with the external observers’ findings. Students were observed interacting in class discussions, peer editing and revising, as well as in social interaction. Student-led literature discussions were in evidence, and students actively participated without raising their hands or asking for permission to speak; the researcher (teacher) was the mediator, or facilitator, when necessary. The observers transcribed the participants’ behavior, thus enabling the researcher to analyze students’ self-efficacy beliefs, as well as their utilization of SRL strategies.
The subjects’ use of self-efficacy in the classroom environment was examined by external observers and the researcher using Bandura’s foundation definition: “Self-efficacy is the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3), and this was the focus in observing and recording the interplay in the classroom by two external observers and the researcher on four separate occasions. It was the students’ beliefs, or judgment of skills they might possess, rather than the skills themselves that were the focus of this student-centered classroom. The students’ interaction in the classroom may therefore be indicative or supportive of their mastery or perceived self-efficacy. The TARGET framework of Tasks, Authority, Recognition, Grouping, Evaluation, and Time (Ames, 1992; Epstein, 1989) was the framework used to integrate the observed strategies in the classroom context, in order that mastery goals could be contrasted with performance and performance avoidance goals (see Appendix F). The researcher and the external observers discussed the framework descriptions prior to the actual observations. The observation limitations were due to the time constraints of both the external observers and the current subject matter being studied by the students, but it was informative in terms of student efficacy and performance versus mastery in an oral setting. The observers reported on peer interaction, student-engagement, goal-setting, and collective efficacy.

Mrs. Gee noted that the classroom setting was composed of a circular seating arrangement for 12-15 students. The room was filled with posters and evidence of student work, and an entire wall of glass captured the afternoon light. The teacher’s desk was in front of the room, but the chair was not occupied. The instructor was seated as a
member of the semi-circle of nine students. Mrs. Gee, the external observer, sat outside the circle as she observed and took notes. The class officers were in charge of the class and used a gong to begin the daily lesson. This procedure was followed for all four observations.

Observation 1

In the initial observation the class was opened by the class president, Beth, who reviewed the assignments and explained the new syllabus assignments to the students who were seated in a semi-circle. The students arranged themselves in their seats as she addressed her peers. She then answered questions and clarified any misconceptions. Ann, who took responsibility for distributing papers, placed information in folders for absent students, and kept records of project assignments and current due dates. A required novel, *Anna Karenina*, was under discussion, and Dan was quick to play the “professor” (performer), as he related background information on geography, politics, and social aspects that connected with the novel. Ann analyzed the novel from a “feminist” perspective and readily explained her viewpoint, even when others kept interrupting her as she moved into what they perceived as irrelevant areas, but the students displayed respect for her opinions. They seemed to understand her need to display her task strategy in struggling with a variety of perspectives in the novel. A student who was not in this study kept interrupting and tried to take control of the discussion, but was often ignored. Fay did not participate in the discussion, but instead seemed distracted by the male student sitting next to her, once again displaying task avoidance rather than apparently risking her self-worth. Cal seemed to be mulling over
the subject matter and the various perspectives, but he contributed little as the discussion opened and seemed to be self-reflecting on his own interpretation of the subject. Nevertheless, he was attentive to his peers as they were speaking, and most were checking their novels for supportive passages and quotes in an effort to be a part of this collective discussion. Ed remained intent and was the only student taking notes as the topics of authorial intention and critical lens were introduced. When the discussion got heated, although still friendly, Ed seemed to “shrink” a bit, dropping his head, perhaps having an aversion to this unaccustomed form of debate and not feeling efficacious enough to refute opposing viewpoints. Beth, like Ann, shared her opinions, or disagreed, but unlike some of the others she was not willing to interrupt anyone else. There seemed to be respect for one another in this seminar group, and hands went up occasionally, even though there are only nine students in this class, particularly when Dan or Ann seemed to be talking at length. The researcher sat in the circle, but only contributed as a facilitator; there was no reliance on the instructor leading the discussion, nor did the students watch the teacher for facial or body language reactions to the ongoing dialogue; their autonomy was evident to the observer and the researcher.

Observation 2

In the second observation in late March by Mrs. Gee, Ann and Beth addressed the class with a joint presentation of the background and history of the aforementioned novel and were well prepared with page references to the text. All of the students, except Fay, took notes and asked questions. They seemed to enjoy making decisions about the reading schedule of this novel and had a discussion about moving due dates to the
following week, which was acceptable to the class, and it appeared that these types of
decisions were often made with just a nod from the instructor; there was autonomy and
the students were engaged. Dan also noted that a particular passage was contrary to the
authorial intention perspective that was being presented, and a discussion followed with
nearly all the students citing their “evidence” of a perceived critical perspective. Dan
seemed to be particularly pleased that he was the instigator of a possible debate; this is
his “comfort zone” as a performer and leader, and he continually seemed to sense that he
was respected for his intelligence by his peers, as well as attempting to please his
instructor. He leaned forward, put on his glasses, and nodded to each student who was
speaking. Dan asked insightful questions relating to probing the psyche of the characters,
and his peers, except Fay, seemed enthralled by his judgments and perspectives.

This observation is reflective of Dan’s earlier interview comment that the ideal IB
student should be one who is well-rounded, and who can carry on a conversation, rather
than simply being wrapped up in schoolwork. He was in his element in his “task
accomplishment” of being the orator and leader with his peers, as opposed to “mastering”
the assigned topic in written form which he had neglected to do at an earlier date.

When given the choice of seeing a short film on the novel’s theme, or continuing
the discussion, the class chose the option of the discussion; they stated they did not want
to have a “spoiler” before they finished the book, displaying evidence of student
engagement and student management; far too many students would have chosen viewing
the film rather than an activity requiring student effort in participation and attention
focusing. As the class concluded, Ann wrote down the new due dates, and Beth
reminded the class of project assignments as well as a project meeting that evening.
Dan was not ready to conclude the novel discussion and remained after class to continue it with the instructor. This exemplified his initiative in seeking social assistance, as he clearly viewed this after-class meeting as an adult dialogue discussing mutual literary concerns. He engages in this post-class literature discussion more often than any of his peers. As the class exited the room some of them were quite frustrated with one particular student (not in the study) who had made some disparaging remarks about Ann’s views and her presentation. Cal spoke to the instructor and stated that this offending student should not be judged too harshly; he was trying to “contain” himself, Cal explained, and that the class understood that. This is another example of the “collective efficacy” (Bandura, 1997) that is evident in this class, but not usually seen at the secondary level in terms of maturity or unity.

Observation 3

In the third observation by Mrs. Smith (another in-school teacher observer) which concerned the novel, Things Fall Apart, the participating students questioned one another and listened closely to their views until they got excited about presenting their own, but then Cal or Beth reminded the offenders to wait their turn. The organizational and management skills of the group were apparent with Dan leading the discussion, and Ann, Beth, Cal, and finally Ed (although briefly) interacting and participating, displaying “collective efficacy.”

Fay, once again, is a non-participant, and from her earlier literature assessment results it appeared that she had not read the novel or taken any notes. She is completely disengaged, and since she had announced that she was exiting the program at the end of
the semester, she seemed to feel no need to participate in discussions or group projects. Even though she seemed to have “exited” academically from the program, it is likely that she is very anxious about her ability in this context, and she was still trying to protect her self-worth, even with the self-consequence of receiving poor assessments.

**Observation 4**

In a final observation by Mrs. Smith, the students were peer-editing and suggesting revisions of their research problem-solving project with their partners. They all appeared very intent on carefully reading and following a proofreading rubric; there was constructive criticism and suggestions taking place without personal attacks on writing or research abilities. Fay had nothing to provide for a proofreader and worked on other assignments. She promised to turn in a complete rough draft later in the week. Ed was very concerned about the “correctness” of his paper but produced an excellent draft and an in-depth analysis. Cal was very serious and self-assured and did not laugh or even acknowledge some of the immature remarks from some of the other males in the class during this process. After completing the proofreading, the class decided that the revised draft should be turned in the next day with revisions and editing, which was an acceptable collective decision. Dan and Fay were the only students without a draft to be proofread at this point in time. The other students seemed focused on mastering their writing revision processes before shifting to final performance outcomes, such as the final grade on their research project; they felt they successfully met their proximal goals in meeting the distal goal of the completed project.
Student autonomy was evident in the aforementioned observations as noted by the external observers and the researcher, as students managed the class, made decisions, and led in-depth discussions. Peer modeling was evident in the observations, most notably since when the IB class began in the fall, the female students were often reluctant to engage in debates with the males concerning their perspectives, but by March they were participating and engaging in class discussions, reinforcing Schunk’s (1990) belief that efficacious individuals are more likely to participate than less efficacious students who are more likely to withdraw and are less willing to engage in activities, such as Fay. The majority of the class took pride in stating their views, a form of task completion, but was not focused on simply performing, although Dan might be the exception in that area. The students were proud of their discussion prowess, and when the instructor had to briefly leave the classroom, the literary conversation continued on task, as noted by one of the observers. The instructor was sometimes a facilitator or even an arbitrator as needed, but there was continual evidence of collective efficacy in this tightly knit group of autonomous students who were “learning to learn,” and appeared to be enjoying the process.

The observations reinforced the self-efficacy of Beth, Ann, Cal, and Ed, as they displayed their self-autonomy and mastery skills with their engagement in the oral and peer group activities. Fay reinforced her lack of self-regulation and engagement by not participating in oral or peer activities, and Dan continued to enjoy his comfortable role as a performer with his oral prowess and belief that being an excellent discussion leader and conversationalist was all that should be required of a student enrolled in the IB program.
Persistence in Performing the Task

Evidence of self-efficacy beliefs was provided in task persistence as illustrated in the required research project. Motivation to continue when meeting challenges such as the 15-page research paper assignment was an indicator of the fact that students who possessed self-efficacy set higher goals and expended more effort in achieving them (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). Students controlled their persistence not only through motivation, but also by the strength, number and content of external factors such as extracurricular activities, peer engagement, occupational requirements, or family pressures. This balancing act whereas the students juggled extracurricular activities with scholastic responsibilities exemplified persistence; whether goal orientation was proximal or distal, they developed autonomous motivation in being successful in task completion, as noted in their reflection letters (see Appendix G).

Beth’s goal was task completion, and she viewed the project as a whole, without stressing about the time constraints, research involved, or the enormity of this new challenge. She completed the task, met all the deadlines, and was self-satisfied that she possessed the volition to complete her proximal goal, but was still less than pleased with her final writing, due to her lack of strategic planning. Ann, on the other hand, had completed all of her reading, but still spent stressful hours highlighting and engaging in task strategies until she realized that “writers write what they know,” and her anxiety turned to self-efficacy as she met the challenge, even though, much like Beth, reflected that she could have spent more time self-monitoring and record-keeping, but eventually met her goal of task completion. Ann and Beth both received excellent assessments on their final papers and met every deadline. Cal met the challenge of the assignment as if
going to battle, which was an excellent task strategy for him; he would “slay the monster.” He realized that when one had a “passion” for a topic it could actually be fun and rewarding, and thus he viewed the assignment for its intrinsic value and saw it as an example of self-efficacy expectancy outcome, rather than just earning the grade: he too met his goal. Ed encountered the task as an experience with a challenging proximal goal; the longest paper he had ever written and felt he learned how important task strategies were in the process. He noted that even though the experience was not particularly enjoyable, he was excited by the task completion and felt it was beneficial in accomplishing his distal goal of attending a prestigious university. All four students felt empowered by meeting the challenge of a difficult project and gained confidence in meeting their next goal of the extended essay in their senior year, as they exhibited the skills and knowledge, and self-efficacy that should increase as they continue in the program.

Fay and Dan both exhibited their lack of motivation and persistence by missing the deadlines, not keeping dialectical journals, and viewing the assignment as having little intrinsic value; it was outcome expectancy for each of them, rather than persisting and making an effort to overcome their environmental structuring problems. Fay defended her lack of strategic planning by blaming computer problems, time constraints, and a heavy academic load. She eventually turned in a less than satisfactory paper 6 weeks after the due date. Dan’s helplessness, he believed, stemmed from poor research subject materials, time constraints, and the fact that he did not enjoy deep textual analysis, since he was not primarily “research writer.” Dan’s final paper was also 6 weeks late and poorly edited and written. He promised he would turn in a revised and
edited version, but that promise was never fulfilled. There is a clear distinction between the self-efficacy expectancy of Beth, Ann, Cal, and Ed, and their resiliency and success in their goals of task completion, and Dan’s and Fay’s causal attributions, exhibiting helplessness in their failure to meet the challenge, or to meet required IB goals.

**Students’ Current Self-Efficacy Beliefs**

Beliefs about self-efficacy come from four sources: prior task accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological state (Bandura, 1997). Beth is self-efficacious because she values her work ethic in completing all of her assignments(task accomplishments), and noted the fact that she has “grown as an individual” this year because she now values learning, rather than just being anxious about getting perfect “A+” grades. She has presented oral poetry presentations, completed cultural diaries, and collaborated in an “Oscar” winning video, all of which received excellent evaluations, including her pride in being elected a class officer. She now attributes her motivation and persistence to her desire to learn, not just to perform. The success of past IB graduates and the high rate of diploma attainment represented her vicarious experiences, as well as being proud of qualifying for the IB program. Her stress representing her physiological state has been alleviated as she has continued in completing challenging assignments in her junior year. Ann mirrors Beth in being highly motivated in accomplishing her “learning goal,” and although never pleased with her work, she is pleased with her “work level,” attributing her success to her desire to master, not just to perform, and in attributing any weakness not to her ability, but rather to her misapplication of positive learning strategies. She too has engaged in the aforementioned
activities with Beth and is determined to balance her extracurricular interests with her IB academic requirements. She respects the members of the IB senior class, following their mentoring and their advice (vicarious experience), and like Beth uses self-monitoring (verbal persuasion) in dealing with her anxiety and stress (physiological state).

Cal is determined to meet the challenge of his difficult classes by persisting in satisfactory task completion for as long as it takes him: “Until I am done with it.” He realizes that just completing the assignments is not just earning a good grade, but going above and beyond the minimum is what is required, an attribution of controllability (Weiner, 1990). Cal has taken a leadership role not only in the class as a moderator during heated debates, but also by being actively involved in the Oscar presentations, cultural diaries, peer editing circles, and a video project involving the final novel of the semester. His vicarious experiences from his successful home and cooperative schooling activities have given him self-efficacy in his new public school environment; through self-monitoring he continues to use verbal persuasion in assignment completion. Cal continues socially assisting his peers collectively without ever being asked or expecting any rewards. Ed’s often repeated goal is “learning,” and he understands the difference between mastery and performance goals: “I want to learn the material and retain it, and I do want to learn and I desire to learn.” Ed has participated in every class activity including the Hamlet Oscars, cultural diaries, peer grouping, individual poetry and novel presentations, as well as participating in many extracurricular events such as sports and choir. He states the most fulfilling time for him is: “When I am able to learn something I never thought I would be able to do,” reflecting his self-efficacy in reaching his mastery goals, and attributing this desire to his early academic practices of being an independent
Fay is the least self-efficacious of all the subjects in this study; she feels she lacks the motivation to continue with IB and attributes her unsuccessful “performance” to time constraints and unrealistic teacher expectations. Her task completion record is lacking, and through performance avoidance she has seldom managed to meet the requirements of the course. She is not self-regulated; she attributes this to the belief that she has the ability, but not the time; protecting her self-worth: there is no evidence of any vicarious experiences that would provide a stronger foundation for self-efficacy, and efforts by her peers and instructors to mentor her have not changed her mind about exiting the program (Weiner, 1974). Although she does not admit it, she exhibits anxiety and stress as she constantly exhibits self-handicapping. Dan, much like Fay, believes that he has the intelligence and the ability but differs in his self-awareness that he is lacking in volition. He attributes this to lack of environmental structuring, much like Fay, but she differs in stating that she simply has other priorities. Both of these factors result in lack of task completion. Dan feels the need for stress, or verbal persuasion, from his peers and his teachers; only by threats of being dropped from the program does he feel he can be diligent in meeting deadlines and completing class assignments; he attributes this need for teacher-regulation (Weiner, 1974). He has not experienced a challenging academic program in prior academic classes, thus his vicarious experiences have been limited. He has a strong relationship with an IB senior who constantly attempts to motivate him externally through continually urging him to put more effort into completing his
assignments, thus fulfilling his stated need for peer or external regulation. Yet, he still seems to be lacking a vision of a “possible self,” which might result in increased persistence in his studies. He professes no anxiety in his physiological state, but his constant reiteration of fear of becoming ineligible for the IB program belies his stated lack of stress. Unlike Fay he has engaged in many tasks, particularly oral presentations and leading class discussions, underscoring his intrinsic value in these preferred activities, but his written work has been incomplete. In both cases Fay and Dan are not cognitively engaged and self-regulated since they do not see the value in written classroom work, and therefore fall behind, or fail to complete the majority of their assignments. Ann, Beth, Cal, and Ed continue to persist with difficult and challenging projects, indicating that their self-regulation strategies were predictors of their successful academic performance (Pintrich, 1990), and their displayed self-efficacy, in contrast to Dan and Fay’s helplessness and lack of efficaciousness.

Student Anxiety

Student anxiety was evident in each case study; it appeared that being enrolled in the IB program was going to necessitate being “anxious” and stressed about not only proximal but also distal goals. Achievement anxiety emanates from students’ cognitive interference, skill deficit, and motivational perception (Alderman, 1999). It is imperative that the IB students, who were often the highest achievers in their early secondary careers, do not begin to attribute lack of ability when task completion assessments are lower than expected, thus losing self-efficacy. The confident, or successful, IB student instead attributes a negative grade or low assessment to lack of forethought in self-
instruction and self-monitoring, or poor strategy choices. Beth came to terms with the
fact that the “A” grade may be somewhat elusive in this program, but now is realizing
that a “B” does not signify that she is incapable of being successful or lacking in ability;
she currently states that she will continue her efforts to improve her weaknesses of
reviewing records or seeking social assistance. Beth’s early self-evaluation of enduring
the IB “hell” has now moved toward a self-satisfied perspective of being a proud
“survivor” through her efforts. Ann, similarly to Beth, repeatedly cited her “stress and
struggle” to complete her assignments to her satisfaction, and currently she too is quite
proud of her accomplishments. Cal seemed to exhibit little anxiety, perhaps because his
focus was on continuing to balance his academic life by finding security in a diverse peer
group; focusing on the “learning” aspect which he enjoyed, and an awareness that his
future does not depend on his current GPA. Ed was anxious about attaining “perfection”
in all that he does, even to his awareness that he may have been spending too much time
in learning strategies such as keeping records and monitoring, and rehearsing and
memorizing. His anxiety was perhaps linked to finding his identity in not only a public
school environment, but in the challenging IB curriculum. Fay seemed to possess no
anxiety, but instead exhibited learned helplessness, and stated she lacks control of her
environmental situation. Dan differed from Fay in the area of task avoidance; he felt he
needed the “stress” of parents and teachers threatening him in order to be self-regulated.
He did not acknowledge his stress, but his self-worth and negative vision of “possible
self” may be attributed to his anxiety. His goal was to “emulate the stress of his peers,”
viewing this as the volition model that might have helped him to achieve his performance
goals. Fay and Dan were both more anxious than they may have admitted, as evidenced
by their LASSI scores and their interview answers regarding Dan’s view of himself as an “underachiever,” and Fay’s acknowledgement of her “terrible test scores.”

Traits relating to anxiety should not always be viewed as a loss of functional process, since performance anxiety may represent an attempt to adapt to a particular environment (Matthews, Emo, Funke, Roberts, Zeisner, & Costa, 2006). The coping strategy thus depends on the choice of the appraisal of the coping plans, the efficacy of those choices, and the constraints in executing them. In other words, by implementing self-talk and self-monitoring, the task appraisal and coping choice will promote task engagement. Beth, Ann, Ed, and Dan all scored high in this category of stress on the LASSI test and regarded anxiety as a motivator in adapting to the IB requirements. This positive perspective of anxiety, as viewed by Ann, Beth, and Ed, was motivating them to use their SRL learning strategies in effectively dealing with the challenges of high-level assessments, specified environmental structuring, and goal setting. Ann’s view that she even added “stress” to her academic requirements is an example of a coping strategy that is operational in her case, and perhaps in many others who do not consciously view it in quite this positive a manner. Matthews et al. (2006) noted that “emotion-focused” coping can link to dealing with an overload of self-criticism, and of one’s efforts in task environmental issues, thus resulting in increased worry, anxiety, and task avoidance. The student may then choose to make more pleasurable resources available. This is illustrated when Fay repeatedly noted her “overloaded” schedule and impossible teacher expectations, and Dan seeking his “comfort zone,” or stating he would rather have read a book in the woods than dealt with tasks at hand.
The very structure of the IB program lends itself to “collective efficacy,” which seems to aid in diminishing the anxiety noted by the subjects in this study. It is a collaborative project-based curriculum of “learning to learn” in which students are expected to work together, and thus share the collective belief that they will be successful in using their SRL strategies in meeting their proximal goals in classroom assignments, and a distal goal of the IB diploma, or as Cal defined it: being part of the “the IB family.”

**Successful Use of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies**

The foundation of students’ success in the IB program is successful implementation of learning strategies: “Action directed at acquiring information or skill that involve agency, purpose (goals) and instrumentality self-perceptions by a learner” (Zimmerman & Pons, 1986, p. 617). IB students are expected to be resilient, possess a sense of purpose, be goal-oriented, and develop a “love of learning (IBO, 1999).

Zimmerman’s findings indicated that high achievers are distinguished by their use of social support, particularly from peers and teachers, which is reflected in the triangulation of interviews, journaling, and observations.

With the exception of Fay, all of the students noted class unity and peer collaboration as one of the most positive aspects of being in the IB program, or as Cal stated: “Without my relationships in IB—you definitely need the IB family—I would be nowhere.” He is adamant about the assistance they gave one another, and particularly the collective perspective of: “I understand you are not getting the concept: let me help you,” as they worked on problem-solving and collaborative group projects. Ann echoed this when she stated: “It is possible to have in-depth conversations without the teacher leading
us,” and that she viewed the class as a “community.” She did not see her peers as part of a cult, as some of her non-IB friends have stated, but simply as individuals who put more “effort” into their lives. Ed, one of the two newcomers to the secondary school, admired how much his peers were involved, and the fact that his teachers “really care about us and want the best for us.” Beth stated, “It is like a family—I just feel so comfortable with everyone—we really depend on each other.” Fay, on the other hand, never mentioned “family,” or social assistance, but instead noted that the teachers treat her differently because “they expect so much more,” but, conversely, she did like her peers because they were really smart, but “we just don’t know how to manage everything,” attempting to be a part of her peer group, even though she was not “managing” the work load and requirements as well as most of her peers. Fay was once again protecting her self-worth by self-handicapping. Dan’s SRL strength was in social assistance, but he was too reliant on this strategy; he wanted to depend on his peers and his teachers to guide him and prod him into persisting in his efforts, rather than self-regulating and being motivated to utilize more of the SRL strategies. He recognized his lack of effort and persistence and stated his goal was to implement more strategic planning in his senior year.

By examining and analyzing the SRL strategies and beliefs of the six subjects in this study it became evident that each student had an awareness of what it meant to be self-efficacious, as supported by the LASSI test, phenomenological interviews, the observations, and the artifacts. The four subjects who effectively utilized strategies such as self-evaluation, goal-setting, and record reviewing, as well as the other SRL strategies, contrast with the two who did not engage in those particular practices. This illustrates why the successful IB student displaying self-efficacy is able to overcome academic
obstacles through the use of positive choices, while the self-handicapping student will undoubtedly continue to encounter academic obstacles, and perhaps not meet any distal goals required by the challenging curriculum.

**Beth**

Beth used organizing and goal setting in her assignments; she illustrated her self-talk in stating, “I have to do the work and I can’t let it go, but I can’t always be perfect.” She self-evaluated her progress, attributing her perceived weakness to her failure to self-reflect or to review her records, realizing that she needed to utilize more nonsocial sources for a satisfactory completion of her research paper. She acknowledged her self-consequences of insufficient studying for an unsatisfactory performance on a particular test and noted that her future environmental structuring success depends on making academics her first priority. She recognized the value of rewards such as allowing herself chocolate after completing a challenging assignment, a self-consequence that was positive for her task completion. Her volition was evident as she set her goal of becoming class valedictorian in her senior year, as well as changing her goal orientation to law instead of medicine for her future career.

**Ann**

Ann self-evaluated on a continuing basis and noted that she was never pleased with her performance, but realized it was not her lack of ability, but only that more intensive organizing and transforming, as well as rehearsing and memorizing would bring her self-satisfaction in achieving success in the program. She acknowledged that she worked best under pressure, thus setting up her environmental structuring in which she
could review her records in an effort to improve her knowledge and her performance.
This year she has raised her goals: “I have raised my minimal goals, and I expect more
out of myself.” Ann’s self-satisfaction in attaining her high mathematics grade was
evidence of her self-satisfaction in her task completion and attribution of her ability in a
difficult subject. Her goal orientation was clearly stated in her advice to younger students
that even though they might sometimes fall behind, they must never give up. She used
proximal and distal goal setting in her need to earn a scholarship with “an IB diploma in
hand.”

**Ed**

Ed viewed himself as a student who focused on goal setting and planning, yet was
still concerned with perfection and achieving excellence in all that he does. His SRL
strategy was setting deadlines for his academic assignment goals, not only during the
school year but in the summer months so that he would have the volition to complete all
the assignments. His primary proximal goal is the IB diploma, while his distal goal is to
be accepted at an Ivy League university. Ed was adept at information seeking, and
rehearsing and memorizing as evidenced by his outstanding research paper. His
environmental structuring involved working “in small spurts, working on something a
few days before it was due.” He used the strategy of reviewing all of his class notes on a
daily basis, and memorizing pertinent facts. Ed has never missed an assignment or
received an unsatisfactory evaluation in this class, but still felt he needed to work harder
on mastery goals, and not be so concerned with just his performance. It is evident that Ed
was successful in all of the SRL strategies, but was still anxious about meeting his own
high standards, but his motivation and current success appeared to be lessening his need to be an overstriver; he was somewhat shocked to note that he has been extremely successful in meeting all of his proximal goals by the end of the semester, while at the same time spurring his efforts to successfully combine his mastery and performance goals.

Cal

Cal’s self-evaluation revealed how his positive experiences in his elementary and middle-school education have gave him the foundation for practicing SRL strategies. His proximal and distal goal setting and planning were clear; he not only wants to earn the IB diploma, but also an opportunity for university choices he might like to attend. He cited the need to improve his environmental structuring and turning assignments in on time, but at the same time he was not anxiety-ridden or constantly worrying about his GPA. He valued seeking information from nonsocial sources, such as writing his research paper, as well as the social assistance from his peers and his teachers as noted earlier. He viewed the need to keep records and self-monitor as analogous to practicing for a sport: all requiring hard work, or else suffering the consequences of being unsuccessful in his academics, or failing to get the diploma. In self-evaluating and reviewing his records he felt he has learned many different skills through his goal setting and planning, and has “evolved as a student.”

Fay

Fay was not a self-regulated individual and attempted few SRL strategies. Her self-evaluation reflected that she felt that she has the ability, but not enough time because
of other priorities. She stated she could handle the program, but not in light of the unrealistic expectations of the program and the teachers. She did not view her lack of environmental structuring as negative, but simply felt that other activities had more intrinsic value than the IB requirements and curriculum. She did not use rehearsing and memorizing, nor record reviewing because she stated that she was a “perfectionist,” and if she did not meet that particular standard then she “would not turn in the work.” She self-handicapped and was defensive in light of her unsuccessful year in the program. When reviewing records she stated that the only learning strategy she would use is to “study more and perhaps make a chart.” Her focus was on maintaining her self-worth, rather than being self-efficacious in being persistent, or in seeking social or nonsocial assistance.

**Dan**

Dan stated he wanted to be the “ideal” IB student and practiced the SRL strategies necessary to succeed in the program, but was lacking in the motivation to do so. As a performer he was truly “comfortable” and at ease in relying on social assistance, both with his peers and his teachers, but still exhibited anxiety when he classified himself as an underachiever. The attention he received as the intelligent “professor” with a vast store of knowledge was rewarding and one he would not like to give up. He was perhaps protecting his self-worth by citing his inadequacies in “researching” a paper, or being a life-long procrastinator, while still citing his goal of being successful and remaining in the program. His environmental structuring was weak; due dates were seldom met, final drafts were error-ridden, and keeping records, or rehearsing and memorizing were not in
evidence. He was aware of the self-consequences and felt “defeated,” but stated that because he was really more interested in “learning,” than in performing it was difficult for him to exert the effort to improve his weak SRL strategies: “I do have the ability—it is just going to take the effort.” He was insistent about the stress factor, and repeatedly stated that he needed the stress of external regulation and assistance from his peers and his teachers in order to become motivated, even though was fully aware of the negative self-consequences of his procrastination and lack of environmental structuring.

**SRL Strategies Summary**

The most commonly used SRL strategies employed by all the subjects were social assistance (asking for help), goal setting, seeking information, and environmental structuring as needed. These SRL strategies (Zimmerman & Pons, 1986) were used by four of the six subjects across different assignments and assessments. The subjects reported using social assistance as the most positive factor in helping them meet the goals of being successful in the IB curriculum. Goal setting and planning were evident in each student’s journal, interview, and LASSI test. They viewed achieving the proximal goals of their class assignments, and the distal goals of achieving the IB diploma as their aim, but five of the six also listed their goal setting and planning as helping them to become successful not only in their IB curriculum, but in their future academic pursuits. Self-efficacy was evident in four of the six students, and the fifth (Dan) was aware that persistence and effort were necessary for him to continue in the program. The development of “possible selves” was evident as they stated their goals, and four of the six had the volition to focus and persist despite the environmental distractions and time
constraints. Beth, Ann, Cal, and Ed used their metacognitive strategies, combined with their SRL strategies ranging from a cycle of forethought, performance, and self-reflection to their continuing self-satisfaction in their progressed in the IB program. Reviewing records, or self-evaluation, in regard to critical essays, research papers, quizzes and tests was seldom discussed or in evidence in the interviews, journaling or observations, but it was clear that they were continually measuring their progress at the peer level in regard to their current GPA and IB assessment requirements: performance and mastery were integrated in this sense. This is perhaps a result of the challenge of the program and the pressure of the time constraints in meeting deadlines, or the fact that there was not adequate class time provided for in-depth discussions in this area, or in modeling SRL strategies that aligned with the requirements of the IB program (see Table 3).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SRL Strategy Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Self-evaluation</td>
<td>Statements indicating student-initiated evaluations of the quality or progress of their work, e.g., “I check over my work to make sure I get it right.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Organizing and transforming</td>
<td>Statements indicating student-initiated overt or convert rearranged instructional materials to improve learning, e.g., “I make an outline before I write my paper.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Goal-setting and planning</td>
<td>Statements indicating student setting of educational goals or subgoals and planning for sequencing, timing, and completing activities related to those goals, e.g., “First, I start studying two weeks before exams, and I pace myself.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seeking information</td>
<td>Statements indicating student-initiated efforts to secure furthered task information from nonsocial sources when undertaking an assignment, e.g., “Before beginning to write the paper, I go to the library to get as much information as possible concerning the topic.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Keeping records and monitoring</td>
<td>Statements indicating student-initiated efforts to record events or results, e.g., “I took notes of the class discussion.” “I kept a list of the words I got wrong.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Environmental structuring</td>
<td>Statements indicating student-initiated efforts to select or arrange the physical setting to make learning easier, e.g., “I isolate myself from anything that distracts me.” “I turned off the radio so I can concentrate on what I am doing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Self-consequences</td>
<td>Statements indicating student arrangement or imagination of rewards or punishments for success or failure, e.g., “If I do well on a test, I treat myself to a movie.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Rehearsing and memorizing</td>
<td>Statements indicating student-initiated efforts to memorize material by overt or covert practice, e.g., “in preparing for a math test, I keep writing the formula down until I remember it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10. Seeking social assistance</td>
<td>Statements indicating student initiated efforts so solicit help from peers (9), teachers (10), and adults (11), e.g., “if I have problems with math assignments, I ask a friend to help.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRL Strategy Category</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14. Reviewing records</td>
<td>Statements indicating student-initiated efforts to reread tests (12) notes (13) or textbooks (14) to prepare for class or further testing, e.g., “when preparing for a test, I review my notes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Other</td>
<td>Statements indicating learning behavior that is initiated by other persons such as teachers or parents, and all unclear verbal responses, e.g., “I just do what the teacher says.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from Zimmerman & Pons, 2006.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study explored six subjects’ self-regulation characteristics and their use of SRL strategies in the International Baccalaureate English A1 program in their junior year at an urban secondary high school. LASSI scales, phenomenological interviews, participant observations, structured student journaling, and analysis of artifacts were used as data sources. Each student’s behavior and beliefs was interpreted through the field of self-efficacy, student attribution, the social cognitive theory of self-regulation, and the self-regulation learning strategies employed by the subjects in this study.

Research in self-regulation learning theories emphasized that students create an advantageous learning environment, plan and control their instruction, and “display initiative, intrinsic motivation and personal responsibility to achieve academic success” (Zimmerman, 1990, p. 14). These students employed a variety of strategies: metacognitive, motivational and behavioral, while responding to feedback and to their own self-evaluations of their task accomplishments in the academic setting (Zimmerman, 1990). Students utilizing these particular strategies and self-evaluating task accomplishments fit the profile of a successful student enrolled in the IB program. In order to enhance and enrich the experience of the IB students in this challenging program, it is necessary to analyze their self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies. The contrast between successful SRL strategy users and unsuccessful users has been noted
and illustrated in Chapter IV. Successful learners use more SRL strategies and more often monitor and adapt their strategies than less successful subjects (Pape & Wang, 2003; Zimmerman & Martinez Pons, 1988). It is clear that not only the IB students in this study might benefit from employing varied SRL strategies, but that students outside this particular advanced curriculum might be more successful in their academic pursuits if given the opportunity to understand their self-efficacy beliefs, and given the opportunity to monitor and adapt their own SRL strategies, as well as attribution of success and failure in their particular academic pursuits.

Students must be self-efficacious to engage and persist in academic tasks when encountering difficult academic assignments, as noted in cited studies. When students gain confidence and set realistic goals and accomplish them, they assume more responsibility for their learning and are thus self-regulated.

Conclusions

Students’ behaviors such as task persistence, goal setting, and adaptive learning strategies all relate to a self-efficacy expectancy (Bandura, 1986) which is evidence of students’ self-efficacy beliefs. The subjects who perceived themselves as “survivors,” or who seemed to be anxiety-ridden were able through their efforts and persistence to undertake and complete difficult tasks, such as completing all the required steps of an in-depth research paper over a 3-month period, and those who had successful experiences used a variety, if not all, of SRL strategies in meeting the challenge. The two subjects who did not produce a completed research project used self-handicapping strategies. The four successful self-regulated subjects have now raised their efficacy expectations in
feeling able to produce an in-depth extended essay in their IB senior year, believing they not only have the “will” but the “skill” (Pintrich, 1990).

Students’ interactive behavior in the classroom, willingness to lead and/or engage in literary discussions, collaborating in group projects, and persistence in task completion were identified as evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs, and often attributed their success to persistence and motivation. Efficacious students were notably more active participants than those who withdrew when presented with difficulties (Schunk, 1990), such as not being prepared for literary discussions by reading assigned materials, or who exhibited helplessness through procrastination or attributing their failure to related external factors. The student who exhibited prowess as a learned and knowledgeable discussion leader may simply have been focusing upon that role to the exclusion of mastery learning. Another student who seldom participated and seemed almost disdainful in her classroom behavior was believed to be simply protecting her self-worth, and anxious about appearing less than intelligent. Student involvement in oral discussions may have provided evidence of self-efficacy beliefs, but it was only through triangulating interviews, journaling, self-reflection letters, and external observations that students’ beliefs about self-regulation and learning strategies became evident.

**Sub-Question 1**

How does perceived self-efficacy affect students’ ability to develop and self-regulate their use of SRL strategies in the IB classroom as they persist in the task?
The student perception of collective “survivorship” enabled the students to persist in completing the challenging requirements of the IB curriculum, as well as increasing their efforts to reach their goal of obtaining the IB diploma. They discovered that by engaging in collective efficacy they were able produce quality projects as well as individual and group assignments. The LASSI scores reflected strengths in the categories of attitude and motivation with four of the six subjects. Their volitional strategies of complying with social and teacher expectations aided in dealing with obstacles and challenges in achieving distal and proximal goals. Four of the six students exhibited self-efficacy with the knowledge that with careful environmental structuring they were able to focus on successful coping strategies which then became more automatic as their self-confidence increased.

**Sub-Question 2**

What are the self-efficacy beliefs of the IB students?

They believed that through their motivation they could overcome the anxiety and stress of the curriculum requirements by exhibiting forethought and planning, or choice and consistency, in completing their assignments. In the second semester of their junior year they began focusing on needs, values and intrinsic interests as they began moving from earlier academic performance goals in their freshman and sophomore years to currently meeting mastery goals in their endeavors. Their LASSI information processing category, or SRL strategy of organizing and reviewing records, reflected this change. They set higher goals and expended more effort in achieving them; they moved from “outcome expectancy” to “self-efficacy expectancy” (Bandura, 1986). The four
efficacious students are now able to appraise and monitor their behavior with their desired identity, and through self-reflective activities such as journals, portfolios, and related artifacts. They are currently able to assess, chart, and discuss evidence of their academic and personal growth; they are autonomous collectively and individually. They feel they are now enriched by the desire to “learn,” rather than to simply performing and obtaining credit for the diploma.

Sub-Question 3

What specific strategies do they use in meeting the requirements?

The successful students relied heavily on self-evaluation, goal setting and planning, environmental structuring, self-consequences, and rehearsing and memorizing. They displayed high levels of self-motivation and hierarchical goal-setting. They self-evaluated against their personal goals, and utilized strategy attribution rather than ability attribution. This led to more satisfaction with their “learning to learn” progress and future efforts to improve; thus self-efficacy, outcome expectations, learning goal orientation, and intrinsic interest were apparent in their personal initiative, perseverance and adoptive skill, once again reflected in their strong LASSI scores in the categories of time management and selecting main ideas. They are currently able to “activate, alter, and sustain specific learning practices in social as well as solitary contexts” (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 70). Collective efficacy in the “social assistance” category was considered to be the foundation for academic success by four of the six subjects. Self-consequences were evident in every case, and the awareness of this factor was a motivator in accomplishing set goals.
Main Question

What are the SRL strategies and beliefs of the IB students?

The four successful students employed forethought and goal-setting, strategic planning, and exhibited intrinsic interest in their academic tasks. They valued student engagement, social assistance, and self-control processes; they believed that “learning to learn” was a solid foundation in their pursuit of the IB diploma.

Their volition, or will, to succeed overcame earlier stress and performance anxiety, as well as their concern with their GPA. They moved from individual achievement goals to a collective efficacy, thus alleviating obstacles and fear of failure, as reflected in the LASSI category of motivation and attitude. They shared a solid foundation from earlier positive academic experiences and helpful mentors, as well as supportive parents. The students’ self-efficacy beliefs empowered them by understanding that they were capable of achieving their goals through effort and persistence. There is an awareness of their collective weakness in self-reflection and record-reviewing. The constraints of time, social activities, and being well-rounded in their secondary experiences seem to have prevented the four subjects from necessary self-reflection which might have alleviated their earlier stress levels when they entered the program. They came to the realization that true success results not just from the collective efficacy, but they now possess the knowledge that individual persistence and effort were the key attributes in not only being successful in obtaining their proximal and distal goals, but in self-worth and efficacy.
Forethought, Performance/volition, Self-Reflection

The cyclical self-regulatory phases of forethought, performance/volitional and self-reflection are instrumental in analyzing the SRL strategies of the IB students.

Forethought

Forethought involves learners being proactive in goal-setting, strategic planning, sustaining self-efficacy beliefs and having an intrinsic interest in the task. It is imperative that teachers know and observe their students to understand their beliefs and strategies. Students, and even some teachers, seem to believe that by enrolling in this particular IB program the goal is simply to earn the diploma, since the strategic planning may have only involved qualifying and being accepted in the application/recommendation process prior to their junior year. The self-efficacious students in this study shared a solid early educational foundation of teachers and mentors who valued student engagement, social assistance, and self-control processes, while the other subjects did not receive this support, or because of environmental circumstances and lack of self-confidence did not enter the program as resilient purposeful individuals. The IB goal of “learning to learn” is a challenge to many high-achieving students who have perhaps previously focused on extrinsic, or performance, goals such as high grades, rewards and peer approval, and then as juniors enrolling in a rigorous curriculum requiring new learning strategies, persistence and self-efficacy. The students are thus anxiety-ridden until the need for self-regulation and SRL strategies becomes apparent. A self-regulated strategy is only operational when a student has a set goal, and the implementation is to achieve that goal, even though sometimes it may mean readjustment of the goal, or the use of SRL strategies, according
to the feedback received. Each one of the candidates expressed a distal goal of college acceptance, but only three of them expressed post-collegiate occupational goals, and of these three, two of their goals had been “adjusted’ by the perceived difficulty in current course assessments. On the other hand, they also expressed the feeling that by attaining their proximal goal of the IB diploma they could expand their college choices, such as an Ivy League university, or by receiving prestigious college scholarships. The students whose goals extended into future occupations appeared to have the clearest vision of “possible selves” (Marcus & Nurius, 1986), while the two subjects who were not self-regulated seemed to be focusing on their helplessness as underachievers. Students enrolling in the IB curriculum often have lofty goals of earning 1 or 2 years of college credit through their final scores by noting that previous graduates of the program have achieved that goal, so vicarious experience (Alderman, 2008) is a key factor for encouraging program enrollment, particularly since many of the juniors are in classes with the graduating seniors, and the entire IB population is limited. The successful IB student progresses from a performance goal of earning the “A,” to the realization that real success is in mastering the subject and valuing the knowledge they have gained. Several subjects expressed this view when they noted that the performance grades lessened in importance as the year continued (no longer concerned with GPA and class rank), and they began to realize that the instructors were not just viewing student assessments, but were more concerned with student efforts in self-monitoring and in their persistence in meeting the next challenge. An individual who finds success in one area such as oral performance could develop other SRL strategies and become self-efficacious by exhibiting effort and persistence, whereas if the student sees no intrinsic value in a course
or a task, self-efficacy and SRL strategies will not be in evidence. Self-efficacy is important in education because it is a “self-schema” relating to choices and actions affecting effort, resiliency, strategy and persistence (Shaughnessy, 2004).

**Performance/volition**

Students initiate actions in which they enact volitional control by using strategies such as self-instruction, imagery, self-monitoring, and attention control. Volitional control strategies were in evidence with four of the six subjects. They were aware of the need to control their environmental distractions, as well as stating that their IB peers and the community collaboration were a major support in focusing on the task, or in controlling feelings of inadequacy. One student noted that it was not “cheating,” when asking for assistance from a peer, but rather, “How can I help you understand this device or problem?” Covert and overt techniques involving self-instruction were voiced by the subjects in terms of following deadlines, setting up a study environment, or a schedule that was free of distractions, peer groups for editing and revising, and using a planner or portfolio for self-monitoring. Unique methods of using motivational control ranged from becoming a “dragon slayer” in completing the task, to rewarding one’s self with chocolate following a difficult assignment. Task strategies were evident in study strategies such as note taking, test preparation, and reading for comprehension, or in performance strategies such as presenting an oral presentation, or a literary analysis to the class; students used visuals ranging from power points to smart boards, or even hand-drawn organizational charts.
Self-observation was evident in five of the six subjects as they used phrases such as “I will do it,” or “I will not give up: I will survive,” or “I made the choice and I will not quit.” These statements were made in connection with difficult assignments, or seemingly impossible problems, but the students persisted and their motivation to complete the task satisfactorily, such as the research paper, became more important than the stress or anxiety associated with it. Only two of the subjects exhibited performance avoidance in not completing the task; the other four attributed their success to self-instruction and self-observation. Four of the six subjects used the aforementioned methods of self-talk, helping them to alleviate their anxiety, and attributing any low assessments during the 3-month process not to lack of ability, but to insufficient effort.

**Self-Reflection**

Self-judgment and self-reaction are two self-reflective practices that are important in attaining self-regulation (Bandura, 1986). The self-reflective phase is characterized by examining self-reaction, attribution, and adaptation of their academic performance. Self-evaluation or beliefs about one’s capabilities is derived from mastery (graduated sequence of tests or scores): previous performance (earlier levels of behavior), normative (social comparisons), or collaborative (team or class endeavor) (Zimmerman, 2005). Self-evaluation of mastery is evident in the SRL strategies of time management and environmental structuring. Four of the six subjects noted how they were able to complete tasks successfully that previously seemed beyond their capabilities in attribution statements such as: “I can now write an essay in half an hour, or: “I never thought I could write a successful paper of that length.” They have experienced self-satisfaction in task
completion and attribute it to their persistence and effort. By meeting the challenge of their entry year of the IB program, and not feeling insecure, or threatened, because of a perceived performance assessment deficiency, they felt they have the ability and the competence to continue with the subsequent curriculum. Current successful academic performances replaced their often negative academic self-comparisons during their freshmen and sophomore year. By the conclusion of their junior year they were exhibiting competence in writing essays, research papers, and oral presentations.

Normative criteria cannot be avoided in a select group such as IB, and particularly in a seminar environment with only nine participants. Students readily admit to sharing quiz, test, and final grade comparisons, but felt that this “sharing,” is simply giving them a sense of their weaknesses, pinpointing a possible mentor in a difficult subject, or even motivating them to strengthen their efforts in a subject. Collaborative criterion is one of the strengths of the curriculum, since project-based learning is one of the key elements of the IB program; students are expected and encouraged to collaborate as a unit, as well as to mentor and exchange knowledge and information. Five of the students pinpointed this aspect as one of the most positive and supportive elements of the program: collective efficacy.

Self-satisfaction was evident in four of the subjects; they felt they have performed successfully in their first year in the program; they have set goals and achieved them; they have mastered their IB English requirements, not merely earned a respectable assessment; they have become a “family” who not only collaborates with one another, but one that functioned with collective efficacy during their junior year. The other two subjects have struggled and attributed their subpar performances to seeing little intrinsic
value in particular aspects of the program for the former, and to lacking self-regulation in the case of the latter. The defensive self-reactions included procrastination, task avoidance, and helplessness.

**SRL Strategies**

The students’ use of SRL strategies were recorded from the LASSI scale, the interviews, their journaling, external observations, and their reflection letters. Four of the six students relied heavily on self-evaluation, goal setting and planning, environmental structuring, self-consequences, and rehearsing and memorizing. Social assistance from peers was a strategy reported by all the subjects, while seeking information from nonsocial means (other than the internet which was never mentioned, but often used as the only nonsocial source) was a weak area, as was reviewing records. Self-evaluation, environmental structuring, and seeking social assistance did not depend on context, while goal setting and planning, rehearsing and memorizing were more task-specific, such as producing a research paper, or collaborating on a group project. Self-consequences were evident in every case, whether negative in regard to an assignment or project, or positive in successful task accomplishment leading to successful completion of proximal and distal goals.

Enrollment in the IB program necessitates goal setting, as well as the capability of organizing and transforming, record-keeping, self-monitoring, memorizing and record reviewing; however, their use of each learning strategy varies with specific context and the history of the students’ task accomplishments in writing, speaking, or project collaboration. Student record reviewing was a weak strategy with time constraints cited
as a factor in insufficient attention given to reviewing notes, tests, and other forms of assessment; only one student reviewed his notes on a daily basis, and one other student corrected all of her marked tests: this practice seems to occur mainly when a final exam is on the horizon, rather than as a daily or weekly occurrence. Self-efficacy in using a variety of strategies to achieve self-set goals was evident in one efficacious student citing his use of all the SRL strategies, while another student lacking in self-regulation cited none. This seems to indicate that highly motivated students use a variety of strategies to achieve self-set goals (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

**Significance for the Field of Self-Regulation of International Baccalaureate Student**

A recent review of current research relating to the IB program states that currently there is a “dearth of valid and reliable knowledge addressing the ‘value-added’ effects of participation in the IB Diploma Programme” (IBO, 2007, p. 23). The report stated that this problem will be rectified in the future with claims that may be made for the effectiveness of the program, and even the subsequent lifelong learning of said graduates. In many schools the program is implemented as a means of scholastic improvement policies [external validity], and it is believed to have a profound effect on changing not only student, but teacher and parent attitudes. The challenge is to develop a method of evaluating and characterizing such attitudes. For example, how could the IB learner profile be used to evaluate and characterize growth and development of students in “cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains?” (IBO, 2007, p. 22). Future research connecting the use of SRL strategies and the IB learner profile could provide a
foundation for improving the effectiveness of the program and the means necessary to do so.

This study attempts through phenomenological interviews, LASSI scores, observations, journaling, and artifacts to discover the self-regulation beliefs and SRL strategies of IB students in a “school-within-a-school” setting in a Midwestern public school. This study provides in-depth descriptive case studies of six junior students and their specific beliefs and use of SRL strategies. International Baccalaureate students work at a faster pace, have more in-depth discussions, find the pace appropriate, have good critical thinking skills, and develop excellent time-management skills, according to Taylor and Porath (2006). They found that only a few students were excessively stressed about earning the diploma, but the majority felt that a major benefit of the program was learning time management skills. They had a more positive perception of the school climate, higher grade point averages, less affiliation with negative peers, good attendance records, and literally no behavior problems. Four of the six subjects in this study matched this profile of IB students: the collective efficacy and the unity of the “IB family” are supportive of the aforementioned study. A recent study (Suldo, Shaunessy, Michalowski, & Shaffer, 2008) found that the stress of IB students mainly related to academic requirements, while non-IB students were more anxious about family and life events, and that the IB students may even be protected from stress because of strong social support (social assistance) and what is defined as a “state of flow,” (full engagement in an activity) which “buffets” their physical and mental well-being (McNamara, 2000). In other words, being in a class or program with students sharing similar goals and interests relieves the stress as they become members of a unified group,
thus lessening the anxiety since they are collaboratively engaged, seeking similar challenging goals and activities (Suldo et al., 2008). It is ironic that students not enrolled in IB often believe that the concept of extreme “stress and struggle,” in the program deters them from enrolling. This is a misconception unless the student lacks motivation, and may become more stressed in their adolescence by other non-related IB academic factors. What became apparent throughout the interviews and the journaling was that even though the IB students were self-regulated and efficacious in English class requirements, this did not mean that they could regulate their learning in others courses such as in chemistry or mathematics; the strategies were domain specific. Anxiety is evident, if not always from the Language A1 class, but success in task completion in the English classroom seemed to spur the efforts and the persistency of the self-efficacious students to continue with renewed determination in the difficult subject areas with statements such as “I will do it: I will not give up.” Too much external regulation, or lack of self-monitoring and self-evaluation, results in minimal development of necessary metacognitive skills, thus resulting in low self-regulatory strategies; one of the subjects expressed the need for this type of “stress,” which he thought would then motivate him to graduate with the capability of directing his own learning: “I need it in college.” This rationale became his excuse for lack of effort and persistence.

The cyclic phases of self-regulation: Forethought, Volition, and Self-Reflection (Zimmerman, 2005) and the SRL strategy categories of Zimmerman and Pons (1986) illustrate that higher achieving students will have higher self-efficacy beliefs and utilize a variety of SRL strategies in their academic requirements (Pape & Wang, 2003) (see Table 4). The IB learner profile (IBO, 2007) reflects the characteristics of the self-regulated
student in a matrix (see Table 5) of the cyclic phases of self regulation. The students in IB classes confer and are guided not only by their instructors, but by an IB supervisor who meets with them regularly and focuses on their academic progress, behavior, and related personal problems that may be reflected in their proximal and distal goals, or perceived obstacles or set-backs. This organizational structure sometimes alleviates IB students’ stress when confronting failure or anxiety, and helps to build resiliency when facing setbacks. It is not the perceived failure or challenging assignment that might seem to be overwhelming to the students, but recognizing it is the “response” in overcoming said difficulties with renewed effort that could bring success (Bandura, 1997). This was reflected in student interviews by four of the six stating that they were now learning that just earning the excellent performance grades of “A’s” (freshman and sophomore years) has now evolved into “learning” the materials or mastering the assignments, even when their current grades of “B’s would previously have reflected failure. They are now aware of adaptive learning strategies such as increased effort in the areas of self-evaluation, strategic planning, and task strategy.
### Table 4

Phase Structure and Subprocesses of Self-Regulation (Zimmerman, 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forethought</th>
<th>Performance/Volitional control</th>
<th>Self-Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task analysis</td>
<td>(Self)</td>
<td>Self-judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal setting</td>
<td>Self-instruction</td>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td>Causal attribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-motivation beliefs</td>
<td>Attention focusing</td>
<td>Self-reaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>Task strategies</td>
<td>Self-satisfaction/affect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome expectations</td>
<td>Self-observation</td>
<td>Adaptive/defensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic interest/value</td>
<td>Self-recording</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal orientation</td>
<td>Self-experimentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cyclical self-regulatory phases**
When asked about what it means to be a successful IB students the subjects’ answers ranged from believing it is the effort to “survive”; “feeling confident to talk and debate in class”; “somebody who rebounds and picks himself up”; “understanding the material and getting the good grades to reflect that understanding”; “communication,” and “working up to my potential.” These statements reflected the diverse perspectives of the IB students at the close of their junior year. They now appeared to be able to self-
reflect, evaluate their goals, and verbalize how their efforts, for the most part, have made them successful and self-efficacious.

**Strengths and Characteristics of IB Students**

1. They exhibit self-efficacy in their use of SRL strategies of self-monitoring, time management, and goal setting.
2. They are unified as a supportive and collective family.
3. They are risk-takers and accept the challenges of a rigorous curriculum.
4. They are mastery learners, yet are still performance-driven.
5. They are self-reliant through the use of scaffolding, teacher support and peer assistance.
6. They set proximal goals and are persistent in accomplishing them, even though the distal goal of the IB diploma is a major focus.
7. They enter the program with a sense of task accomplishment just by being accepted, thus establishing a sense of self-efficacy.
8. Their anxiety is decreased by their motivation to succeed.

**Weaknesses of IB Students**

1. Inadequate self-reflection and self-monitoring is evident at times as assignments become more challenging.
2. Students’ lack of preparation in SRL strategies as freshmen and sophomores for the IB requirements produces anxiety and stress as the course load increases in their junior year.

125
3. Few opportunities for cooperative learning and/or collective efficacy are experienced prior to their enrollment as juniors in the IB program.

**Significance for Classroom Teaching**

An environment of trust needs to be established in the classroom, as opposed to one of compliance; students need to be able to express their concerns as they move toward autonomy, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation. Ryan and Deci (2000) and Pintrich (2000) presented goal orientation from the perspective of intrinsic and extrinsic tasks, affecting the way students self-regulate, and how teachers can facilitate the movement, thus students may safely autonomously explore the relevance of the assigned materials, and how it applies to their lives. Students are not satisfied with just becoming competent in their school settings; they also want autonomy and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000); therefore, teachers must provide support. The classroom must be student-centered as the students become autonomous with the teacher facilitating and guiding as needed, which is one of the guidelines of the IB curriculum.

Students need guidance in SRL strategies; some have never self-monitored or self-evaluated in their past educational experiences. They need to understand their own learning processes and how to develop their learning strategies; practice and modeling in the SRL strategies should begin in elementary school, giving students experience in goal setting and social assisting, as well as resiliency, and in this manner building a solid foundation. Scaffolding (helping students) in each level of motivational maturity should be utilized as necessary. Environmental control is very difficult for any adolescent, and time management becomes a priority. It is very challenging and stressful to encounter
the expectation of becoming a self-regulated learner in their final years of secondary school in the challenging IB curriculum, and students must be externally supported to become resilient and persistent.

Teachers and instructors in the IB curriculum and other ELA classes need to focus on addressing learning strategies not as compensating a deficit, but rather as improving useful learning techniques in any classroom, so that students have a variety of SRL strategies at their disposal for different tasks and situations. It is crucial that instructors in all subjects take the time to introduce and model these strategies and not feel that this is time wasted, or that the curriculum content must be rapidly covered. Students can only become self-regulated by becoming more task-centered (Scanlon, Deshler, & Schumaker, 1994); therefore, teachers need to use reciprocal teaching methods: self talk and think-alouds. This is particularly the case in the challenging IB classes when some of the newly enrolled students feel the need to protect their self-worth, or feel that they are lacking in ability. Students need to experience SRL strategies by engaging in open discussions involving practicing strategies, as well as assessment processes in a non-threatening environment. Students should be able to see that their engagement in self-regulation and learning strategies is a continuous process of forethought, volition, and self-reflection, requiring constant monitoring, as well as selecting alternative strategies when necessary. Students who decide too quickly, as one subject chose to do, that they cannot achieve success in the program could benefit by strategy intervention, rather than the focus being on the student’s weaknesses, thus resulting in exiting the program.

Instructors need to help students set challenging proximal goals, rather than just focusing on distal goals, or exit diploma exams which can be daunting, as well as helping
students attribute successes or failures to specifics such as the use of SRL strategies, rather than attributing lack of ability or skill; this is a significant problem that has not been addressed in most ELA classes, not just in any of the advanced sections. The instructor’s role should be to continually urge them to persist in putting forth their best effort. Students who set a goal will experience self-efficacy in achieving that goal and thus be committed to attempting it, resulting in persistence (Bandura, 1997). Students should be given a rubric that has been clarified and discussed in class, or given the opportunity to create their own as a collaborative assignment. Students need explicit feedback; a returned assignment with no commentary or red-lined errors in grammar and mechanical errors is seldom reviewed by the students, if even read. Students need critical feedback in terms of content, organization, and structure, and how they can achieve mastery in specific areas: modeling, cooperative learning activities, peer groups, and collaborative project assignments; failure should not be an option because it does not encourage mastery or progression toward a goal.

Instructors should minimize the use of objective tests, competitive test scores, and any performance comparison, since these practices detract from students’ sense of mastery and efficacy (Paris & Paris, 2001). Projects involving creativity such as the Hamlet video project in which students write, direct, perform and edit; visual interpretations of required novels, portfolios, original songs and poetry all present cross-curricular opportunities for students to exhibit mastery and creativity; students not only gain self-satisfaction but engage in collective efficacy and peer modeling with these activities. Extrinsic rewards may be appropriate in certain contexts: particularly when a difficult cognitive strategy is being presented and can be a positive motivator (McWhaw
& Abrami, 2001). An example of this would be the Shakespearean unit which combined with project-based learning such as creating their own Renaissance play, results in an “Oscar” ceremony based on the Hollywood version; this is a favorite project of many juniors at this secondary school, even those individuals who originally saw no intrinsic value in studying Shakespeare’s tragedies.

Instructors in all classes need to be trained in not only their curriculum areas, but in concepts of ability and motivation; goals and goal setting; development of student self-regulation and their SRL strategies in order for optimal engagement of their students. Teachers need to discuss and model the differences between performance and mastery; discuss causal attribution and handicapping; encourage student autonomy, and discourage any emphasis on ability as opposed to effort and persistence. One particular strategy or instrument is insufficient in introducing self-regulated practices; it must be a combination to help steer and direct their motivation and their ability to understand the difference between performance and mastery. Students need to have an awareness of the intrinsic value of learning in itself: “Students need to know that they are being taught, not evaluated as persons” (Dweck, 2000, p. 152), and in this manner they will be open to new strategies, rather than a “flight from risk, so as to protect an image of oneself” (Dweck, 2000, p. 155) in their academic endeavors.

**Limitations of This Study**

All of the participants in this study were junior International Baccalaureate students in a public secondary high school, and had previously been interviewed and selected for this 2-year program at the end of their sophomore year. This was a
descriptive study not a statistical analysis, and it was not intended to generalize the findings to other IB students in this school or those enrolled in any existing IB program. Even though some common characteristics were evident in this group, each individual differs from the others in generating the results.

This study was conducted in a natural setting, and no intervention was involved. An LASSI scale was given at the beginning of the project with students performing self-scoring, before submitting it for the study. Students were observed while reading, writing, studying, and performing as they would usually do on a daily and semester basis. The interviews were conducted by one external observer, an experienced English teacher, to promote clarity and coherence, as well as student ease in discussing their personal responses. Journaling took place on five occasions with specific class time allotted and suggested subject matter given. Class observations were conducted by three teachers as external observers during the 3-month period, and research papers (artifacts) were assessed as well as student self-reflection letters on their completed research projects (see Appendices G and H).

Results were limited by the small sample size of students available; all of the subjects were enrolled in one class enabling the natural setting to be the context environment, and the entire IB population enrolled in the school is less than 30. This was an action research study using Eisner’s naturalistic generalization of phenomenological interviews rather than formal generalization; however, these self-regulation characteristics might be found in other programs at other IB schools. The study was conducted over a span of 3 months, rather than all 4 years of secondary school, and two of the six subjects were new students in the fall. Much of the interview data was based
on subjects’ memories of experiences. The LASSI instrument was given only once, since the time frame was not adequate for a valid post-test. This study basically confirmed the components of self-regulation and student engagement with the self-regulated task of completion of their research papers in revealing their strategies, behaviors, and beliefs as portrayed in a specific classroom context. Other limitations would involve the implementation of the described student autonomy and engagement involving a larger sample, such as the average class size of 25-30 in most college preparatory English classes at the junior level. The learning environment must: “provide conditions to facilitate students’ independent learning and regulation of their knowledge acquisition” (Eilam & Aharon, 2003, p. 331) for students to be successful independent learners.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Further study of self-regulation and SRL strategies should address the limitations of this study; an entire IB school year, or even the junior and senior year and post-baccalaureate academic experiences would be enlightening in determining the self-efficacy of the IB students. A controlled study of AP and IB students would generalize the findings of advanced classes and their SRL strategies. Future research should involve types of learning environments, outcome measures beyond standardized indicators, use of environmental cues triggering emotion and goal-shifting; self-regulation interventions, and the socio-political aspect of student becoming self-regulated learners (Bockerts, 2005) (see Figure 2).
Quantitative research methods would produce a more detailed comparative analysis of students’ specific use of SRL strategies and self-efficacy. Efforts to collect data on students’ anxiety and stress, and the efficacy of intervention strategies would be useful, as the students in IB and other advanced classes are not usually seen as “at risk” individuals (Suldo et al., 2008). It is clear that more research is needed to advance the study of not only SRL strategies of students, but also viewing teachers as models and coaches establishing a conducive environment for providing student enrichment through self-regulation and SRL strategies.
Significance for My Classroom Teaching

After conducting this action research study I believe that I now have a better perspective of how to help students become self-regulated in secondary academic ELA classrooms. I was surprised at the student interest in the LASSI test, and the resulting dialogue and conversation as they openly discussed the accuracy of this instrument after self-scoring the instrument. This was an example of how important attribution theory is not only for students, but also educators and parents. Attributional beliefs have important long-terms effects on student learning and education, and more teacher-student conferences and dialogues need to take place to understand the inaccuracy and harmful nature of student attributions (Weiner, 1979). The students’ professed “anxiety,” and the fact that they considered it a motivator in some cases is also an area that needs further analysis and research; this supposed negative factor may indeed be viewed as a positive aspect by some students, particularly through student-teacher discussions concerning this subject, thus giving the students the opportunity to understand that their anxiety and stress is often a communal experience, rather than one felt in isolation. The issue of the “student voice” is critical not only in the IB program, but in any ELA classroom. It was enlightening to hear the students’ perspectives, and the fact that “collective efficacy” is perhaps the core of the IB program; this factor could also be a positive force in any classroom supported with instructional time and effort. It is also apparent that much of the knowledge that I have gained through the interviews, observations, and journaling is applicable not only to students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate program, but to ELA students in any designated honors, college preparatory, or related secondary English classes. All students could benefit with knowledge and practice of SRL strategies, but
the instructor must be the facilitator and the mentor in helping each student become successful in using the aforesaid methods. Students may become motivated functioning members in a collaborative classroom by giving them options and opportunities in choosing their literature, their essay topics, and their assessment tools; only then will they gain autonomy and understand how “learning to learn” is uppermost in becoming successful students, as opposed to a classroom in which they are merely onlookers or observers, as stated by the two subjects who felt the need for external motivation, rather than being autonomous.

I have often been “accused” by my English Literature Honor’s college preparatory students as having the same high expectations for them as I do for my IB classes, which I consider a compliment. I might add that these same students seem to exhibit pride in the fact that they can “survive” in what they consider a challenging class, even without the title of “IB.” This I believe is an example of students wanting to “learn how to learn,” and the self-satisfaction that they receive in their attempts to meet the challenge of a demanding curriculum, even when their honors class is not classified as “most rigorous,” nor receiving the same weighted grade as the IB students earn. I believe that this action research study will impact my best practices in the coming semesters, as described in the following curriculum planning.

**Recommendations for Best Practices in SRL Strategies and Self-Efficacy**

1. Students will have more opportunity for engagement in creating rubrics, self-scoring assessment and quizzes.
2. Students will have more options to choose literature choices for in-depth study and discussion.

3. Class assignments will offer more opportunities for differentiated learning: visual, oral and/or performance.

4. Discussions will ensue concerning SRL strategies, anxiety, and how mastery differs from performance modes, proximal and distal goals, visions of “possible selves,” and self—handicapping.

5. LASSI or Likert-type testing will take place with student self-scoring followed by discussions.

6. More project-based activities will be offered such as video projects, literary trials, debates and curriculum-related field trips.

7. More student-driven assessment opportunities such as student-designed rubrics and assessment artifacts will be assigned.

8. Cross-curricular project opportunities such as combining literature and science when reading texts such as *Brave New World* will be offered.

9. Senior IB students will mentor junior students enrolling in the program.

**Summary of Best Practices**

I plan for all my students, IB and non-IB, to be active participants in creating their academic assignment calendars, rubrics, assessment tools, project-based assignments, and related class activities. My assumption, which I believe I formerly shared with other IB instructors, has been that the IB student is more motivated, and more engaged in SRL strategies, thus more capable of student-engagement and autonomy than individuals
enrolled in less challenging programs. It is clear that all students in any class, given the opportunity, should at least have the option of regulating their learning strategies and behaviors by understanding what it means to be self-regulated, and the connection with academic outcomes. Early discussions with students concerning the aforementioned class activities will include what it means to be self-regulated; proximal and distal goals; visions of possible selves; learning strategies; self-handicapping, and anxiety. There will be opportunities for open discussion taking place with student facilitators, and how effort and persistence overcome perceived intelligence and ability. It will not be sufficient to simply discuss these subjects, but modeling and practice will help to instill the worth and value of becoming self-regulated. This will require “time and trial,” but it is far superior to “drill and kill,” which has sometimes been the case in their past educational experiences. The necessity of forethought, volition, and self-reflection will be an integral part of each assignment, requiring careful planning of instruction and modeling on the part of the teacher before any assignments are given.

Collective efficacy and collaborative group work is clearly a positive factor in the case studies of this dissertation. This should not be limited to just the IB or the English Honors’ classes. With careful planning and modeling even a large group of students can effectively work together on a variety of projects and assignments, but it takes constant monitoring with an emphasis on rigor to make it successful. Collaboration through the formation of peer partners, peer groups, and cross-curricular activities should also take place. This team effort may help promote the collective efficacy that is a key strength in meeting the challenges of the IB curriculum, as noted by nearly all of the IB subjects in this study; this could and should become a reality in other classes through careful
planning and instrumentation. Students in all classes should have the opportunity to engage in activities such as literary trials, debates, cultural diaries, original novel and drama videos, field trips and reward ceremonies. My goal is to make each class not only student-engaged and meaning-making, but student-centered, and I believe it can be a reality for any ELA instructor with effort and persistence.

Addressing the standards, passing the state-required proficiency testing, and getting “through” the texts hinders in-depth discussions and self-reflections that are necessary in instilling the need for SRL strategies, as well as the students’ need to define their own intrinsic values. It was eye-opening to hear one student state that no teacher had ever asked what he felt or thought about his academic life. Self-reflection appears to be a weak area for both students and teachers as reported in this study. It is clear that teacher and student perceptions are not always similar, and this factor needs to be addressed in open discussions where students feel comfortable in voicing their concerns, thus enabling teachers to discuss strategies and possible interventions. Weekly or even monthly student evaluations of their class work and assignments should be an integral part of every class, giving the students a voice and some sense of control of their learning. This year I will not be as concerned with completing the anthology, normative testing, or even the required novels, but rather in engaging the students in a meaning-centered classroom in which I am truly a facilitator and the students are self-regulators.

It is my goal to encourage my colleagues to have more student-centered classrooms and to engage them in promoting self-regulation techniques and practices, thus moving away from what I perceive as “invisible tracking.” Too often the students who are enrolled in “regular” classes are viewed as lacking ability, rather than the
possibility that they have become disengaged through years of social comparison and negative feedback. I believe through staff development in teaching effective instructional learning strategies involving how students’ beliefs, and generating classroom applications, it is possible to eliminate the perspective by some teachers that students in “regular” classes are less intelligent, or simply lazy, resulting in teacher-centered classrooms and student disengagement. However, this change in perception and classroom practices requires effort, persistence, patience, and planning on the part of the administration and the willingness of ELA instructors to move to student-centered classrooms. It will only be effective if teachers are able to view and practice effective models of student autonomy, and perhaps even being mentored by successful teachers who use and instruct the SRL processes. My goal, therefore, is to encourage all teachers to believe that students have the capacity to learn and to become self-regulated with teachers who are: “Partners, facilitators, and models with new strategies-learning how students think-generating their own classroom applications, effective instructional strategies, and the self as-agent perspective” (McCombs, 2001, p. 113.).
REFERENCES


144


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA

[Diagram of the International Baccalaureate Diploma program]

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program is designed to develop well-rounded students who are academically strong, ethically and socially conscious, and open-minded towards the world. It is a two-year program that focuses on the following subjects:

- **Language A1**
- **Language A2**
- **Language and Literature**
- **Mathematics**
- **Sciences**
- **Arts**
- **Humanities**
- **Economics**
- **History**
- **Literature**
- **Philosophy**
- **Theological Studies**

The Diploma programme is divided into six groups, each with a specific focus:

1. **Group 1** (Languages A1 and A2)
2. **Group 2** (Language and Literature)
3. **Group 3** (Mathematics, Sciences, and Languages)
4. **Group 4** (Arts, Humanities, Economics, History, Literature, Philosophy, Theological Studies)
5. **Group 5** (History and Economics)
6. **Group 6** (Arts and Mathematics)

Central to the IB Diploma is the **Theory of Knowledge** (TOK) course, which encourages students to question the nature of knowledge, the role of critical thinking, and the relationship between knowledge and society. Students are also required to complete an extended essay on a topic of their choice, which allows them to demonstrate their research and writing skills.

The **Creativity, Action, and Service** (CAS) component is an integral part of the IB Diploma, encouraging students to engage in service projects, community work, and creative pursuits that help develop personal and social skills.

Students who successfully complete the IB Diploma are awarded a certificate that is recognized worldwide for its emphasis on critical thinking, problem-solving, and personal development.

150
APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTION OF THE 10 LASSI SCALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of the 10 LASSI Scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LASSI scores are reported in percentiles for each scale based on national norms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidelines for Interpreting LASSI Scale Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 50&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need to improve skills to avoid problems succeeding in college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Anxiety Scale**—Measures how tense or concerned a student is when approaching a task—a student feels panicky or globalizes the effects of an exam. LEARN to break larger tasks down into smaller, more manageable tasks.

- **Attitude Scale**—Measures general motivation for succeeding in school. FOCUS on higher-level goal setting and reassess how school fits in to the bigger picture.

- **Concentration**—Measures a students ability to focus (when studying and listening) and not being distracted. ASSESS where to sit in class and where to study.

- **Information Processing**— Measures a student’s ability to learn by the use of elaboration, creativity, and organization strategies. DEVELOP various approaches such as mnemonic devices and note-taking strategies.

- **Motivation**—Measures a student’s general motivation to perform specific tasks related to achieving success and the degree to which he accepts responsibility for daily tasks. SET goals to accomplish specific tasks.

- **Self Testing**—Measures a student’s ability to test her own level of understanding. LEARN note-taking and effective reviewing methods to monitor your understanding of material.

- **Selecting Main Ideas**—Measures how well a student can identify important material. DEVELOP skills on how to separate out critical information by asking “What is really being asked?” or “What is the author or my professor really trying to say?”

- **Study Aids**—Assesses student’s use of resources to help him learn or retain information. RESEARCH resources to help you study and become a more effective, efficient learner. Check out ACE!

- **Time Management**—Measures a student’s ability to apply time management principles to academic situations. REFLECT on your behavior, your various energy levels, and procrastination by making a clear time management plan.

- **Test Strategies**—Assesses a student’s use of test preparation and test taking strategies. LEARN effective techniques for preparing for and taking tests.
## Interpreting Your LASSI Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentile Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANX Scale</td>
<td>The Anxiety Scale assesses the degree to which students worry about school and their academic performance. Students who score low on this scale are experiencing high levels of anxiety associated with school (note that this scale is reverse scored). High levels of anxiety can help direct attention away from completing academic tasks. Students who score low on this scale may need to develop techniques for coping with anxiety and reducing worry so that attention can be focused on the task at hand.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT Scale</td>
<td>The Attitude Scale assesses students' attitudes and interest in college and academic success. It examines how facilitating or debilitating their approach to college and academics is for helping them get their work done and succeeding in college (sample item: I have a positive attitude about attending my classes). Students who score low on this scale may not believe college is relevant or important to them and may need to develop a better understanding of how college and their academic performance relate to their future life goals.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON Scale</td>
<td>The Concentration Scale assesses students' ability to direct and maintain attention on academic tasks (sample item: I find that during lectures I think of other things and don't really listen to what is being said). Low scoring students may need to learn to monitor their level of concentration and develop techniques to refocus attention and eliminate interfering thoughts or feelings so that they can be more effective and efficient learners.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INP Scale</td>
<td>The Information Processing Scale assesses how well students' use imagery, verbal elaboration, organization strategies, and reasoning skills as learning strategies to help build bridges between what they already know and what they are trying to learn and remember, i.e., knowledge acquisition, retention and future applications (sample item: I translate what I am studying into my own words). Students who score low on this scale may have difficulty making information meaningful and storing it in memory in a way that will help them recall it in the future.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT Scale</td>
<td>The Motivation Scale assesses students' diligence, self-discipline, and willingness to exert the effort necessary to successfully complete academic requirements (sample item: When work is difficult I either give up or study only the easy parts). Students who score low on this scale need to accept more responsibility for their academic outcomes and learn how to set and use goals to help accomplish specific tasks.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFT Scale</td>
<td>The Self-Test Scale stresses students' use of reviewing and comprehension monitoring techniques to determine their level of understanding of the information to be learned (sample item: I stop periodically while reading and mentally go over or review what I saw). Low scoring students may need to develop an appreciation for the importance of self-testing, and learn effective techniques for reviewing information and monitoring their level of understanding or ability to apply what they are learning.</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMI Scale</td>
<td>The Selecting Main Ideas Scale assesses students' skill at identifying important information for further study from among less important information and summarizing details (sample item: When studying, I seem to get lost in the details and miss the important information). Students who score low on this scale may need to develop their skill at avoiding extraneous information on which to focus their attention. Tasks such as reading a textbook can be overwhelming if students focus on every detail presented.</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STA Scale</td>
<td>The Study Aids Scale assesses students' use of supports or resources to help them learn or retain information (sample item: I use special study help, such as index cards and headings, that are in my textbook). Students with low scores may need to develop a better understanding of the resources available to them and how to use these resources to help them be more effective and efficient learners.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMT Scale</td>
<td>The Time Management Scale assesses students' application of time management principles to academic situations (sample item: I set aside more time to study the subjects that are difficult for me). Students who score low on this scale may need to develop effective scheduling and monitoring techniques in order to ensure timely completion of academic tasks and to avoid procrastination while realistically including non-academic activities in their schedule.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TST Scale</td>
<td>The Test Strategies Scale assesses students' use of test preparation and test-taking strategies (sample item: In taking tests, writing papers, etc., I find I have misunderstood what is wanted and lose points because of it). Low scoring students may need to learn more effective techniques for preparing for and taking tests so that they are able to effectively demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

LASSI RESULTS MATRIX

**TEST RESULTS**

Score (Percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Time Management</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Concentration</th>
<th>Information Processing</th>
<th>Selecting Main Idea</th>
<th>Self Aids</th>
<th>Self Testing</th>
<th>Test Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>33 (55)</td>
<td>33 (65)</td>
<td>21 (50)</td>
<td>20 (25)</td>
<td>29 (70)</td>
<td>31 (80)</td>
<td>19 (60)</td>
<td>22 (45)</td>
<td>24 (40)</td>
<td>28 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cal</td>
<td>31 (45)</td>
<td>30 (50)</td>
<td>23 (60)</td>
<td>35 (95)</td>
<td>19 (20)</td>
<td>38 (99)</td>
<td>25 (99)</td>
<td>32 (90)</td>
<td>30 (75)</td>
<td>33 (75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>27 (28)</td>
<td>39 (95)</td>
<td>25 (75)</td>
<td>8 (00)</td>
<td>17 (15)</td>
<td>35 (80)</td>
<td>20 (65)</td>
<td>31 (90)</td>
<td>30 (75)</td>
<td>30 (60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed</td>
<td>34 (65)</td>
<td>38 (95)</td>
<td>26 (75)</td>
<td>21 (25)</td>
<td>26 (55)</td>
<td>24 (35)</td>
<td>19 (60)</td>
<td>20 (30)</td>
<td>27 (60)</td>
<td>29 (55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan</td>
<td>35 (70)</td>
<td>22 (10)</td>
<td>13 (10)</td>
<td>25 (45)</td>
<td>30 (75)</td>
<td>36 (95)</td>
<td>25 (99)</td>
<td>28 (80)</td>
<td>27 (60)</td>
<td>27 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fay</td>
<td>31 (45)</td>
<td>24 (20)</td>
<td>16 (21)</td>
<td>25 (45)</td>
<td>20 (25)</td>
<td>25 (40)</td>
<td>19 (60)</td>
<td>31 (90)</td>
<td>18 (15)</td>
<td>24 (25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

MATRIX FOR LASSI CATEGORIES AND SRL STRATEGIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LASSI CATEGORY</th>
<th>SRL STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Goal Setting, Self-Consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Goal Setting and Planning, Environmental Structuring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>Environmental Structuring, Rehearsing and Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Self-Consequences, Self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>Environmental Structuring, Seeking Information, Keeping records and monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Processing</td>
<td>Organizing and Transforming, Rehearsing and Memorizing, Reviewing Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Main Ideas</td>
<td>Organizing and Transforming, Rehearsing and Monitoring, Reviewing Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Aids</td>
<td>Environmental Structuring, Social Assistance, Self-evaluation, Reviewing Records, Rehearsing and Memorizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Testing</td>
<td>Self-evaluation, Self-Consequences, Reviewing Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Strategies</td>
<td>Reviewing Records, Rehearsing and Memorizing, Organizing and Transforming, Social Assistance, Environmental Structuring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW ONE     March 10, 2010

1. Describe your elementary school experience:

2. Do you remember anything that you learned that was significant?

3. What was your relationship like with your elementary school peers?

4. Is there any other aspect of elementary school that stands out?

5. Describe your middle school experience in relation to your teachers.

6. What was your relationship like that you had with your teachers in middle school?

7. What was your relationship with your peers in middle school?

8. What else do you remember about middle school?

9. How do you feel about the relationships you developed with prior students and teachers in middle school?

10. How do you feel about your intellectual peers in high school, and who would you consider your intellectual peers?

11. How about our friends and classmates who are not in the IB program?

12. What was your first year of high like in terms of academic requirements?

13. How about teacher expectation? How were they similar to middle school.
14. What can you tell me about your experience in 9-10 Pre-IB?

15. Did those expectations change in 10th grade?

16. Do you feel you were adequately prepared for the IB program?

17. What makes you unique?

18. What characteristic defines you as a person?

INTERVIEW TWO     April 12, 2010

1. When do you feel the most positive about your IB classes, or your involvement in the IB program?

2. Is there anything that really stands out?

3. When do you feel the most frustrated about your involvement in the IB program?

4. What has been a highlight of the year for you?

5. What has changed this year for you in terms of your future plans?

6. How do you prepare for our quizzes or tests?

7. Do you have a notebook or a portfolio for each class?

8. Do you study with a group?

9. What do you do when you feel your grade is lower than expected?

10. Do you get angry at the instructor

11. Do you ever talk to the instructors?

12. Do you talk and compare your grades?
13. Do you change the way you study for our next quiz or test when a grade is unacceptable to you?

14. Do you feel you are mastering your subjects? Are you truly engaged in them and are you absorbing all the material? Just fulfilling the requirements?

15. Do you feel you have the capability of satisfactorily completing the course work for this year, and what does that mean to you--satisfactorily completing?

16. What would you say your perspective is in terms of your course work is at this point? Positive, hopeful, excited, frustrated, angry? Or defeated?

17. Do you feel you made a good decision to be in the program, and what was it based on?

18. Why did you choose IB?

19. Describe the ideal IB student, does this fit you?

INTERVIEW THREE     May 17, 2010

1. After this first year in the IB program would you enroll in it again--why or why not?

2. What would you say to younger students who are thinking about the IB program?

3. What are the first words that come to mind when you are asked to evaluate your progress this year in IB? Explain

4. What are you proudest of that you accomplished this year? Why?

5. What would you rather forget that you did or did not do this year and why?
6. What are your goals for this summer in terms of your IB assignments? How and when are you going to accomplish them? Do you have a plan?

7. Do you feel next year will be easier than this year? In what way?

8. How will next year’s requirements differ from this year’s? Easier or more difficult?

9. What strategy works best for you in terms of doing your assignments, or meeting the requirements?

10. What does it mean when some asks you to “reflect” on your experience?

11. If you were to leave or exit the IB program right now, how would you feel about it?

12. Do you think it was beneficial to have the “special attention” from teachers that you receive in IB, or was it more stressful?

13. Do you think your participation in IB English was outstanding, satisfactory, or poor in terms of the entire year?

14. What was the most frustrating to you in terms of your IB peers? What are you most proud of in regard to your interaction with them?

15. What would you like to say to them about the program if you could be frank, and without hurting their feelings?

16. Have you changed the way you view your academic performance this year? How?
17. Do you know your GPA and your class rank right now—do you want to know? Is that important to you?

18. How do you see yourself academically a year from now?
APPENDIX F

OBSERVATIONS

Classroom Observations  2010            Field Notes                                      White: 210

Date________________                                                    Observer_________________

Please take field notes in the following areas:

TARGET (task, authority, recognition grouping, evaluation, time)

1. Task: Is learning interesting—use and variety and personal challenges; students setting realistic goals, students using management skills, and effective task strategies?

2. Authority: Are students participating actively in decisions, are they taking responsibility for their learning, selecting activities?

3. Recognition: Are students being recognized for their efforts, progress and/or accomplishments?

4. Grouping: Is peer interaction evident?

5. Evaluation: Are students focusing on mastery (not performance) taking the opportunity to improve their work, using private evaluation (peer editing and revising) Are they involved in their assessments?

6. Time: Are students on task? Are they using strategies to meet deadlines? Are they anxious or stressed about upcoming assignments?
Part II

1. Where are the students (at the door, in their seats?), and what are they doing as they enter the classroom (laughing, etc.)

2. What are the students doing after the official (sounding of the gong) class begins: taking notes, collaborating, disengaged?

3. What is the interaction with the instructor or student facilitator? Are students actively participating; if not, what are they doing?

4. Are questions being asked and answered by the whole class or just a few? What are the others doing? Is the group staying on task? If not, what are they doing?

5. Is undesirable or distracting behavior taking place? If so, what is it, and how is it handled?
APPENDIX G

RESEARCH PAPER ASSIGNMENT REFLECTION LETTERS

Fay

Personally I found this assignment extremely difficult. I had a very difficult time trying to sit down, and actually force myself to write the paper. I enjoyed reading the novels, I did not enjoy writing a research paper on them, and I wish I would have chosen a different topic. It made for a very boring paper, especially to write the three novels.

Preparing for the assignment was the hardest part.

It was extremely difficult to prioritize the paper when we had copious homework in each class each night. I found myself having zero time to work on it, between Chem. Math and other English homework and extracurricular activities. Hopefully this is the longest paper I will ever write in my high school career. If I would have chosen a more interesting book I would have enjoyed writing the paper and it would have been much easier. Next time I am given an assignment such as this, I will make sure to pick more interesting books, not do two books by the same author, and I will start working on my paper much sooner. (This paper was one month late, and cost her at least two letter grades –computer excuses, etc.)
Dan

While writing this paper I was given the opportunity to revisit my favorite books each offering an enjoyable read and good material...However few things, other than overanalyzing text, can suck all the enjoyment out of reading and leave you feeling as though you have destroyed every positive aspect of a book appeal. The phrase that I use to describe this degradation of interest is “I started with dry material and ended with the Sahara. Overall this is a true statement, for by verbose writing and a simplistic message I believe I have written a poor paper, I am primarily not a research writer. I have trouble holding interest alive within my papers and too quickly fall victim to my poor writing. However I do enjoy working with the texts that I chose. They contrasted nicely and both offered a lot of material to work with. Overall I enjoyed the work, but only wish I had created a better product. If I were to redo my paper I would have started immediately in reading and taking notes; dong this would allow me to recreate a concise and to the point plan of attach, with which I could create a good paper. Also I would employ the help of a friend and family to read and evaluate my writing, to offer opinions and to help me craft words that would efficiently captivate and communicate. As of now however I am not proud of my work, but it is what is, a large piece of writing that is dull and mundane, but it does make a clear point. I think one of my fatal errors of writing is my ability to value the beautiful over the direct: Hemingway has much to teach me. Yet for all its faults I think my paper does strike an interesting core of writing, the basis of human evaluation. Are we characterized as good or bad, what is our nature as a species? I do not pretend to say that my short paper answers those immense questions, but only adds to them
A fifteen page research paper may seem daunting and downright impossible, however when spread out over several days, it becomes much more manageable. This is certainly the case with the research paper in IB. When I first learned that I would be comparing 3 different books and analyzing them, I honestly wanted to go back to sophomore year again, a place where I could hide from the mountain of homework that comes with being a junior. Yet because I could not do this, I faced the monster that was the research paper. My weapons in fighting the beast included 3 books, which allowed me to vanquish the beast—so to speak—I still had to complete 15 pages of analysis. When writing a research paper it helps to be interested in your topic of choice. That is why it was very fortunate that she allowed us topic what we wanted to compare, and with criteria we could compare them by. Because of that 15 pages it not seem so bad-When one has a passion for something, it does not feel like working when one is writing endless amounts, but rather, it is fun and somewhat entertaining.

Another positive aspect of the paper was the fact that it taught me a lot about writing. I realized after I pushed out a draft after draft, what mistakes are commonly made, and how to avoid them. There were also little things that I learned from her corrections that I did not know before.

I feel that writing the research paper improve my general writing skill, so the saying “PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT” APPLIES TO HOMEWORK AS well as sports, Despite the amount of positive feedback that I will give on the experience I must admit that there were a lot that I did not like. I made the mistake of choosing 3 books, none of which I had read before, and all were long Because of that it was difficult reading each
book and getting the necessary information for the paper. It was difficult trying to find critic that pertained to what I discussed in may paper. It was also hard to find a balance between summary and analysis, because it is natural for me to want to completely explain a book’s plot before trying to analyze it. Yet despite all these difficulties I believe that I ended up writing paper that would satisfy the teacher.

Ann

Admiring the authors Austen, Bronte and Bronte, I was inspired to write my research paper about them. I was inspired to see the reflection of themselves in their works, as independent feminist protagonists. As I began this adventure I was terrified I would misinterpret their works. I spent more time reading Austen etc. than writing my actual paper because I take their words very seriously. From the sweet works of Austen to heartbreaking Bronte, I spent hours highlighting. Using sticky notes and deciphering trying to find thru author voice in their novels and finding many similarities. As I discovered this, a quote came to me, “Writer writes what they know”. For an example most of the Bronte sister’s protagonist does not have a mother, similar to their motherless childhood. This may be one of the reason why I enjoy their novels so much, because they re written with passion. However, I do wish I spent more time to organize my paper. No matter what, I feel something can always be “tweaked,” a statement could be written better, or I could have another focus point. Yet despite that, I feel that I truly understood the authors through the protagonists’ struggles and accomplishments, which is a wonderful feeling.
Beth

It would have been an easy paper to write if it had not been for finding critics, I could find barely any critical critiques about the topics I focus on for either character. This was extremely frustrating and time consuming. Something that was not time consuming was writing the paper itself. I wrote the first draft the night before it was due in about five or six hours. However I had already read both books and basically knew what I wanted to say. I usually work in a similar manner of highlighting and taking time collecting my thoughts and writing out main ideas or points that I want to make before starting my papers at the last minute. I also waited until the last minute to write out the dialectical journals, but already had the quotes highlighted so it wasn’t too terrible. I wish I would have picked a different topic. While the paper was easy to write, it was pretty boring. I should have gone with my first idea and compared and contrasted absurdist authors. I think if I would have picked a topic that I liked; I would have enjoyed the reading and research and wouldn’t have put off writing the paper itself like I did.

Overall I think my paper turned out all right. More critiques from critics would have been nice, but I used as many as I could find which was not much. I could have spent more time or writing the paper itself, but I did spend a lot of time reading, highlighting and searching for nonexistent critics.

Ed

Overall this paper has been a beneficial experience for me. After looking at the word count, I am excited to say that the paper is over 4000 words, which is the longest paper I have ever written, and it is hopefully the longest paper I will write until I get into college.
The experience that I have gained from writing paper will definitely help me when I am writing my extended essay for IB this summer and next year, which is a very important part of getting the diploma. I have learned many lessons from this paper. First, research is very important. The only way to effectively write about a book is if you know all about it and you have read it completely. This posed a problem for me during a few of journal entries (the first 10) and my outline. But thankfully I had the book completely read before I wrote the first draft. Second –having a topic that you enjoy is very important For example, there is one student that I know who hates her topic and as a result hates her paper I was very pleased with my topic. Third, having a narrow topic is beneficial when writing the actual paper. Because I had such a narrow topic and a focused research question, my paper was able to explore the subject in depth without the paper being too long.

If I were to write this paper again, I would make sure to finish researching the topic before I began dialectical journal. I would make sure to choose this topic and the same books. For my focal points I might change the focal point for theme, but I would keep the other two. Other than these few adjustments I would not alter anything. Overall, I would not trade this difficult, but manageable, experience for anything.
APPENDIX H

RESEARCH INSTRUCTIONS

Junior Honors & IB English 2010

Monday: Research Drafts returned and discussed.

Drafts: If you received a score you do not have to rewrite your draft—but make sure you place it in your research folder with your final copy and your précis.

If you received an “R” or an incomplete you MUST TURN IN A REWRITE BY WED—or else you will receive only 100 pts. for your paper this grading period—that is 100 pts. out of 300. You must include your draft with the rewrite or it will not count.

If you failed to turn in a draft you will receive no pts. this grading period—but you still must write a draft before the final copy is due; otherwise you will receive no credit for the final copy either—you are in serious trouble gradewise!

Problem areas:

WORKS CITED: this page must follow MLA—you have used it before—review it in your English handbook and do it correctly.
INTRO—you must include who, what, when, where, etc.—dates, places, background with a cited source for your information—it should be at least one and one/half pages with the ATF at the end of the paragraph.

BODY: You must use the EIQ to open your paragraphs—this is not a report/review—this is a problem-solving paper that follows the formula of:

Example, Incident, Quote

Paraphrase

Critical view

ANALYSIS—this is the most important and MUST CONNECT TO ONE OF YOUR THREE FOCAL POINTS.

CONCLUSION: Summarize all your focal points in brief—re-thesis—no new materials—the first paragraph and the last should make sense—read and check it.

Mechanics: No personal pronouns, no “this paper,” no fatal errors—there, their, etc.

12 pt. font, one inch margins, double spaced on 20 lb. paper (no notebook paper, etc.)

Precis: This is a one page overview or abstract of your paper—all of your intro, body and concluding evidence is summarized—you may even use some of the same sentences—include your ATF, your focal point proofs and your conclusions. This is separate from the paper.

Final paper must be 12-15 pages including Precis and Works Cited
There must be evidence of a thorough proofreading by the writer and the reader—this was not the case in most of the papers that required rewriting. Do not make the same errors or they will be counted double in the final paper. Ask for help if you need direction or clarification.

Final paper due: April 2, 2010

RESEARCH PAPER CHECKLIST

NAME of WRITER:

NAME OF PROOFREADER:

Check the following:

1. Abstract/Precis ___

2. Reflection ___

3. First and Second Drafts ___

4. EIQ and ATF questions ___

5. Outline ___

6. Final paper: 12-15 pages ___

7. Works Cited page correctly written ___

8. Introduction with ATF at the end in question form ___

9. Body paragraphs with EIQ’s in each one ___

10. Conclusion with an ANSWER to the ATF question from the intro ___

11. Critics on Works Cited page match the critics cited in the paper ___ (check each one)
12. A minimum of three cited critics are used in the paper_____

13. Mechanics: spelling, punctuation, syntax and diction_______ (all correct)

14. All papers are contained in one enclosed folder_____

15. MLA format is followed throughout the paper_____

NO PAPER WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT THE ABOVE BEING CHECKED CAREFULLY AND MARKED.

PROOFREADERS NOT CAREFULLY READING WILL LOSE POINTS BY NOT FOLLOWING AND MARKING PROBLEMS AS NOTED IN THE CHECKLIST.

WRITE THE ATF QUESTIONS BELOW (PROOFREADER)
APPENDIX I

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION
OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

January 6, 2010

Judith White
2805 Erle Drive
Fairlawn, Ohio 44333

From: Sharon McWhorter, IRB Administrator

Re: IRB Number 20070230-4 "What are the Characteristics of the Self-Regulated Learner in the English Literature Honors and the International Baccalaureate Program at an Urban Public High School?"

Thank you for submitting your Application for Continuing Review of Research Involving Human Subjects for the referenced project. Your protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and has been approved under Expedited Category #7.

Approval Date: January 6, 2010
Expiration Date: February 8, 2011
Continuation Application Due: January 25, 2011

In addition, the following is/are approved:

☐ Waiver of documentation of consent
☐ Waiver or alteration of consent
☐ Research involving children
☐ Research involving prisoners

Please adhere to the following IRB policies:

• IRB approval is given for not more than 12 months. If your project will be active for longer than one year, it is your responsibility to submit a continuation application prior to the expiration date. We request submission two weeks prior to expiration to ensure sufficient time for review.
• A copy of the approved consent form must be submitted with any continuation application.
• If you plan to make any changes to the approved protocol you must submit a continuation application for approval and it must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.
• Any adverse reactions/incidents must be reported immediately to the IRB.
• If this research is being conducted for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, you must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.
• When your project terminates you must submit a Final Report Form in order to close your IRB file.

Additional information and all IRB forms can be accessed on the IRB web site at:
http://www.uakron.edu/research/orssp/compliance/IRBHome.php

Cc: Hal Foster - Advisor
Cc: Stephanie Woods - IRB Chair

☐ Approved consent form/s enclosed

Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Akron, OH 44325-2102
330-972-7666

The University of Akron is an Equal Education and Employment Institution
APPENDIX J

PARTICIPANTS' LETTERS OF CONSENT

Parental Consent for Children under 18

Title of Study:
Authentic Inquiry: What are the characteristics of the self-regulated learner in the English Literature Honors and the International Baccalaureate junior program at Firestone High School?

Introduction:
Your child is invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Judith White, a faculty member at Firestone High School and a doctoral student in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at The University of Akron.

Purpose:
The study will investigate how high school juniors in the International Baccalaureate and the English Literature Honors program view their academic experiences and challenges. This study could lead to a better understanding of best practices in the English Language Arts classrooms at all levels, as well as helping students understand how they meet the challenges of advanced classwork. I hope to involve at least 3 honors and 3 IB students in this study.

Procedures:
The students will be given a pre-test on their attitudes and current thoughts on their experiences in English Language Arts. They will be observed in the classroom by an outside objective researcher as well as the classroom teacher, and will keep a weekly journal of their experiences and activities in the classroom. I will interview each student individually three times throughout the semester, and once at the end to discuss the findings and significance of each student’s experience and perceptions. All interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed.

Risks and Discomforts:
There is no anticipated risk to participation in this study. Participation or lack thereof will have no impact on the student’s grade or class placement.

Benefits:
The benefits to your child for participating in this study may be increased self-knowledge of study habits and practices. However, there may be no direct benefit from participating in this study.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw:
Following your consent, participation of your child in this study remains voluntary. Your child will also be asked to provide assent to participate and may refuse even if you consent. Your child can also refuse to answer any questions and may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies
College of Education
Akron, OH 44325-4205
330-972-7765 Office • 330-972-8150 Office • 330-972-5209 Fax
The University of Akron is an Equal Education and Employment Institution
Confidential Data Collection:
Any identifying information collected will be kept in a secure location and only the researcher will have access to the data. Participants will not be individually identified in any publication or presentation of the research results. Only aggregate data will be used. Your signed consent form and your child’s assent form will be kept separate from the data, and nobody will be able to link their responses to them. All audiotapes will be erased at the end of the study.

Who to contact with questions:
If you have any questions about this study, you may call Judith White at 330-873-3315 or by e-mail at epgiaywhit@yahoo.com. This project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Akron Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the IRB at (330) 972-7686 or 1-800-232-8790.

Acceptance & signature:
I have read the information provided above and all of my questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to the participation of my child in this study. I will receive a copy of this consent form for my information.

Parent / Legal Guardian Signature

Name of Child

Parent / Legal Guardian Signature

174
Student Assent

Title of Study:
Authentic Inquiry: What are the characteristics of the self-regulated learner in the English Literature Honors and the International Baccalaureate junior program at Firestone high School?

Introduction:
You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Judith White, a faculty member at Firestone High School and a doctoral student in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at The University of Akron.

Purpose:
The study will investigate how high school juniors in the International Baccalaureate and the English Literature Honors program view their academic experiences and challenges. This study could lead to a better understanding of best practices in the English Language Arts classrooms at all levels, as well as helping students understand how they meet the challenges of advanced coursework. I hope to involve at least 3 honors and 3 IB students in this study.

Procedures:
You will be given a pre-test on your attitudes and current thoughts on your experiences in English Language Arts. You will be observed in the classroom by an outside objective researcher as well as the classroom teacher, and will keep a weekly journal of your experiences and activities in the classroom. I will interview each student individually three times throughout the semester, and once at the end to discuss the findings and significance of each student's experience and perceptions. All interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed.

Risks and Discomforts:
There is no anticipated risk to participation in this study. Participation or lack thereof will have no impact on the student’s grade or class placement.

Benefits:
The benefits to you for participating in this study may be increased self-knowledge of study habits and practices. However, there may be no direct benefit from participating in this study.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw:
Your participation in this study is voluntary. Even if your parent or guardian consents, you may refuse. You may also refuse to answer any questions and may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
Confidential Data Collection:
Any identifying information collected will be kept in a secure location and only the researcher will have access to the data. Participants will not be individually identified in any publication or presentation of the research results. Only aggregate data will be used. This signed assent form and your parent's consent form will be kept separate from the data, and nobody will be able to link your responses to you. All audiotapes will be erased at the end of the study.

Who to contact with questions:
If you have any questions about this study, you may call Judith White at 330-873-3315 or by e-mail at engiavwhit@yahoo.com. This project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Akron Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the IRB at (330) 972-7666 or 1-800-232-8790.

Acceptance & signature:
I have read the information provided above and all of my questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I will receive a copy of this assent form for my information.

Name ______________________ Age ______________________

Signature ______________________ Date ______________________